



University of New Hampshire
Child Study & Development Center

CSDC Family Handbook

Revised:
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Dear CSDC Family,

Welcome to our community! We hope that this will be the beginning of a significant and supportive relationship between your family and the staff at the CSDC. This handbook contains information regarding policies and we ask that you refer to the booklet as needed. Many policies have been developed in collaboration with families, while others are required by our national accreditation and state licensing.

In addition, your child's classroom teaching team will provide you with a Family Packet that will give you more specific information regarding the program, schedule, and culture of the classroom. Please do not hesitate to contact your teachers or the office if you have any questions about the policies or would like to offer feedback or suggestions.

The CSDC has an "open door policy" for our families; we encourage you to visit at any time to observe or participate in the program. Your teachers can provide you with the daily schedule including nap times. As a University Laboratory School, our teachers are used to being observed by hundreds of visitors and UNH students every year! Each classroom is equipped with an observation booth that you are welcome to use. If your child is experiencing transition difficulties or you would like to become more involved in the curriculum, please make sure to talk with one of the teachers in advance. Your teachers are happy to organize a time to meet when they are not in the classroom.

We also have an open door policy with regard to family feedback of our programs. Each spring you will have the opportunity to complete a Family Survey and our Family Action Board (FAB) meets monthly during the academic year. You are welcome to join FAB as a classroom representative or to simply attend a meeting. Throughout the year, keep your eyes open for a variety of events planned for you, including center-wide events such as Harvest Festival. We value your participation at the CSDC and recognize that our work can only be effective if we establish a trusting and respectful relationship with you – your child's first and most important teacher!

The CSDC has a long history in early education at UNH that began in 1929 and has a national reputation for innovation and quality (see <https://chhs.unh.edu/child-study-development-center>). As an academic program engaged in teacher education, research, and outreach, we receive support from the College of Health and Human Services to create an excellent and inclusive program for our children.

Once again, welcome to the CSDC adventure and do not hesitate to send us an email or visit us in the office.

Warm regards,

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CSDC History and Missions

A Brief History

The history of the CSDC mirrors many of the significant shifts in the broader society, including changing gender roles, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and the potential of cultural pluralism and inclusion. More specifically, our center has often ridden the edge of the wave of innovations in early childhood education. In lieu of the more detailed photographic record and identity timeline displayed in our Community Room, we have included a much briefer history of the CSDC below.

In January 1929, the Home Economics Department collaborated with the Durham Kindergarten Association to provide a laboratory for child development classes. Children from the private nursery school kindergarten attended the preschool. The University furnished the building, heat, light, maintenance, and the supervisor for the students taking the courses. In order to have the school near enough for university students to use, the program was set up in the location in what was called the “Practice House”.

In 1937, due to financial and administrative needs, the use of the Practice House as a nursery school was discontinued and the building was converted into Craft Cottage. Weaving and other crafts, which had been a part of Home Economics, were transferred to the newly created Department of the Arts. In order that some work with children could be continued, one room in the new home management building, the Elizabeth DeMeritt House, was used to maintain a nursery school for six children.

In 1947, the small Home Economics Nursery School merged with the mother-run G.I. (Government Issued) Nursery in the College Road Apartments. In 1950, the Nursery School moved back to the Craft Cottage. There was one morning and one afternoon program for preschoolers. The student teachers' primary role then was to observe through screened observation booths. A typical session included rest time on rugs, juice, and story time. At that time there were only two courses taught in Child Development.

Shortly before 1980 a new program for toddlers was started, and in 1983 permanent positions with benefits were approved for two teachers. After years of discussion and development, the current facility was constructed in 1988, and full-day programs were initiated to offer year-round services to children six weeks to five years of age. The existing nursery school programs also moved to the new facility, located at O'Kane Farm. In 1993 a full day kindergarten was added as a result of family interest. This specific program ran successfully until full day Kindergarten became a reality for most families, ending in 2019. In August 2021, the Nursery program changed names to Multi-Age Preschool (MAP) to reflect the structural changes of the part time program. The Child Study and Development Center (CSDC) is licensed by the State of NH and has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) since 1999. In 2008 the center celebrated the opening of our unique natural playground and the completion of our “Looking In, Looking Out” community mural.

The CSDC philosophy and pedagogical approach is rooted in the traditions of constructivist theory and practice. Since the early 1990s our center has been inspired by the ideas of early educators in Reggio Emilia, Italy, that emphasize the social construction of knowledge, the inquiry process of long term investigations by learners, the role of symbolic languages in developing understanding,

and the importance of reflecting family and culture in our environments. The children's program is built upon the belief that children learn best when provided rich experiences that encourage collaborative inquiry and study of the world in which they live. Diverse materials and media are provided to support the many ways children represent knowledge. Taking an emergent/responsive curriculum approach, teachers act as learning partners and modify their practice in response to children's questions, theories, and misconceptions.

Today, a team of teachers and staff, supported by student interns and part-time teaching assistants, provide quality care and education to approximately 100 children between the ages of six weeks and six years. The CSDC offers a variety of programs for campus and community families in a single location, and provides a complete child development laboratory for training, research, and community engagement. Currently, more than 120 college students enrolled in the Child Development Option (including the Birth - Grade 3 Teacher Preparation program) of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies complete a minimum of two semesters of fieldwork at the CSDC. Faculty and students from numerous university colleges and departments visit our laboratory school each year for the purposes of their own professional development, child study, and research.

Mission Statements

Early Education Mission

We design and provide developmentally and culturally appropriate programs for young children that promote development, support family partnership, and are reflective of our community. An integral component of our curriculum is that children and teachers construct the content of the curriculum and the processes for learning through collaborative inquiry. We actively engage in efforts to create a diverse and inclusive community of learners.

Teacher Education Mission

We provide UNH students with excellent teacher training in early childhood education that parallels our work with children and families. In addition, we offer students and educators opportunities to learn about child and family development in a naturalistic setting. Students enrolled in Human Development and Family Studies courses at UNH use the Center as a laboratory for experiential teaching and learning, and documentation of those experiences. Students from other disciplines, including education, psychology, occupational therapy, and communication sciences and disorders, also use the center as a laboratory for the study of children.

Research and Engagement Mission

The CSDC engages directly in action research that supports our work with children. We provide the UNH community with access to a relevant research site and engage the broader professional community in learning about innovative early childhood practices. The six classrooms in the center are equipped with observation booths that are used by college students, faculty, families, and visitors. These booths provide researchers with the opportunity to observe children in a natural context. Research projects have ranged from the effects of infant child care on attachment, to the development of emergent literacy. All research projects must be approved by the UNH Institutional Review Board and by the Executive Director. The center hosts conferences and tours by educators from across the country and internationally.

Diversity Mission

The CSDC community is committed to valuing individual differences and actively including children and families with a wide variety of racial, ethnic, family, religious, economic, and cultural orientations, as well as children with a range of special needs and linguistic backgrounds. The following mission statement was adopted by the CSDC staff in 2005 to guide future initiatives:

“Lack of the free and equitable intercourse which springs from a variety of shared interests makes intellectual stimulation unbalanced. Diversity of stimulation means novelty, and novelty means challenge to thought.” - John Dewey, 1916

We believe that human diversity is integral to the care and education of young children and to all those who touch their lives. Diversity at the University of New Hampshire can be defined as “a fully inclusive campus community that is enriched by persons of different races, genders, ethnicities, nationalities, economic backgrounds, ages, abilities, sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, and religious beliefs.” Our goal is to promote awareness and acceptance, affirm equity, and take an active stance against bias in our community.

We strive to respect and value the differences in each child and family in our community through all that we do. We value the development of strong relationships with families and colleagues in order to better understand how we can respond to cultural and historical differences in experiences, values, and practices. We offer an environment that welcomes and celebrates the sharing of family history and culture in the classroom in meaningful ways. In our curriculum we are intentional in providing children with opportunities to explore similarities and variation, and we are responsive to the questions that emerge.

We support children in being active participants in their world by connecting them to their community in ways that foster an understanding of diversity and an ability to effect change. We are committed to an open and ongoing dialogue among colleagues, families, and the students we mentor, seeking insight into how we contribute to social bias and the process of change. As adults we strive to be models of active participation in our field by speaking out against bias and seeking equity.

Curriculum and Assessment

Our Vision and Goals for Children

We are committed to supporting each child at CSDC to:

- Develop curiosity, a sense of wonder, and a life-long love of learning;
- Be an effective communicator through language, literacy, and diverse forms of representation;
- Solve meaningful and challenging problems;
- Have a positive sense of self-identity and an understanding of diversity in the world;
- Be a respectful friend, community-member, and citizen.

Our Vision and Goals for Families

In developing a partnership with families, we strive to:

- Ensure families feel welcomed and included as valued members of the CSDC community;
- Advocate for the best interests of all children and the CSDC community as a whole as articulated in our code of ethical conduct;
- Build trusting relationships that respect multiple perspectives, develop open and honest communication, and seek common ground;
- Involve families in understanding the mission, values and philosophy that guides our work with children;
- Invite families to participate in the curriculum and center activities in meaningful ways by sharing their resources, ideas, knowledge, and culture.

Philosophy

The CSDC philosophy and pedagogical approach is rooted in constructivist theory and practice. Since the early 1990s our center has been inspired by the ideas of early educators in *Reggio Emilia*, Italy, that emphasize the social construction of knowledge, the inquiry process of long term investigations by learners, the role of the 100 languages of children- symbolic languages children use in developing understanding, and the importance of reflecting family and culture in our environments.

The children's program is built upon the belief that children learn best when provided rich experiences that encourage collaborative inquiry and study of the world in which they live. Our teachers seek to create a learning context that is relevant and meaningful to the lives of the children in the classroom. Diverse materials and media are provided to them to support the many ways children represent knowledge.

