

# Toddler Classroom Family Packet



**UNH Child Study & Development Center  
2019-2020 School Year**



## UNH Child Study and Development Center Toddler Classroom



Welcome to the Toddler Program! We are very excited to have you and your child as part of our community. It is very important to us that we develop a relationship to support the growth and development of your child as well as the needs of your family. Please let us know your thoughts, ideas, concerns, and questions. To help make your transition as smooth as possible, we have compiled information that we hope will begin to answer some of the questions you may have.

### **Teaching Staff:**

We are a team of three teachers: Sandy Berge, Cassie Emerson, and Freedom Mussari. We work together to ensure that every child in our classroom receives warm, loving care and appropriate challenges that support their development. There are a total of twelve children in our room ranging in age from approximately a year and a half to three years of age. We have undergraduate students from the Human Development and Family Studies Department fulfilling an internship in order to gain first-hand experience working with young children. We also have a number of Teaching Assistants from the University who assist us in the classroom. We value our HDFS Interns and Teaching Assistants as part of our teaching team. Their pictures will be hung on the classroom door, accompanied by a brief biography so that faces will quickly become familiar.

### **Our Philosophy of Care and Education**

#### **Working with Toddlers and their Families:**

It is our belief that families are the experts of their own children. Because of this, we work in partnership with families so that we can provide children with a high level of quality care. We plan on working closely with your family as well as learning to read your child's cues in order to meet their individual needs during this time of transition. We are committed to providing the children with a respectful, nurturing environment that is sensitive to their many needs and promotes positive interactions between all caregivers and children. It can take approximately 6-8 weeks to fully transition as a new classroom community. During this time, we will work very closely as a team of teachers to ensure that the needs of every child and family are being met. You will receive a phone call from one of the classroom teachers welcoming you into our program and setting up a home visit before the start of the school year. During this time, we will work very closely as a team of teachers to ensure that the needs of every child and family are being met.

#### **Respect:**

Respect involves understanding that the children we work with come from different backgrounds and families, and appreciating each family's values. Respect is speaking to a child, letting him/her know what is happening while you are interacting, and

capitalizing on the time that ordinary daily tasks offer such as diaper changes, eating and napping. Respect entails allowing children to have space to explore but also means being close enough to support them as needed. Respect involves having faith in children's abilities and scaffolding their learning so that they can begin to use a higher order of thinking.

### Curriculum

CSDC strives to utilize an emergent curriculum, which provides your child with developmentally appropriate activities. This means that we will be observing your child's play and social interactions in an effort to understand their abilities and things that they might find to be a little challenging. We then analyze these observations in order to provide subsequent experiences or provocations that are meaningful, challenging, and support further development in the areas in which children have previously expressed an interest. We believe that young children learn in a social context and we will provide them with as many opportunities as possible.

### Communication

1. We will connect with you at the beginning and end of each day to share pertinent information. If you must connect with us to share information about your child, **please call the center** and ask to be transferred to the toddler classroom, as we are not able to check our emails consistently throughout the day.
2. Our **nap chart** will tell you what time your child fell asleep and what time they woke up. The chart is located outside our classroom door so you can view it at any time.
3. We also have a **diaper/toileting chart** located on the half wall in the bathroom.
4. You will receive **information about investigations and explorations** we are focusing on via periodic emails as well as ongoing documentation in the classroom.
6. You will receive a **monthly newsletter** that includes important dates and reminders. **Curriculum highlights** will be posted outside our classroom door.
7. **Assessment** is done on an ongoing basis to observe the developmental changes occurring for individual children. We use Journey Books, ASQ's, developmental narratives, family questionnaires, and parent/guardian conferences to gather evidence and we use this evidence to inform our curriculum planning. Teaching teams and parents/guardians will meet for a **formal conference** on two occasions during the year.
8. **Family questionnaires** – You should receive a family questionnaire from the office with your enrollment packet if you are new to the center as well as a questionnaire from the Toddler Classroom included in this packet. If your child is transitioning from the Infant Classroom you will only receive the questionnaire for the Toddler Classroom. This information will help us to better serve your individual child and family needs. Please return these questionnaires prior to your child's first day.