Our primary goal is to create a pedagogy of collaborative inquiry – one in which teachers, children, and families construct knowledge in partnership as processes of learning are developed that support inquiry (e.g. resourcefulness, critical thinking, problem-solving, autonomy, and deliberate attention). Consequently, we strive to create group experiences in which children will develop relationships with people, materials, and space from which discoveries can be made. It is the responsibility of teachers to purposefully create and invoke rich experiences for child discovery and to extend experiences that occur at home, school, and the greater community. Teachers act as learning partners and modify their practice in response to children's questions, theories, and misconceptions through an emergent approach.

Curriculum Investigations

Through an emergent, negotiated curriculum we explore, observe, and converse with children about issues and questions that engage their interest and curiosity. Investigations consist of in-depth study and discoveries about the many components of a particular topic or idea a child or children want to pursue. In addition, many of the topics emerge (with the support of teachers) from the cultural, environmental, social and historical setting that makes CSDC unique. Within this inquiry-based curriculum, a variety of media (wire, paint, collage, drawing, writing, etc.) are used to further the process of learning in all areas of curriculum and development. These areas are intertwined as teachers and children travel together along this exciting road of learning. Children's autonomy is supported and encouraged, their individual strengths fostered and celebrated, and the need for nurturance and guidance always respected. Investigations work is an integral part of all the programs from infancy through preschool.

Curriculum Documentation

The curriculum documentation process at CSDC involves an ongoing cycle of teachers asking questions, collecting data (e.g. photos, video, anecdotes, conversations), analyzing, developing curriculum and sharing what they uncover with others. Drawing on inspirations from early educators in Reggio Emilia, Italy, we use documentation as a tool to acknowledge, respect and value the capabilities, intentions and development of children. Documentation displays present children's work and development in a thoughtful, organized, manner with the children and their work as the focal point. Displaying the documentation throughout the school helps to educate visitors and families about what we do and about the capabilities of young children.

Reflecting Culture and Respecting Diversity

In keeping with the CSDC Diversity Mission we strive to ensure that our programs and teaching practices are both anti-bias and culturally relevant. Teachers are expected to review their classroom environments and curriculum to ensure that materials and activities are intentional in

promoting a community that is diverse and inclusive. In particular, teachers should ensure that the culture and languages of every family in their classroom is authentically represented in the available children's books and other media.

Anti-bias practices focus on supporting children to answer their questions about similarity and difference, develop tools for identifying and combating bias, and engaging children in social activism in developmentally appropriate ways in the classroom and community. In all classrooms, we reflect family and cultural values and practices in our programs and to dialogue respectfully with families. When there are differences in the CSDC philosophy and family beliefs, we seek to engage in dialogue to find common ground and appropriate strategies to employ. Please talk with the Executive Director or Assistant Director if you need further information.

Family Language Goals and Translation

Many languages other than English are spoken in the homes of CSDC families. The CSDC Diversity Mission guides us to be inclusive and supportive in assisting families to maintain language traditions. We also recognize that language is an integral element of culture and identity. In pursuing this goal we consider (1) the family's goals regarding maintaining the home language and learning English, and (2) best practice for ensuring that all families are able to participate fully in CSDC programs through accessible communication tools.

CSDC teachers are encouraged to dialogue with families regarding their goals and our willingness to support the use of languages other than English. We also want to know whether a family will need access to a translator for meetings or translation of key CSDC documents. The UNH language departments have assisted in the past by providing students who can participate in the classroom or provide translation services for our work with families.

The Role of External Standards

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) advises that in order to be effective, early learning standards need to address all areas of a child's development, recognize the importance of individual differences in ability and interests, and be responsive to socio-cultural background.

At the CSDC we use an emergent, negotiated curriculum model in which teachers develop goals for children based on what they have learned about the specific children in the classroom, their families and cultures, as well as the unique qualities and ecology of the surrounding community. In this model the curriculum includes initial core values, broad goals and intentions for children's learning, but it is not pre-determined by external standards. Instead, teachers work actively to uncover, document, and respond to children's ideas, questions and problems, and then develop curriculum in response.

At the CSDC we are also committed to supporting children in making a smooth transition to public school. We believe that we do this best by providing children with a broad-based and meaningful education, while also helping the children to be familiar with and competent in the expectations they will encounter in school settings. CSDC teachers have a working knowledge of the appropriate learning standards for the age and developmental level of children in their classroom and for the following developmental level. This includes the *NH Early Learning Standards*. In addition, CSDC teachers draw on and reference other published developmental guidelines such as the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* and *Teaching Strategies Gold* tool

Rather than prescribing the content and methods of teaching at CSDC, external frameworks are used by teachers as a tool for informing our choices about curriculum direction and as an important guide in assessment of children's learning. For instance, teachers might identify through their observations that the preschoolers are engaged in learning more about how light creates shadows on the playground. Teachers would discuss what questions children have about light and develop experiences that support children to investigate these questions. As part of this planning process, teachers would also identify appropriate learning goals based on their knowledge of children's development and a review of external standards. For instance, a teacher might decide to ensure that the activities include opportunities for children to develop the ability to share ideas and to acquire an understanding of specific mathematical concepts.

Research and experience confirm that the course of learning and development varies greatly during the early years and that an effective model of early education has its foundation in an in-depth knowledge of the unique qualities of every child in the classroom.

Assessment

Our philosophy of Assessment

At the CSDC, assessment is the process of gathering evidence about children's learning and development that is used to guide planning and instruction. Children's assessment is an on-going process. Teachers are expected to consistently monitor, observe, and reflect on children's development within their program. Developing strategies for documenting and communicating this information in a professional and thoughtful way to families, students, and other professionals must be a priority. When issues regarding a child's development are a concern to teachers, they should seek the input of the Executive Director or Assistant Director. Families are considered partners in the decision-making process.

What we do

Collaboration in the Assessment Process

The assessment of each child at CSDC is a collaborative process involving the teaching team and families, with support when requested, from the Executive Director and/or Assistant Director. This process ensures that interpretations and decisions are based on multiple professional perspectives. Teaching teams are expected to communicate regularly about their assessments of each child, including taking the time to discuss and interpret findings. Teams should come to an agreement regarding how and when to initiate a dialogue with families regarding areas of concern for their child. While an individual teacher often takes the lead in authoring particular developmental milestones reached through developmental assessment reports (e.g. narrative) or leading a family conference, all team members should provide input into the assessment and writing process, including editing and approval of a final document.

a) At the beginning of the school year

Teachers gather information about children to facilitate transition:

- Meetings with CSDC teachers from the previous year are conducted prior to the beginning of the school year (typically in early August) to exchange relevant information that might aid children's classroom transition.
- Classroom visits with an initial family intake questionnaire to gather information about the child and their family are offered. The responses provide teachers with important information and insights regarding individual children and their prior experiences, family culture, and learning goals, and are used to guide the planning and implementation of the curriculum.
- Procedures and routines established for children with identified special needs (based on information obtained from families/teachers) are discussed prior to enrollment.

b) Ongoing assessment of children's development

- As the weeks progress, teachers observe and document children's development as they engage in interactions with their peers and with materials, as well as learn more about family culture.
- Teachers analyze these artifacts to identify children's interests, gain insights into their thinking, and plan the curriculum accordingly to extend children's learning.

Assessment Terms and Tools at CSDC

How do we assess children's development and learning?

Initial Family Intake Questionnaire:

CSDC families are asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning of each year. The responses provide teachers with important information and insights regarding individual children and their prior experiences, family culture, and learning goals.

Observation and Check-lists:

Skillful, systematic observation of children engaged in play and activity on a daily basis throughout the year is central to our work at CSDC. Observations are often intended to identify children's questions and theories as the basis for developing curriculum investigations. Teachers record anecdotal observations of significant interactions and then transfer them to their chosen system of organization. Observation checklists, arranged according to typical developmental pathways, are sometimes used as a short-hand way to collect specific developmental information regarding children.

Documentation Cycle: Evidence of Learning

We collect a variety of documentation materials that show evidence of children's learning. These materials include selected digital photos and video, children's artifacts and representations (e.g. drawings), and transcriptions of key conversations. Often the focus is on collaborative efforts between children that provide us with insight into designing curriculum that is relevant to the children. Documentation is more than collecting "artifacts," it includes careful analysis by the teachers in order to figure out children's questions, strengths, and challenges that are addressed in curriculum planning. Documentation (e.g. photos) is regularly shared with children to encourage self-reflection. Teachers also create displays and binders for families, students and other visitors to review.

Home- School Anecdotal Communications

All of the classrooms within the CSDC send families regular documentation (photos and/or observation captions) by email of anecdotes during the day that reflect significant individual developmental growth or aspects of their child's engagement in the program. Families are encouraged to engage in a conversation by offering their reflections and observations.

Documentation of Children's Growth and Development:

Our full-time programs use a variety of methods to collect information regarding children's development across the year. Each method includes representative samples of children's work and photographic documentation of learning collected regularly throughout the year. This documentation supports curriculum development and can become the basis for communicating with families through conferences and displays.

Classroom Teaching Team Meetings:

Classroom teachers discuss and analyze their ongoing documentation of children's learning and plan future curriculum on a daily basis. Teachers often decide on what area of development will be the focus of observation and documentation for the coming week.

Developmental Narrative Assessment:

Based on the various observations and/or assessments collected during the year, CSDC teachers write developmental narratives regarding each child's overall development at two points during the year. Reports are the end-result of consultation between the teaching team. The reports are structured to provide information on core areas of development and learning and are aligned with the NH Early Learning Standards. These reports, intended to offer a detailed story about the child, form the basis for further discussion and sharing of information with families and are provided to transfer schools and intervention teams as requested.

Conferences:

Each teaching team meets with families on two occasions during the year to discuss assessments of their child's learning and development and to share goals as well as hopes and dreams. Documentation and/or written developmental narrative reports are often shared at these meetings in order to structure discussion. These meetings are an opportunity to share assessments verbally and to discuss the child's portfolio and then the written developmental report is finalized after the meeting.

Developmental Screenings:

All classrooms use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ and ASQ-SE) which is a standardized developmental screening based on family observations at home.

Diagnostic Testing:

Based on their ongoing informal assessments, CSDC teachers, in collaboration with families, may identify the need for more formal (standardized/valid) assessments and testing. CSDC teachers never diagnose a developmental delay or concern, but are trained in their degree program to identify indicators of developmental concerns and variations from typical development. Currently, with permission from families, appropriate intervention specialists from the school district or other agencies (including through our collaboration with New England Pediatric Services "NEPS") conduct an initial screening and, if indicated, proceed with further assessments and standardized testing (most often involving observation of children performing specific tasks). Results are used in conjunction with CSDC teacher and family assessments when making decisions.

Building an Inclusive Center: Children with Special Needs

Community, Equity and Diversity

We are committed to supporting and sustaining an educational community that is inclusive, diverse and equitable. The values of diversity, inclusion and equity are inextricably linked to our mission of teaching and research excellence, and we embrace these values as being critical to development, learning, and success. We expect nothing less than an accessible, multicultural community in which civility and respect are fostered, and discrimination and harassment are not tolerated.

The CSDC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, gender identity or expression, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, or any other considerations made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws.

Compliance with ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and Rehabilitation Act, Section 504

Programs such as the CSDC must comply with the ADAAA and Rehabilitation Act, Section 504. The law covers children with disabilities seeking reasonable accommodations in a child care setting, as well the parents/guardians served, as determined by their known or identified physical, mental

or learning disability. Appropriate accommodations are provided based on the disability, its impact, and an assessment of the essential elements of the center. The CSDC will conduct an individualized assessment of a child and family need to identify reasonable accommodations; safely integrate the child into the program given each child's capabilities; and allow the family full access to and participation in our programs to the extent feasible. A determination is made on a case-by-case basis through review of relevant documentation, an interactive process with the parents/guardians and any medical professionals involved with the child, and an assessment of the essential elements of the center's program/activity. Adjustments to policies and procedures may be reasonable accommodations, but the CSDC will not allow a child's participation in CSDC activities where it would pose a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the child or others at the center that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.

Accommodations

The Executive Director and/or Assistant Director will work with the family and teaching staff to accommodate the child. The administration team has several important roles to ensure ADA or Section 504 compliance and appropriate implementation of accommodations:

- Collaborating with the University of New Hampshire (UNH) ADA Coordinator to document the disability and accommodation needs. All accommodations for a documented disability must be reviewed by the UNH ADA Coordinator and the Executive Director and/or Assistant Director.
- Supporting the teaching staff and families to access local and UNH resources.
- Establishing center guidance related to inclusion, such as transitions and assessment (including appropriateness of any screening tools, such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire® [ASQ]).
- Maintaining secure documentation regarding children with disabilities at CSDC. Copies or originals of all appropriate child records, including assessment and family communications, should reside in a child's separate folder kept in a locked cabinet in the administration's office (or if retained electronically, in a secure environment on UNH servers).
- Ensuring that information is appropriately provided to external agencies when referrals are made by families.
- Developing relationships with county agencies and school districts that may be serving CSDC children with disabilities.
- Facilitating a committee created for the support of children with disabilities within the CSDC program to assist with policies, procedures, and professional development.
- Coordination of external consultants (as relevant)

When accommodations rise to the level of modifying normal policies, practices or procedures the ADA Coordinator is involved in discussions with the administrative team regarding whether the CSDC can meet the needs of the child, with regard to social and physical curriculum; general programming; and staffing (e.g. aides, interns, etc.), with the goals of identifying reasonable accommodations; safely integrating the child into the program given each child's capabilities; and allowing the family full access to and participation in our programs to the extent feasible. Such examples include, but are not limited to:

- The accommodation cannot be made without additional staffing;
- Training is helpful or necessary to implement the accommodation;
- The accommodation may necessitate changes in policies, practices, or procedures;
- Provision of auxiliary aids and services is needed to ensure effective communication; or
- Removal of physical barriers in existing program facilities is suggested.

The role of the classroom teacher includes observation, documentation, researching, and educating oneself regarding strategies to assist and collaborate with the child, families, and all members of the interdisciplinary team (i.e., Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy). In this

collaborative model the teacher does not relinquish responsibility to a specialist but works with them to ensure an inclusive program for all children. When therapies occur within the CSDC building, follow up and consistent communication are used between therapists and classroom teachers. These methods include daily summary notes and sharing strategies for the child's success when in the whole group classroom.

If a child has an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) through an area agency or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) through their local school district, the Assistant Director and/or Executive Director will be the point of contact for the IFSP team and school district IEP team. CSDC employees are not a part of the formal IFSP or IEP team, however, classroom teachers may be available to support families in this process by attending meetings that may occur to provide input about how the child's progress at the CSDC.

Classroom teachers should consult with the center's administration team if they observe behaviors that may be indicators of a potential developmental delay, disability, or mental health issue, or if these observations are initiated by the parent/guardians. The administration team may serve as the point of contact for families to address any such indicators and will reach out to the UNH ADA Coordinator when necessary and appropriate to address any accommodation requests.

The CSDC may be able to access limited resources and specialists within the UNH system and as provided by agencies and school districts, including Occupational Therapists and Language Specialists. These specialists consult with classroom teachers on a variety of topics related to successful teaching within an inclusive environment. With permission from their families, a child may receive a formal evaluation through a specialist. Any therapy sessions recommended through the evaluation are paid for by families privately or through their insurance.

The Referral Process

The utilization and success of the referral process is dependent on the following:

- A trusting relationship between families and CSDC staff.
- Acknowledgement by families that teachers know their children very well and use careful judgment when making a request for a referral.
- Acknowledgement by teachers that families use the best judgment possible when making decisions about whether to pursue the referral process.

When teachers notice children demonstrating a potential developmental delay, disability, or mental health issue, they consult with the center's administration team during the initial steps of identification. The Assistant Director and/or the Executive Director will regularly consult with the teachers and work closely with families throughout the process.

The teaching team will discuss initial observations and decide whether further observations are needed and if any concern should be raised with the family. This might be done by asking if families have observed similar behaviors at home. The Executive Director and/or Assistant Director may also observe for these behaviors at various times at the CSDC. The teaching team uses a developmental screening or assessment that may indicate the need for intervention services. A member of the team discusses the issue with the Assistant Director and/or Executive Director, who may be asked to make further related classroom observations. Once an action plan is agreed upon, a family conference is scheduled, and the purpose is shared with the family prior to the meeting.

The classroom teachers should continue to serve as the primary contact for the family throughout the referral process. In addition, the Assistant Director and/or Executive Director will ensure that the UNH ADA Coordinator is notified prior to the CSDC communicating to a family that a referral to an

external consultant may be appropriate. The teaching team, including the Executive Director and/or the Assistant Director, then raises the concern with the family with a focus on observed behaviors. Ongoing discussions with parents/ guardians are conducted regarding any concerns and/or questions about a child's development before making a referral recommendation. The team invites families to share their observations and perspectives. All conversations and meetings with families are documented. The CSDC respects families' understanding of their child as well as the developmental continuum and seeks to provide input as well as gather feedback from families about behaviors that are observed while at CSDC.

When families disagree or refuse to engage in conversations related to their child's behaviors and their impact on the child's successful integration within the center, the UNH ADA Coordinator's office will be consulted about how to best meet the needs of the child. It is possible that the CSDC may be unable to accommodate a child without the successful collaboration of an evaluation or specialists.

A separate file is created for the child documenting any information shared, assessments, and related decisions in the referral process. These confidential files are also kept in locked cabinets in the administration's office (or if retained electronically, in a secure environment on UNH servers). Copies of all written documentation will be ready to share with referral agencies with written permission from the family via the "Permission to Release Information".

Consultants at CSDC

The CSDC draws on the expertise of external consultants in providing an excellent program for children and families. The CSDC currently has nutrition and health consultants who provide pro bono expert advice regarding relevant guidance and practice as required of our national accreditation and our goal to connect with our UNH community.

In addition, UNH and early intervention agencies often organize specialists (language therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapist, and behavior consultants) to provide regular services to children attending the CSDC as part of their classroom practice and to consult with staff and families on practices as specified by IFSP and IEP plans and observed behaviors by CSDC teachers.

CSDC teachers also draw on the expertise of a variety of state and grant supported agencies that have funding to provide additional consultancy support in early education. In addition, the CSDC contracts with private agencies as needed. For example, in 2014, the CSDC established a partnership with New England Pediatrics Services ("NEPS") to provide ongoing teacher consultancy and on-site OT and Speech assessments and services paid through family health insurance. Finally, parents/guardians may work with the CSDC to organize private specialist services for their child in the absence of assistance from the school district and other agencies. The following guidelines apply to all external consultants at the CSDC:

- The CSDC supports a collaborative relationship between teachers and consultants and expects reciprocal participation and communication (written and verbal) that supports children/families and abides with confidentiality policies.
- All consultants must sign and abide by the CSDC Confidentiality Policy.
- CSDC consultants must have the appropriate training and credentials for the services to be provided.
- UNH students completing undergraduate or graduate field work that includes working directly with children identified with disabilities will do so under the supervision of an appropriate faculty member.
- All consultants must sign-in on arrival at the office, wear a visitor's or personal name tag, and sign-out on departure.

- All children are signed out of their classrooms using a log sheet with the time they left and the time returning, along with the purpose and name of the therapist.
- All consultants must pass a criminal background check to the satisfaction of the CSDC.
- All consultants should have an orientation to relevant CSDC policies from the Assistant Director or Executive Director during their first week of service or as soon as practical.
- Any private consultant employed directly by a parent/guardian who is working with children must have a "Parental Permission for Private Intervention Services" form signed and on file by the child's family.
- Any consultant requesting access to a child's assessment, health or other personal records must have a completed "Parental Consent for Release of Records and Exchange of Information" form signed and on file.
- Specialized services are paid by the contracting family member.
- Services contracted by CSDC will require a UNH Consultant Contract and other UNH paperwork as required by Human Resources.
- Consultants at CSDC agree that all records concerning a CSDC child or family will be maintained and secured according to relevant laws.