## A Glimpse of a Typical Day in the Toddler Room

### **Arrivals (Welcomings):**

The CSDC opens at 7:30 am for arrivals. Our goal is to best support each family's varying needs as you transition from home to school and to help your child have a smooth transition into their day. We will do this by inviting your child to engage in an activity once we have said goodbye to you. Some of the expectations we have of parents and guardians during arrival time include:

- Holding hands with your child in the hallway. Your child must be within arm's length of you.
- Physically walking your child into the classroom and verbally checking in with a classroom teacher so we know that they are now in our care.
- Washing hands with your child in the classroom sink.
- Getting your child ready for the day upon arrival. This means bringing them to the bathroom if they are in underwear or in need of a diaper change, applying sunscreen if dropping your child off after 8:45 in warmer weather, or getting them dressed in the appropriate outside clothing if we are already on the playground (including snow gear in the winter months).
- Getting your child's belongings ready for the day. This includes removing items such as shoes, snow gear, and lunchboxes from your child's bag or backpack and placing it in a readily reachable area in your child's cubby.

Please do not leave your children unattended in linking space during drop-off. We also ask that your child does not open and close gates or doors. Thank you.

### **Free Choice:**

This is a time where children have the freedom to move about the classroom at their own pace and make independent choices about what they would like to do.

### **Snack Time:**

The center provides both a morning and afternoon snack. **Please remember that this is a snack and children should be eating breakfast before they come to school.** The snack menu can be found hanging on the wall just outside our classroom. Beginning around 8:30 am we will offer snack in the classroom. If you would like your child to be offered snack in the morning please arrive by 8:50. In the afternoon, snack is offered again beginning at 2:30 so children can eat as they are waking up after their nap.

We strive to offer a variety of healthy foods throughout the week. We will use this time to introduce new foods and create experiences that scaffold children's growing independence.

### **Outside time:**

We give outside time the same importance as any other time in our day. We see the outdoors as an extension of our classroom and therefore an opportunity for continued learning. We will go outside each and every day, so please come prepared with

appropriate outdoor gear for the current season. Our outdoor areas consist of our playground, grassy area, deck, garden, nature trail, and our Classroom in the Woods.

### **Community Room (Large Room):**

When the weather is poor and/or the focus is on large motor movement activities, children have the opportunity to engage in activities in this space.

### **Circle Time:**

Circle Time gives us the opportunity to come together as a whole group to read books, sing songs, and do group activities related to our curriculum and investigations. As the year progresses, this gives us the opportunity to work towards involving children in asking and answering questions, making predictions, taking a guess, and brainstorming about various activities. Circle time leads us into our classroom investigations.

### **Classroom Investigations and Explorations:**

This time of day offers a variety of activities for the children to participate in. Some activities take place with a teacher while others are more independent. Teachers may break off into smaller groups during this time, taking a few children out of the room to engage in an exploration. During this time we will focus on our intended curriculum, follow any emergent investigations that we have observed and offer activities that challenge children in all areas of development. This is also a time where our interns may be working with small groups of students on explorations/investigations.

### **Lunch:**

Families will provide their child with a lunch each day. Lunch boxes are kept in your child's cubby. Please include an **icepack** in their lunch box to keep items cold. If you have an item that needs to be heated, please place it in the refrigerator located in the toddler classroom. Items to be heated must be sent in a **glass** microwavable container with both the **lid and container labeled** with your child's name. The date needs to be included on the lid as well. Also, please refrain from sending in plastic bags as children will be assisting with both unpacking and packing up their lunch. **All** food items need to be labeled with your child's name to avoid confusion about whose food it is.

Children will help to unpack their lunch onto plates and bowls if needed, which we provide along with bibs, cups, forks, and spoons. **Please send in foods ready to eat, such as peeled fruits if your child prefers, cut pasta so your child can manage it with a fork, and meat that is cut in bite size pieces.** All leftovers are sent home so you know the eating habits of your child. Teachers always sit and converse with the children and sometimes eat their lunches with the children, creating a time of community.

State licensing and NAEYC guidelines prevents us from serving particular foods that may cause a choking hazards to any child under the **age of four**. The foods children in the toddler classroom may **NOT** have include:

- Whole or rounds of hot dogs or other cylindrical foods (cheese sticks that aren't split down the middle)

- Whole grapes or any round firm foods (ie: tomatoes). Please cut in half lengthwise.
- Hard candy
- Raw carrot chunks or rounds (raw carrots must be shaved very thin or served "matchstick" style)
- Raw pea pods
- Pretzels
- Popcorn
- Meat larger than can be swallowed whole
- Chips (potato, tortilla, etc.)
- Marshmallows
- Seeds
- Raw celery
- And any other foods that may cause a choking hazard.

### **CSDC is a Nut-Restricted Environment**

We do not allow the serving of tree nut or peanut products but cannot guarantee their exclusion. In accordance with our nut policy, we ask that **you not send food containing any nut or peanuts (This includes the nut product, pastes, flours or oils)**. If foods containing nuts are sent in, we will be unable to serve them to your child. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

### **Food Allergies:**

It is our policy to support children and families who are affected by food allergies. Please let the toddler teachers know if your child has a food allergy so that we can develop a plan to assist them. We ask that children have been offered a particular food at least two times at home prior to it being sent to school due to the risk of food allergies. If your child has a diagnosed allergy, please fill out an Emergency Health Care Plan from the office prior to their first day of school (this will involve communicating with your child's allergist and completing the form). This will be posted in our classroom and in the kitchen. If your child has a food intolerance please fill out the Food Intolerance form which will also be posted. Each year we take into consideration the food allergies in our classroom and make any necessary adjustments to keep all children safe.

### **Napping:**

Naptime takes place from 12:15-2:45 pm. Children sleep in the linking space on mats and are provided with both sheets and blankets. We have a wave machine and music playing during naptime. Teachers sit with the children and help them to fall asleep using a method that meets their individual needs. *In keeping with the NH State Licensing Laws, we will not be waking children up before the rest time period is over.*

When children wake up, a teacher is available to transition children into the classroom in a way that meets their individual needs.

### **Departures (Reunions):**

When you arrive to pick up your child, a teacher will check in with you to share how your child's day was. The CSDC closes at 5:30 p.m. We ask that all families arrive at the

Center no later than **5:20 p.m.** to pick up their child(ren) in order to ensure that everyone will exit the building no later than 5:30 p.m. Families who anticipate needing more time to gather necessary items to take home, have more than one child at the center, need/want talk to teachers, or look at items in the classroom, should plan for an earlier arrival at the end of the day so they are able to leave the building by 5:30 p.m.

Transitions can be challenging for young children, not only into school at the beginning of the day, but at the end of the day as well. Here are some tips regarding the language and strategies you may use with your child to get them to leave in a timely manner.

- Say, "It's time to go home," or, "It's time to leave," instead of asking, "Are you ready to go home?" This may prompt a "no" answer from your child.
- Gather items needed to go home before getting your child in order to shorten the transition process.
- Encourage your child to ask you whether there is time to play for a few more minutes, or if it is time to go home right away. Let your child know that sometimes the answer may be yes, but sometimes the answer may be no.
- Wait until your child is in their car seat to offer a snack or drink. This may provide some incentive in moving along the departure process.

If someone else is picking up your child on any given day:

- Please notify a classroom teacher in advance.
- They must be on the emergency pick-up list. You can update this list in the office and classroom teachers will receive a new copy.
- Please let friends and family know that we will ask for photo identification.
- You can leave a car seat in the office where you can store it for the day. Please label your car seat.

### **Other Important Pieces of Information**

#### **Diapers:**

The center provides disposable diapers for the children, sizes 1-7. Children are checked approximately every 2 hours and changed on an as needed basis. We ask that you supply topical diaper rash creams or ointment if needed. Please bring them in **unopened, labeled with your child's name, and ensure that the expiration date is visible** (if the tube of diaper cream comes in a box, the expiration date may be on the box instead of on the tube). You will also need to fill out a permission form for topical medication before we can apply the cream.

#### **Toileting:**

Many children begin toilet-learning in the toddler room. Some become fully trained, especially towards the end of the year. We work very closely with families to figure out whether or not their child is ready to begin the process and we also look for signs such as asking to have their wet or soiled diaper changed. We also offer each child the opportunity to sit on the toilet during each diaper change in order for them to become more comfortable. As the time approaches, we will provide you with our letter about toilet-learning in the toddler room.