Challenging Behaviors

CSDC teachers work proactively with children to develop a caring community in which there is respect for each other and the environment. Based on our knowledge of each child's development, we support children as they learn to regulate their emotions. We also seek to understand why the child may be behaving in a certain way as all behavior is a means of communication. Our first step in supporting children to act responsibly and to abide by reasonable limits is to provide a challenging and meaningful curriculum. When children are engaged in their environment, it decreases the likelihood of challenging behaviors. We also want children to learn how to work through conflict over ideas and actions with peers that is respectful and leads to collaboration.

When communicating with families, we encourage a reciprocal dialogue in which observations and insights are shared from home and the center. CSDC teachers communicate with a family member in-person, by e-mail, or over the telephone, as part of an ongoing commitment to building a collaborative relationship.

When limits are challenged we first engage the child (or children) in problem-solving the situation to see if they can identify the problem(s) and find a solution. If our intervention is needed, we phrase things positively, clearly, and, if needed, firmly, rather than using commands or negative phrases to redirect children. We provide some explanation as to why certain limits are being set, so the children begin to understand the reasoning. Providing a choice for children is ideal because they then feel more in control of the decision and thus take ownership of their behavior. CSDC teachers do not use formal time-outs, although children may be required to choose another activity or space in the classroom if they are experiencing difficulty in a specific area. At the CSDC we believe that physical punishment of children, along with shaming, ridiculing and teasing, is never acceptable in our programs. If serious safety risks are posed to the child having difficulty, or other children or employees in the classroom, the child may be removed to another appropriately safe space in the center. Or, should the behavior be a direct result of a disability, and an effective reasonable accommodation is identified to mitigate the safety risk, then consideration will be given to allow the child to stay in the most integrated setting.

When children have difficulty in regulating their emotions and/or solving conflicts with others, teachers will document these incidents as part of their daily teaching practice. An incident form will be used to document behaviors that result in harm to materials, equipment, or others. These incident forms help teachers to analyze whether a behavior is consistent over time and whether

they occur in a pattern of any kind. These reflections are used to identify any supports teachers may provide for the child having difficulty. When a child displays a pattern of behavior that is concerning, teachers will share with parent/guardians the observations that have been made and inquire about behaviors at home to determine context and next steps.

Incident forms will be completed for each child involved or affected by the incident. Each child's identity will remain confidential to the extent permitted by law and staff will promptly communicate with each family involved. The information shared typically includes the details of the incident itself (e.g., the time and the place, preceding and subsequent events, the specific steps taken to comfort children (if hurt), and how the situation was handled in general). Plans are developed to teach more appropriate interactions and to prevent the recurrence of the challenging behavior which are shared with families for consistency between home and the center.

If any child's behavior results in a serious safety risk to the child or others within the program, we will act quickly and decisively to resolve the situation (e.g., through closer supervision, redirection to more appropriate activities, removal from tense situations, firm and consistent limit-setting, and/or provision of alternative outlets for the expression of feelings). An action plan will be implemented by the CSDC and presented to the parent/guardian of the child. The action plan, which on a case-by-case basis may include a documented disability and reasonable accommodation will be documented in writing and address how best to keep all children and teachers safe while working toward successful regulation of emotions. The Executive Director or Assistant Director must review and approve the action plan. If the action plan does not achieve positive change and unsafe behavior has not resolved within a reasonable time despite these efforts, disenrollment may be required.

Process of Disenrollment of a Child

The CSDC has a responsibility of ensuring the health, well-being and safety of all children and employees. The CSDC appreciates and respects families as the first and most important teacher of their children. In addition, the CSDC will work closely to ensure that resources needed to provide an inclusive environment for children are offered and accessed as feasible.

The CSDC will take steps to assist a child in maintaining enrollment prior to disenrollment for behavioral incidents and/or challenging behavior. Parent/guardian notification will begin anytime a child's behavioral incidents and/or challenging behavior becomes of concern to a teacher or administrator as outlined by CSDC policy. Families will be notified verbally or in writing. The child's needs and challenges will be evaluated in the context of the CSDC's program.

If there are serious safety risks posed to other children or employees, the CSDC will work with the family as well as identified consultants and/or therapists (if any involved as outlined above) to implement strategies for each child's success. Communication between all parties becomes essential for the successful implementation of such strategies. Any prior Incident Reports will be reviewed to assist in formulating a plan and determining the feasibility of continued enrollment. These strategies will be documented in the action plan, which on a case-by-case basis, may include the documentation of the child's disability and reasonable accommodation.

A child's extreme or persistent challenging behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such behaviors include:

- The child poses a serious safety risk to him or herself or others within the program; or
- The conclusion, by medical, psychological, school district, or social service personnel working with the center or child, that continued care at the center could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of, the child; or
- Any other situation in which the accommodations needed for the child's success in the

- program conflict with the fundamental nature of our group environment, or when a different environment is in the best interest of the child or the center; or
- The child's behavior is harmful to other children in the program and an action plan and reasonable accommodation should the behavior be a direct result of a disability does not achieve positive change and harmful behavior has not resolved within a reasonable time despite these efforts.

If interventions are not successful and the challenging behavior continues, families may be asked to find a program that more closely meets their child's individualized needs and will be disenrolled from the CSDC.

Staff, Programming, and Calendar

Licensing and NAEYC Accreditation

The CSDC is licensed by the State of New Hampshire and is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC accreditation sets the standard for what it means to be a high-quality early childhood program. For more information regarding NAEYC accreditation please visit <https://www.naeyc.org/>.

Administrative Team

The CSDC Administrative Team includes the Executive Director, who is responsible for leadership of the center, the Assistant Director, who has oversight for day-to-day operations, and the Administrative Coordinator who manages the workings of the CSDC office. The Executive Director is also a faculty member in the Human Development and Family Studies department

Classroom Teams

The CSDC team includes 15 full-time permanent teachers. Teacher biographies and current teaching teams can be found at <https://chhs.unh.edu/child-study-development-center>. In addition, teachers typically provide their families with contact information for communication.

Staff Qualifications

At the CSDC, we are fortunate to have a highly qualified permanent teaching staff. All teachers hold at minimum a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, with several holding a graduate degree and state teacher credentials. All teachers meet or exceed the appropriate NH Early Childhood Credential for their position and participated in a rigorous screening and interview process before they were hired. They are also required to complete periodic health screening and FBI national criminal background checks. All our teaching staff are current in Infant & Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid, are expected to adhere to the NAEYC Code of Ethics, and participate in on-going staff professional development opportunities, such as, conferences, staff meetings and workshops. Some staff may also engage in credit bearing coursework.

Teaching Assistants and Interns

In addition to our permanent staff, the CSDC employs UNH students from fields such as Human Development and Family Studies, Psychology, and Communication Sciences to work as part-time Teaching Assistants in our programs. All Teaching Assistants meet licensing rules for qualifications, pass a federal criminal background check, are fully oriented to our policies and programs, and are engaged in CSDC activities.

The CSDC also participates in the pre-service training of UNH students in the Human Development and Family Studies Department who are seeking to work in the field of education in the future. Most students complete a practicum in the part-time MAP programs before moving on to be an intern or student-teacher in one of our full-time programs. CSDC teachers act as Cooperating Teachers and meet regularly with students to mentor and supervise their progress.

Each semester, the CSDC places interns from other departments including psychology, nutrition, and occupational therapy. These students are under the direct supervision of full-time staff.

Brief biographies of Teaching Assistants and UNH interns are posted on classroom doors or included in newsletters each semester. UNH students and Teaching Assistants sign a detailed confidentiality statement. Please don't hesitate to introduce yourself.

Classroom Descriptions and Hours of Operation

The CSDC offers early childhood programs in seven different classroom groupings for up to 102 children.

Full-Day Programs:

Infant-Toddler Program: consisting of an infant classroom (9 infants-ages 6 weeks to 18 months with 3 full-time teachers) and a toddler classroom (12 toddlers ages 18 months to 33 months with 3 full-time teachers).

Preschool Program: consisting of the Preschool 1 classroom for 3-4 year olds (15 children ages 34-47 months with 3 full-time teachers) and the Preschool 2 classroom for 4-5 year-olds (18 children ages 48 – 59 months with 3 full-time teachers).

The Infant-Toddler and Preschool programs are full-day/full-year operating from 7:30am-5:30pm, and are open to children of full-time students and graduate students, benefits-eligible staff and faculty at UNH. Community families may also access our full time programming when space is available.

Part time Multi-Age Preschool Programs (MAP):

The MAP programs offer full day, part-time programming for the UNH academic semesters with open admissions for children 2.9 (as of September 30th) to 5.0 years of age that are recruited from the community at large. MAP 2 meets two days per week from 9:00am to 4:00pm (T/TR). MAP 3 meets three days per week from 9:00am to 4:00pm (M/W/F). Each program serves 16 children with 3 full-time teachers.

Classroom Orientation and Transition

All children and families are oriented and transitioned into full-time and MAP classrooms in late August of each program year or as admitted. Prior to the school year, CSDC teachers set up classroom visits for newly enrolled families to facilitate introductions to the teachers and environment. These visits may include at least one other new family. Classrooms offer zoom and/or in person orientation to review classroom policies and procedures.

The infant and MAP classrooms practice a gradual transition process over the first week during the child's first entry into the CSDC. Please see your classroom handbook for specific transition policies. They then collaborate with adult family members during the phasing in process to help the child make a smooth transition to the new school year, while meeting the individual needs of each child and family.

Families are invited to attend an orientation with the administration team to go over CSDC program policies and procedures and to ask any questions related to the program prior to the beginning of the school year. Families sign off acknowledging they have received and reviewed the policies and procedures within the handbook.

Transition to the Next Classroom at CSDC

The majority of transitions to new classrooms occur at the end of August. If a space is to become available at a different point during the school year in our younger classrooms, teachers and administrators work together to decide if there is a child within the Center ready to move before looking at the waiting list, and then consult with the family before a final decision is reached.