**Extra change of clothes:**

Please keep **two or three** complete sets of weather appropriate clothes here at school in a backpack or cloth bag that will hang in your child’s cubby and check it periodically if it needs to be replenished. **Please label all clothing and footwear with your child’s initials.**

**Footwear:**

Children need shoes that will support the variety of activities that they will encounter throughout the day. This could include sneakers, closed-toe sandals with a heel strap, puddle boots, and a pair of slippers with a rubber sole or indoor shoes for inside wear on wet or muddy days.

**Connecting Home and School**

**Family Photos:**

In an effort to bring the two worlds of your child together, we display a family photo in a 5x7 frame hanging on a classroom wall. You could either send this photo electronically or print a 5x7 for us. This photo would represent whatever family means to you. We would love to have these hanging on the wall before your child’s first day of school.

**Toys from home:**

We feel that our school has a wide variety of toys and materials to offer the children throughout the day. If there is a special area of interest in the classroom, we can provide additional materials to meet the needs of the children. **Therefore, our Center policy is that toys from home remain at home.** Toddlers can understandably be very attached to toys from home as well, which would be challenging in the classroom. If you have books or other materials that will assist us in an investigation that we are working on, we would love for you to share your supplies and knowledge. In this way we can bring home and school together through a common interest or topic. If you have any questions or need clarification, please come and talk to us.

We hope that this information has helped you to learn all about the Toddler program at CSDC. We can discuss this and any other information during our home visit. We are excited to have you as a part of our CSDC family!

**Toddler Room Daily Schedule**

<b>7:30</b>	<b>The center opens</b>
7:30 – 9:15	Arrival and free choice activities
8:30 – 9:00	Wash hands, snack
9:15 - 9:30	Clean up and Transition Activity



9:30 – 10:30	Outdoor exploration and playground time
10:30-10:45	Circle Time (books, singing, dancing)
10:45– 11:30	Investigations and explorations
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch
12:00 – 12:15	Lunch, clean-up, story-time
12:15 – 2:45	Nap (music & wave machine)
2:00 – 3:15	Wake up/ free choice/ snack
3:15 – 3:30	Clean-up and Transition Activity
3:30 – 5:15	Outdoor time/ large room/ linking space/activities
<b>5:20</b>	<b>Final pick-up time</b>
<b>5:30</b>	<b>The center closes</b>

The above schedule gives you an idea of a typical day in the toddler classroom. Our schedule is very flexible and will change to meet the needs of the children in the classroom. Our schedule will slightly change throughout the year due to the time of year, the weather and the developmental needs of the children. As the children grow and develop, so will the classroom schedule and curriculum.

## **Toddler Classroom 2018-2019**

### **Vision Statement**

All children have the right to:

- A safe and nurturing environment.
- Develop caring and trusting relationships with teachers.
- Build a respectful community that encompasses their families, peers, and teachers.
- Curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, child-initiated, and emergent.
- Engage in a routine that is predictable, consistent, and flexible.
- Participate in opportunities that allow them to explore freely.

### **Mission Statement**

As teachers in the Toddler Room, our mission is to create an environment where children and families feel safe, secure, represented, and respected. Through careful observation, we develop an emergent curriculum that supports children's capabilities and autonomy to help them reach their full potential.

### **Core Values and Beliefs**

- **Autonomy and Capability** – recognizing children's growing autonomy and capabilities by offering opportunities for them to build upon them; for example, eventually offering ceramic plates for meal times, placing materials on shelves within children's reach, and not putting children in positions they can't get into themselves (i.e: not placing them on a tall stump they can't climb onto themselves).
- **Communication** – children communicate their thoughts, ideas, wants, and needs

through various methods, which include tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, signing, and verbal language. In order to give every child a voice, regardless of their verbal abilities, we support children to begin to interpret and recognize these various methods of communication.

- **Conflict Resolution** – taking the time to assess the situation and listen to all sides while allowing children to work through conflict. We encourage children to use language that they know, see things from another child's perspective, and to develop solutions to the conflict that addresses all children's needs.
- **Emotions** – children recognizing their emotions as well as those of their peers. Teachers support this by introducing vocabulary that encompasses a variety of feelings (excited, frustrated, scared, silly, jealous, etc.).
- **Problem Solving** – encouraging children to develop strategies and skills to accomplish tasks and come to conclusions with the support of a teacher if needed.
- **Wait Time** - giving children the time and opportunity to freely explore, experiment, and make discoveries in order to come to their own realizations and conclusions about the world around them.