Most full-time children typically spend two years in one of the following classrooms: Infants, Toddlers or Preschool I. Decisions about whether children can transition to the next classroom are based on developmental abilities, space availability, and chronological age. We strive to move children with a cohort of peers, at least one friend or more. We believe this familiarity of a peer allows children more comfort when entering a new physical environment as well as the many benefits of strong social relations.

Due to state regulations about the minimum age to begin Public School, we do not advance children into our Preschool 2 or any of the MAP classrooms if they will not be able to make the State cut off age to enter their first public school experience.

Children returning for a second year in the Preschool 2 or MAP classrooms

Typically, children at the CSDC do not spend a second year in our MAP or Preschool 2 classrooms. If the teaching team, in consultation with the parents/guardians, believes that a child at the CSDC may benefit developmentally from returning to one of these classrooms for a second year, the following procedure is followed. This procedure does not apply to children who spend a second year in the same program due to chronological age or availability of placements (usually Infant through Preschool 1 classrooms; please see the preceding policy):

- Teaching teams write a recommendation to the Executive Director by March 1st in which s/he documents specific rationale and supporting information for a child to return for a second year in the same program.
- The Executive Director considers the recommendation and makes a decision to approve/not approve within 2 weeks.
- A child can only be offered a place in the same program if there is space available after current CSDC children transitioning to the next age-group have been accommodated. Placements held for children with special needs or families on leave/sabbatical may be considered in reaching this decision. There is no guarantee of a placement even when the Executive Director approves the teacher's recommendation of a "need."

Calendar

The CSDC calendars for each of our programs are distributed at the beginning of the academic year. The MAP programs follow the UNH academic schedule in terms of holidays and other scheduled closures. A calendar of CSDC events can also be viewed at: <https://chhs.unh.edu/child-study-development-center/enrolled-families>.

During non-academic times the CSDC reduces operational hours. As a laboratory school the center relies upon college student labor to support our daily operations. When these students leave campus our core staff cannot absorb the number of hours to fully operate. As a result, the center

operates to the fullest extent possible, depending upon the time of year and the number of students available to us at that time.

Closures, Center Retreats and Planning Days

The CSDC closes for approximately 2 weeks over the winter (Dec.-Jan.) and 1 week in July to enable intensive cleaning and other facility improvements. These dates are not calculated as part of tuition.

Additionally, the CSDC is closed to children for 5 full days in August and for 3 full days in March so that teachers can participate as a team in professional development retreats. In addition, the CSDC may schedule early closures to enable staff to meet regarding classroom transitions, assessment tasks and curriculum documentation.

These dates change annually and are reflected on our program calendar.

Full and Part Time Program Curtailment Policy

The CSDC curtails operations if UNH curtails, except in circumstances where the Executive Director makes the decision because of special circumstances. The CSDC will make the decision in consultation with the UNH Emergency Management Director and will look at the local school district decisions as well as other child care programs in the area. You can find out if UNH has curtailed by calling 862-0000 or checking WMUR, which will list the CSDC once a decision has been reached by UNH.

In the event of a decision to curtail operations and cancel classes at the University, we will close and *will expect families to pick up their children no later than 30 minutes after the University closes*. Please plan accordingly, as the late policy will be in effect. As always, you need to make sure to take into account how safe you can travel.

If a decision to curtail is made prior to 7:30 a.m., we will not open that day. If there is a delayed opening at the University, we will open at the time of the delayed start (e.g. UNH delays until 9:30AM – CSDC would open at 9:30AM).

The University utilizes a mass notification system during curtailments and incidents (mobile and email notification). It is highly recommended that all staff and families sign up for UNH Emergency Alerts powered by Rave Mobile Safety: <https://www.getrave.com/login/unh>.

Arrival

While the CSDC opens full-day programs at 7:30am (when not in reduced hours) and families arrive at a time that best suits their family's schedule, CSDC teachers in our older preschool programs believe that it is important for families to make a special effort to be at the center by the first large group circle, typically around 9 am or so (please check with your teacher). These meeting times are important in building a learning community, orienting children to the plan for the day, and checking in with the group. By having all the children at the first meeting time, teachers are able to focus their energy and attention on engaging children in the various learning activities that are available for exploration.

For your child's safety, we require that you, or an authorized adult, accompany your child into the center at arrival and departure time. Please be sure that a staff member is aware of your child's arrival and departure. More detailed policies are included under the "Safety" policies in this booklet.

Late Policy

Families are considered late in the following circumstances:

Full-time: All people, including teachers should have left the building by 5:30 pm. Families who linger in the building will be considered late after this time.

Families should arrive at the Center no later than 5:20p.m. to pick up their child(ren) in order to ensure that everyone will exit the building no later than 5:30p.m. Each family code will not allow access to the building after 5:30 and at this time families will be considered late and will be assessed a late fee.

Families who anticipate needing more time to gather necessary items to take home, 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 5:30pm. Families who leave the building later than 5:30 will be considered late.

Part time MAP Program: Families with children attending the MAP program, should arrive no later 4:00PM. Families arriving after 4:00PM will be considered late. Intern post-sessions begin promptly at 4:00PM. Arriving late impacts the quality of the pre-service experience that students engage in.

Late Departure Policy: The administration and staff recognize that everyone has an occasional emergency (i.e. accident, delay due to serious inclement weather, car problems or illness). Families are requested to develop a contingency plan to address the pick-up of their children should such an emergency arise (see list of ideas below). In addition, families should call (603-862-2835) to alert the staff to such emergencies as soon as possible in the event they will be late. These calls do not remove the late policy from being in effect.

Some suggestions that have been used in the past:

- Communicate with a college student to take responsibility for your child, especially on a day when it might be extra tough for you to get here on time (must be on alternative pick up list)
- Communicate with another family member to pick up your child (must be on alternative pick up list)

1st: If a parent/guardian (or designee) is late (according to the terms above) within the same school year (defined as Aug. – July, the teacher or administrative person in the office at the end of the day will greet the family by opening the locked door and will remind the parent/guardian of the CSDC policy on late pick-up/departures and may give the parent/guardian this policy in writing. The occurrence will be documented and kept in the office. At this point, no signature is required.

2nd: If a parent/guardian (or designee) is late (according to the terms above) within the same school year, the parent/guardian will receive a late fee of \$50.00 for every 15 minutes (in the form of an invoice).

3rd: If a parent/guardian is late a third time within the same school year, the parent/guardian will receive a late fee of \$50.00 and an administrator will meet with the parent/guardian to help find solutions to barriers that exist to being on time. For any future late pickups, an administrator will meet with the parent/guardian to assign an earlier pick-up time for the remainder of the current semester. If the family does not have any additional late picks ups during this time, the original time may be reinstated with approval from the Executive Director.

**Families who continue to be late may be subject to further action, including removal from the CSDC program.

Admissions & Tuition Policies

CSDC policies for admissions and tuition can be found on our website at <https://chhs.unh.edu/child-study-development-center/admission-tuition>. Separate policies exist for the full-day (infant-preschool) and part-time MAP program. Application forms can be accessed online, completed, and emailed to csdc.info@unh.edu or mailed to the center, along with the application fee (\$15.00). The CSDC operating costs are subsidized by the UNH College of Health and Human Services because of our academic and research mission.

Claiming Tax Credit and FSA Reimbursement

You will need our tax ID number 02-6000-937 for a Dependent Care FSA (Flexible Spending Account) or for reporting these expenses toward the federal dependent care credit on your income tax returns.

To request a receipt for FSA reimbursement, please email your request to Jessica.Carver@unh.edu AND Lisa.Ranfos@unh.edu. Please include the following information:

- Your child's (or children's) name and classroom
- Requestors information (who has payroll tuition deduction or is responsible for paying if you are not on automatic deductions from payroll)
- If this is a new request for the year or if you are requesting an updated receipt*

This information will be shared with the Financial Operations Center (FOC) and they will produce a letter, which we will email back to you. This process can take up to two weeks.

*After your first request, any additional requests will be added to an already existing letter.

Program Withdrawal

Children admitted to CSDC are eligible to attend the full day child care programs while a parent/guardian retains status as a benefits eligible UNH or USNH employee or full-time student or when enrolled as a community member due to availability. Any extension of enrollment for the current academic year must be approved by the Director in writing and will be based on demand for the opening, the specific circumstances, and the needs of the child.

For other programs, families must submit a written notice to the CSDC administrative coordinator at least four weeks (not including center closures) prior to withdrawing a child. The family will be responsible for all fees during this four-week period, even if their child does not attend and/or the position is filled.

Celebrations

The celebration of traditions related to holidays are driven by the children and families at the center as they work with teachers to share the important aspects of their home culture. In honoring each family, we do not put up decorations for any holiday, assume everyone shares the same traditions, or decide what celebrations are important.

Our decision not to celebrate the dominant culture's holidays such as Halloween, Easter, and Christmas is based on our concern about the negative impact of consumerism, classism, and the mass media on young children that may be associated with these cultural celebrations. Furthermore, it is often difficult to give holidays meaning that is developmentally appropriate for young children and it is challenging to be inclusive of all children and families.

We use the following values in decision making:

- We believe that each member of the CSDC community reflects larger cultural practices and values in their own unique ways;
- In order to ensure all feel welcome and included at the CSDC, we believe that it is important to acknowledge practices and values that are important to families and to find ways to make these visible in our environments;
- We value the participation of all members of the CSDC community and are thoughtful about honoring home culture and providing opportunity of values and traditions to be shared within the classroom setting. When families share these traditions we will create authentic documentation to display in our classrooms to support meaningful dialogue with children;
- We believe that building strong relationships of respect and trust with families is an essential building block to being able to share culture in the classroom;
- We recognize that teachers are members of our community who also bring their cultural identity into the classroom in various ways;
- We realize that teachers bring their own cultural identity into the classroom in various ways;
- We are conscious that we must consider the pervasiveness of dominant (majority) religious and cultural practices and values in our community and seek to ensure that all families feel included at CSDC;
- Any celebration of cultural practices should be developmentally appropriate, meaningful to young children, and child oriented - just as we seek with all curricula.

Individual classrooms sometimes choose to host their own special days, based on the interest and relevance to the lives and cultures of the children, families and teaching team. If families have a special celebration they would like to share with the classroom, they are welcome meet with the teaching team to find developmentally appropriate ways to do so. Please see the family packet for your child's classroom for more information.

If you wish to share a tradition, celebration, or important event within the classroom, or if you have questions, please check in with your classrooms teachers. Each classroom may have a different process as to how they incorporate such culture including but not limited to: family pictures, share day, classroom books, family sharing traditions, cooking, singing, etc.

The CSDC hosts center-wide events each year that all children and families in our community can be part of. In planning these events, we will follow basic principles for developmentally-appropriate practice: children will have choices and input about their environment; children's individual needs will be supported; activities will be designed to engage and include children and families; the celebrations will promote positive values; and celebrations will be designed to fit within the overall curriculum.

The Center celebrations are:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Harvest Festival | September |
| UNH HDFS Capstone Event | Fall |
| Author Day/Literacy | Varies |
| Week of the Young Child | April |
| End of Year Ice Cream Social | May and sometimes August |

Families will receive information in advance about the events and how they can participate. Individual classrooms sometimes choose to host their own special days, based on the interest and relevance to the lives and cultures of the children and/or families. In the past, classrooms have

chosen to recognize milestones in children's development; honor special events for children and their families (birth of a sibling); and host special events ("Wear Your Pajamas to School Day"). If families have a special celebration they would like to share with the classroom, they are welcome to do so.

Field Trips

The CSDC views the surrounding community as an important resource in extending the curriculum and providing children with opportunities to learn about people and places in their "neighborhood". Families grant permission for specific trips or recurring trips using the various NH Licensing Field Trip Permission forms so that we can go on walks and visit different areas on campus or further afield. The UNH shuttle is used with parent/guardian permission.

Typically, CSDC tuition covers field trip costs. If money is requested from families for a field trip, the field trip notification will include a clause stating, "If this fee poses a hardship for your family, please speak with the Executive Director or Assistant Director."

Communication

Confidentiality

The CSDC operates as a community in which the building of trusting relationships between families and center personnel is important to the quality of our programs, the delivery of a developmentally appropriate curriculum, and our mission as a research and teacher training laboratory. To be in compliance with federal and state regulations and to respect the privacy of everyone, confidentiality of information is of primary importance at our center.

Child and Family Records:

- All child/family records are confidential and kept in secure cabinets.
- Only full-time CSDC staff members have access to children's records on an educational or administrative need to know basis. Other staff/students/external bodies view files only under the supervision of an administrator or staff member.
- Family questionnaires and developmental records may be reviewed at the CSDC by UNH interns and student teachers for children in their assigned classroom with permission from the classroom teacher as relevant to their coursework.
- All CSDC staff, interns and volunteers sign a confidentiality policy form.
- Parents/guardians can review records of their own child in the CSDC office.
- Under no circumstances should records be left out unattended.
- The status of children and families is discussed in an appropriately private space only by CSDC personnel who are working with or have a legitimate educational need regarding that child or family.
- Limited information regarding a medical condition of a child that is necessary for the safety of the child (e.g. allergy information) is provided as needed to personnel working directly with children.
- Personal information regarding children and families is only shared as needed or requested by the family/staff and with respect to the privacy of each individual.
- Information about families and children, including assessment results, may not be released to other agencies or individuals without written permission from the parent/guardian. Current law permits the CSDC to transfer educational records to an appropriate public school.
- CSDC staff members are mandated by law to report to the appropriate government agency any evidence of child abuse or neglect regardless of confidentiality agreements.

Research and Teacher Training:

- CSDC Families/Guardians sign a release upon admission to CSDC which stipulates the use of educational documentation (e.g. photos, video, children's work) by CSDC staff and students as part of our mission to preparing professionals to work with children and families. Additionally, the release covers the use of photographs by UNH and the media. When prior permission is not given, the CSDC will seek verbal approval to the extent possible.
- All research projects that require UNH Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission will also be reviewed and approved in writing by the CSDC Executive Director or Assistant Director.
- All research projects involving direct collection of data from children/families require prior family written informed consent and, as needed, oral consent from the child.
- When writing for college assignments and other research, UNH students and researchers use only the child's first name, initials, and a date of birth.
- Visitors to the CSDC are not permitted to take photographs that include children's faces, except with parent/guardian permission as indicated on release form.
- A social media release is signed for the intent of sharing our curriculum with other in the field of early childhood education.

Family Workshops

During the year, the CSDC hosts center-wide evening meetings for families on a variety of topics of current interest. Recent meetings have focused on dual language learners and nutrition. We often have an event connected with our curriculum and will have special topic meetings as interest and need are expressed. In addition, each classroom provides a schedule of events intended to encourage family participation in our programs, including potlucks, and transition to school meetings.

Conferencing with Families

Scheduled conferences are held with parents/guardians on two occasions each year (fall and spring) to discuss your child's development and experiences at the CSDC. We encourage a reciprocal dialogue in which observations and insights are shared from home and center. CSDC teachers also often informally meet with a family member in-person, by e-mail, or over the telephone, as part of an ongoing commitment to communication and building a collaborative relationship. Conferences may be initiated by a family member also outside of the bi-annual scheduled conferences.

Communicating Children's Progress

The communication of children's progress occurs in a number of ways: emails, developmental narratives, documentation, conferences, and curriculum documentation binders /panels. Please also see the section on Assessment in this handbook.

Family Action Board (FAB)

Purpose and Activities:

The purpose of the committee is to promote communication and to advise the Executive Director regarding issues related to the Center and its families. The Executive Director reports on the activities of the center, including annual survey results, outlines proposed initiatives, and seeks input from members regarding center policies. From time to time the FAB may take the lead in fund-raising (e.g. t-shirt sales) and volunteer activities intended to support major projects (e.g. community workdays; playground construction, developing a website). FAB representatives act as a conduit for information and feedback between the CSDC administration and CSDC families. In addition, classroom teachers may ask their representative(s) to assist with the coordination of classroom events and projects and encouraging family participation. Minutes are recorded and

are available to families. This is not a formal decision-making body and does not have oversight or responsibility for the center budget.

Structure:

The FAB consists of the Executive Director, the Assistant Director, and 1-2 family representatives from each program or classroom. Family members are invited to let their teacher(s) or the Executive Director know that they are interested in being a representative. Any family member or teacher may attend and participate. Agenda items are sent to the Executive Director prior to the meetings which are held monthly during the academic year.

Annual Evaluation and Feedback

Each Spring we ask families to complete an annual survey regarding their experience at CSDC. The feedback is summarized and discussed with teachers and the Family Action Board in the fall. A copy of the summary is emailed to all families. We appreciate and carefully consider all your feedback and ideas. In addition, a *transition to school* survey is sent in late fall to the families of children who have moved on to elementary school. Please do not hesitate to telephone or email any of the administrative team or your classroom teachers with feedback at any time or to request a time to meet.

Accessing Community Resources

CSDC staff members are very familiar with the range of community resources in the Seacoast area and across the state and can help you get any support you may need in raising your family. The Assistant Director can assist with connecting you up with UNH and local resources in the area of special needs.

Health

Reporting Accidents and Illnesses

Accident reports are filled out for any injury that needs to be treated (ice pack, washed, etc.). For minor injuries, it is up to the discretion of the teacher with regard to whether or not to call the family. Families must be called for any injury or accident involving the head and directed to come in to evaluate the injury. If the family members cannot be reached, emergency numbers will continue to be tried until someone is reached. If no one can be reached, teachers, in conjunction with administrators will make a decision with regard to follow-up treatment (i.e. transporting the child to the hospital for evaluation.)

The accident report needs to be given to a family member to sign and then to the Assistant Director for a signature. Accident reports are then placed in the child's file in the front office.

State Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse & Neglect

As New Hampshire early childhood teachers and staff, we are mandated reporters. This means that if we have any suspicion of abuse or neglect that we are required to report it immediately.

Suspected Cases of Child Abuse

New Hampshire State law, RSA 169-C, the Child Protection Act, states that any person, who has reason to suspect that a child under the age of 18 has been abused and/or neglected, must make a report to the Division for Children, Youth and Families.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families also assesses allegations of abuse and neglect occurring in residential care facilities, such as: foster homes, group homes, and institutions. If you

have reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, contact the Division for Children, Youth and Families Central Intake at:

1-800-894-5533 or (603) 271-6562

All staff MUST consult or advise the Executive Director or Assistant Director of a decision to make a report before calling. If a staff member disagrees with the administration, s/he still has an ethical responsibility to act and will be protected by UNH policies from reprisal. For additional information, please visit: [Report Child Abuse | New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services \(nh.gov\)](https://www.nh.gov/health-services/report-child-abuse)

No Smoking Policy

In accordance with UNH policy and best practice for early childhood programs, no smoking is permitted on CSDC grounds or in the presence of children at CSDC.

Staff and Student Training in CPR & First Aid

All permanent CSDC staff members and student teaching assistants and interns are certified in pediatric first-aid treatment including CPR for infants and children. All staff and students are required to complete specific health and safety training each year.

Policy on Child Illness

Our utmost concern is children's health followed by the ability of the staff to meet the needs of children who are ill while at the same time caring for well children in the program. The focus of this policy will be on the comfort level of the child and his/her ability to participate in the normal schedule of the day. In addition, consideration is given to whether the staff is able to meet his/her increased needs, such as needing to be held or monitored continually. CSDC policy draws on information obtained from our consulting physician, the NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Because we are working with an early childhood group environment, our policies may differ from those recommended by a pediatrician for a home setting or policies used in elementary school settings. In cases where an outbreak of a particular illness occurs, the CSDC may alter exclusion policies in accordance with expert advice.

The utilization and success of the center's policy is dependent on the following:

- A trusting relationship between families and staff;
- A commitment by families and staff to understand the burden that child illness creates for everyone and to make every attempt to ease this burden on families, on staff, and on the child;
- Acknowledgement by families that teachers:
 - know the children in their care very well;
 - use careful judgment when making a decision that a child is behaving atypically;
 - can recognize when a child is uncomfortable in this setting;
 - will reach an agreement among the team, and if needed, the Assistant or Executive Director, that the symptoms indicating illness are sufficient to warrant a warning call and/or sending a child home.
- Acknowledgement by teachers that families use the best judgment possible when making decisions about whether their child is well enough to attend .

- CSDC will take responsibility to distribute up to date and accurate health information to families and staff as needed resources with regard to common childhood illnesses are available from your child's teachers or in the front office.

Containing the Spread of Germs

CSDC implements practices that have been determined to help control the spread of germs. Among the several procedures include:

- Washing hands upon entering the classroom, after changing diapers, assisting children in toileting, and after helping children blow noses;
- Opening classroom windows when leaving the room for outdoor play, lunch and/or nap;
- Containing diapers in separate closed containers;
- Sanitizing toys which are often mouthed;
- Sending uneaten food home, daily;
- Disinfecting diapering, bathroom, and eating areas; and,
- Providing individual sleeping mats/cots/cribs and blankets and disinfecting/washing weekly.

In addition to these precautions, we require that universal precautions be followed. Specifically, staff and students wear gloves when changing diapers and when bodily fluids are present.

Exclusion for Health Reasons

The following are used as guidelines for teachers in reaching a decision regarding exclusion of a child from CSDC (also see head lice policy below):

- Type of symptoms such as fever, vomiting, and/or more than one instance of diarrhea
- Exclusion generally is not dependent upon a single criterion, but on a combination of symptoms that include both physical and behavioral factors.
- As the degree of severity and number of physical and behavioral changes increases so does the probability of exclusion.
- When two or more symptoms are present in concert, the teaching team will determine whether the child should be sent home.
- The age of the child, the severity and longevity of symptoms and the existing outbreak of similar symptoms in the classroom/center will impact a decision to exclude a child from the group.

For example, a 4-year-old with a temperature of 100 degrees F and no other symptoms would be monitored closely and a phone call would be made to provide an update. A child with a low temperature of 100, for example, but who is lethargic or complaining of a stomachache and unable to participate comfortably in the daily routine of the classroom would be sent home.

The CSDC follows public health and bureau of disease control instructions regarding exclusion due to a communicable disease. However, in keeping with state licensing guidelines, exclusion is warranted for:

- Injuries and symptoms of illness that impair or prohibit the child's participation in the regular child care activities; or
- Injuries and symptoms of illness which require more care than child care personnel are able to provide without compromising the health and safety of the ill or injured child or the other children in their care.
- Skin lesions or rashes, which have not been diagnosed or treated by a licensed health care practitioner.
- Unusual or extreme fatigue or lethargy.
- Vomiting
- More than one episode of diarrhea in one day.

- Uncontrolled coughing or wheezing.
- Fever at or above 101 degrees F (taken orally, 100 degrees F when taken under the arm) or higher combined with any of the following: uncontrolled diarrhea (defined as increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern and that are not contained by the diaper or toilet use), rash, ear ache, sore throat, or vomiting.

Prior to making a phone call about an elevated temperature:

- The child's temperature is taken using different thermometers if readings seem disparate.
- The staff waits 20 minutes following a nap to take an initial temperature.
- The staff removes some clothing if a child has an elevated temperature with the initial check.
- The staff takes under the arm temperatures. All thermometers are digital.

When a decision to exclude a child is made, we ask that parents or caregivers make every effort to pick up their child within 30 minutes of being notified.

When a child has vomited, had more than one instance of diarrhea, or has an excessively high fever at school or at home, they must be out the day of the incident (day 1), out the whole next day (day 2), and may return the following day (day 3) provided they are symptom free all of day 2 without the assistance of medication.

Sick or Contagious Child Awaiting Pick-Up

If the child is too ill to stay at the CSDC or has a potentially communicable illness that requires a child to be sent home, the child will be required to rest in a quiet area within the classroom or an area outside of the classroom (if staffing permits) with an appropriate staff member until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives. The child will be supervised at all times by someone familiar with the child. Extra attention to hygiene and sanitation will occur until the child leaves the facility.

Respiratory Viruses

There are many types of respiratory viruses that impact children and adults, including but not limited to COVID-19, the flu, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Core strategies for prevention include staying up to date on recommended immunizations, implementing proper hygiene, and staying home when sick. Additional strategies may include physical distancing, masking if appropriate, and testing. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention respiratory guidance is a helpful resource and can be found here: [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#)

When children and/or adults within our community are experiencing a respiratory virus **with fever** they can return to the CSDC when, for **at least 24 hours, both are true:**

- Symptoms are getting better overall, and
- They have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication).

When returning to the CSDC, children and/or adults are encouraged to take added precautions over the next 5 days, such as taking additional steps for cleaner air, hygiene, masks, physical distancing, and/or testing when they will be around other people indoors.

- Keep in mind that you may still be able to spread the virus that made you sick, even if you are feeling better. You are likely to be less contagious at this time, depending on factors like how long you were sick or how sick you were.
- If you develop a fever or you start to feel worse after you have gone back to normal activities, stay home and away from others again until, for at least 24 hours, both are true: your symptoms are improving overall, and you have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication). Then take added precaution for the next 5 days.

Head Lice Policy

The presence of head lice is not an illness but it does require special attention, in part because of misinformation in the past. Maintaining a sympathetic attitude and avoiding stigmatizing or blaming families who are experiencing lice infestation is important at CSDC. While parent/guardian have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the CSDC community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

It is the expectation of parents and families attending CSDC that:

- You will proactively check your children's hair for head lice on a weekly basis, at home.
- You regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary.

If you find live head lice on your child:

- You notify the CSDC and advise when safe and recommended treatment was commenced;
- Your child will be allowed to return to CSDC after proper treatment for live lice, or other advice by a health professional, and no live lice remain;
- You should check your child daily to ensure that no live lice remain. Re-treatment is sometimes required;
- Follow recommendations for eradicating further head lice from the home or other high contact areas;
- You notify the parents or caregivers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

In order to achieve a consistent approach to head lice management the CSDC will:

- Notify a child's parent/guardian immediately (or at the close of the day if appropriate) when visible live lice are identified by a teacher or the administrative team. The child will need to be excluded and will be allowed to return to CSDC after proper treatment for live lice, or other advice by a health professional, and no live lice remain. Because direct head-to-head contact is difficult to avoid at CSDC due to the frequent interactions between children and close confines in the nap room, the exclusion policy is stricter than typical in a school setting. Prompt treatment is in the best interest of the child and his/her classmates.
- If nits (lice eggs) are identified, parents/guardians will be notified at pick-up but no exclusion is required.
- Provide practical advice on treatment and eradication and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatizing or blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- Accept the advice of parents/guardians that appropriate treatment has commenced.
- Only inspect children who are showing symptoms of head lice. To help reduce the stigma and maintain confidentiality when conducting head lice inspections, the CSDC will inform the families of all children involved.

Conjunctivitis Policy

Conjunctivitis is an infection of the eyes commonly known as "pink eye", which can come in various forms including viral, bacterial, and as an allergic response. Because the CSDC is unable to make a definitive diagnosis, a child with conjunctivitis-like symptoms will be required to be examined by a healthcare provider and can return when approved to be in group child care, with or without treatment. Families will be notified and asked to take their child to a provider as soon as possible to minimize the risk of spreading infection.

Medications Policy and Procedures

We strongly ask that families not use medications that may mask undiagnosed illnesses. Giving a child Motrin/Tylenol may get them through the morning, but may also expose other children to unidentified ailments unnecessarily. If a family has given medication in the morning at home, please inform the teacher at drop off.

The CSDC will administer prescription and/or doctor prescribed medication only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent; the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container. The CSDC must have on file the written or telephone instructions of a licensed clinician to administer the specific medication.

1. For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide teachers with the medication in the original, child resistant contents that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration storage and disposal instructions. For over-the counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child. In some cases a physicians signature may be required for over-the-counter medication.

2. Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teachers in writing (by a signed doctor's note or a prescription label). This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

3. A physician may state that a certain medication may be given for a recurring problem, emergency situation, or chronic condition. The instructions should include the child's name; the name of the medication; the dose of the medication; how often the medication may be given; the conditions for use; and precautions to follow. A child with a known serious allergic reaction to a specific substance who develops symptoms after exposure to that substance may receive epinephrine from a teacher who has received training in how to administer.

4. Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended in a locked container.

5. Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

6. The Authorization to Administer Prescription and Non Prescription Medication Form will be maintained by CSDC staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

7. Medication errors will be controlled by checking the following 5 items each time medication is given:

- a. Right Child
- b. Right Medicine
- c. Right Dose
- d. Right Time
- e. Right Route of Administration

Teachers may not dispense non-prescription medications. The only exceptions to this is if a physician has specified the use of over the counter medication through an Emergency Health Care Plan or written medical order and use of over the counter topicals, such as sun block and insect repellent per parental or legal guardian permission.

Exposure to Communicable Diseases

Exposure notice includes the recommendations as guidelines for providers and families and may be subject to variations depending on circumstances, prevailing medical opinion, and program capability to integrate children with illnesses in to care. Whenever an outbreak of a communicable disease occurs, the Assistant or Executive Director will seek consultation first from the local health department or a medical consultant.

When informed that a child has one of the illnesses, CSDC staff will complete an exposure notice form and post it on the classroom door.

The CSDC follows all applicable NH Child Care Licensing Rules regarding exposure and exclusion reporting.

Health Messages

Whenever there is an illness that could be contagious, all families are communicated with via email about the illness accompanied by a fact sheet about the illness. This allows information to be shared with families that could impact them indirectly. For example, a mother who is pregnant may not be aware that there is a case of Fifth disease, which could affect her unborn child. These unintentional lapses in information are alleviated by this procedure.

Insect Repellent Policy

When public health authorities and the CSDC's public health consultant recommend the use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, the CSDC will, with written parental/guardian permission, supply and administer an insect repellent containing a minimal concentration of DEET and approved by the Center of Disease Control (CDC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) parental/guardian (see Insect Repellent Permission Form).

Additionally, the insect repellent is:

- Applied when mosquitoes and ticks are present.
- Applied during field trips that may expose a child to ticks or mosquitoes.
- Applied only to clothes.
- Not applied to infants under two months.
- Not applied near eyes or mouth or on hands.
- Not applied to clothing or skin more than once.
- Used according to directions on the manufacturers' label.
- Kept out of the reach of young children.
- Washed off of exposed skin upon returning inside with soap and water or towelette.

Families that do not wish to have the CSDC designated insect repellent applied must also sign the insect repellent permission form, indicating their choice and provide a bottle of the preferred repellent. The bottle must be labeled with the child's name and contain an expiration date.

Sunscreen Policy

Guardians must sign a Sunscreen Permission Form upon enrollment. The CSDC will provide sunscreen for all children and will apply sunscreen to children prior to going outside. Guardians

whose children need a specific brand of sunscreen because of allergies or other medical reasons may provide that sunscreen. Special sunscreen must be labeled with the child's name and include a manufacturer's expiration date and used only by that child. The CSDC supplies sunscreen that is PABA-free, water resistant, and has an SPF of at least 30. The CSDC staff will follow these procedures:

- Apply sunscreen during late spring and summer and other times when the sun seems intense (according to manufacturer's instructions).
- Apply sunscreen in the morning and afternoon and anytime necessary in between, preferably ½ hour prior to exposure – or more specially following manufacturer's instructions.
- Apply sunscreen liberally, with special attention to cheeks, shoulders, backs of legs and upper arms.
- Apply sunscreen before and after water play.

Outdoor Safety and Health

Outdoor activity is very important for young children and is a planned daily activity at CSDC. We feel that a child who is well enough to be in the center is well enough to play outdoors. This provides the fresh air and movement needed daily for your child's general well-being and healthy development. You can help your child enjoy outdoor activities by making sure that he/she is properly dressed for the weather. In winter, this includes boots, warm coat, sweater, snow pants, mittens and hat. In summer, this includes sunhat, use of sunscreen and insect repellent as authorized by parent or guardian. The CSDC also sprays the perimeter of the outdoor play space for ticks as recommended when the children are not present.

Policy for Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

At the CSDC, we recognize that it's not only important for children's physical development to play outdoors, but that it is equally important for health reasons. However, there are times when it is not safe for children to be outdoors, and the purpose of this policy is to distinguish between the two. Unhealthy Air/ Hot weather/ Extreme weather: The UNH Office of Environmental Health and Safety issues alerts for extreme heat, adverse weather conditions (e.g. tornado) or unhealthy air to the CSDC office. These are passed on to staff if the conditions require modification of outdoor play.

Cold weather: Temperature and wind chill are two factors that determine the safety of children being outdoors during winter months. It can be 10 degrees, perfectly dry with no wind chill factor and be safe and healthy for children to be running around outdoors for a few minutes. The key here is that children be active and appropriately dressed for the cold. Mittens, hats, scarves, snow pants, warm socks and a hat are essential for conserving body heat in cold weather. At the first sign of chilling or shivering, a child should go indoors. The temperature can be quite cold and still be conducive to outdoor play, while wind chill tends to be the factor that makes outdoor play dangerous. The cold, blowing cold air quickly gets into children's apparel, regardless of their level of activity, and puts them at risk of frostbite. Teachers and staff will use best judgement and will take into consideration things such as temperature, windchill, clouds/sun, appropriate clothing, children's activity level and tolerance for the cold weather, location of the outdoor play, as well as determining the amount of time children would be outside. For children who are not mobile or have special health considerations, this policy would be modified at the discretion of the classroom teacher. We will use the campus weather station that posts wind chill temperatures throughout the day at <http://www.weather.unh.edu/> .

Hot weather: Teachers and staff will use best judgement and will take into consideration things such as temperature, clouds/sun, appropriate clothing, children's activity level and tolerance for the hot weather, location of the outdoor play, as well as determining the amount of time children would

be outside. Children will have access to shade, drinking water, and/or water to play in during excessively hot temperatures.

Nutrition

Infants: Teachers and families work in partnership to discuss the child's nutritional needs in order to make a feeding plan that will meet the needs of the child and family as well as following the requirements set forth by the state licensing regulations and the NAEYC Accreditation criteria. CSDC supports breastfeeding by accepting, storing, and serving expressed breast milk for feedings as well as providing the time and space for nursing should a family request to come to the center for feedings. For bottle feeding, families must bring in enough prepared milk/formula for the day in a ready to serve fashion (ie: brought in the bottle that they will drink from and properly labeled). When families have made the decision to start foods with their child, we require that foods be tried at least three times before they are offered at school.* Families need to supply all foods their child /children will eat throughout the day.

Young Toddlers through Preschoolers: Families supply all foods their child /children will eat throughout the day, including a morning and afternoon snack based on NH Child Care Licensing requirements. Information about requirements or snack ideas can be provided by your teachers or the Assistant or Executive Director.

We require that foods be tried at least three times before they are offered at school due to the potential for allergic reactions.

Food preference is also a family choice, such as choosing to be vegan or vegetarian, or otherwise eating/avoiding certain foods. We respect these preferences and will work to gather information from families on intake questionnaires.

Food Service for All Children: Foods must be sent in an airtight container and labeled with the child's name and the date and prepared in a "ready to serve" fashion as well as meet the rules for licensing. If food will need to be warmed in the microwave, it must be sent in a microwavable glass container. Plastic can't be microwaved at the CSDC.

Our NH license and NAEYC accreditation status prevents us from serving particular foods to any children under the age of four. We cannot serve round firm foods such as **whole or round slices of hotdogs, whole grapes, raw carrots, raw peas, nuts, hard pretzels, raw celery or meats larger than can be swallowed**. Circular foods such as grapes, hot dogs, olives, etc. all must be sliced lengthwise for young children in order to prevent choking. Carrots must be sliced lengthwise and cooked or heated until soft. In addition, we are unable to serve hard candy, seeds, popcorn, chips, and marshmallows of any form.

Use of the Learning Garden and Exploring Food Through Our Intended Curriculum: Each year we engage in the creation and sustaining of our CSDC community garden. Children are deeply involved in planting, weeding, and caring for the garden through this process as we teach them about foods from seed to table. As vegetables and fruits are harvested, children are learning about them through exploring how they taste raw, cooked, and baked.

Allergy Notification

After review of current policies outlined in the Center for Disease Control's *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care Education Settings* (2013), we decided to work individually to determine potential allergic reactions and, in so doing, minimize the challenges faced by families of children with and without allergies.

Based on updated guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Food Allergy Research and Education organization regarding the introduction of high allergen foods such as nuts and peanut, we have re-examined our practice of excluding nut products in the center. We will no longer be explicitly removing nuts and nut products program-wide and instead take a more classroom specific response to allergens.

This guidance also suggest that children should be introduced to new foods, particularly those that are seen as high allergens for 3 days to determine if a child is allergic to that food. We require families to engage in this practice prior to sending new foods to school for children to eat.

Classroom Specific Allergy Plans: We recognize in some cases, a child may have an allergic reaction that is so severe that being in the vicinity of the allergen can lead to a dangerous reaction. Classroom staff will always work with the families of children concerned to create as safe an environment as possible.

As previously stated, children may develop or discover a food allergy during the school year. This means that we may have to re-examine our classroom specific or center-wide policies around a particular food throughout the year in order to be responsive to the need.

The CSDC cannot promise that the center is an allergen-free environment. We depend on the assistance of families in monitoring foods from home. If there is a known allergy in the room, individual classrooms may ask families to adhere to additional safety practices as needed, including restricting food that contains identified allergens from all families within the classroom.

Response to allergies

Gathering and sharing information: Any child with a known allergy that has potential health and safety consequences must have an Allergy Health Plan (completed and signed by health practitioner and family) including a color photo on file and posted in the classroom, on the first day of attendance. The Administrative Coordinator will initiate this process if information is provided on emergency forms, but it is critical that classroom teachers also notify parents/guardians of the need to complete a plan when an allergy is identified after enrollment. Children cannot attend until this information is on file and any needed medications have been received..

Children may develop or discover a food allergy during the school year. When this happens, we will require an Allergy Health Plan (completed and signed by health practitioner and family).

A food intolerance can cause some of the same signs and symptoms as food allergies, but it is different from a food allergy. A true food allergy will cause an immune system reaction, impacting organs within the body. Food intolerances will also be documented but may not require an Allergy Health Plan.

Training: All full-time teachers at CSDC take a training titled Prevention of and Response to Emergencies Due to Food and Allergic Reactions.

Sanitation & Common Areas: Preventing Cross Contamination

- Clean and sanitize all surfaces that come into contact with food that is being prepared or eaten with soap and water or all-purpose cleaning agents and sanitizers that meet state and local food safety regulations.
- Clean and sanitize food preparation equipment, such as food slicers and utensils before and after cooking experiences to prevent cross-contact.

- Prepare food separately for children with food allergies. Strategies should include preparing items without allergens first, using a separate workspace and equipment, and labeling and storing items before preparing other foods.
- Use appropriate hand-washing procedures that emphasize the use of soap and water.

Classroom specific strategies:

- Teachers educate children in developmentally appropriate ways to the significance of allergies and why food sources might be limited so they begin to understand caring for the classroom community.
- Promote good hand-washing practices before and after eating.
- Supervise children closely during mealtimes.
- Put children's names on cups and water bottles to avoid confusion and cross-contact.
- Designate food storage areas for foods brought from home.
- Children are encouraged to eat only their own food and families are asked to reinforce this idea at home.

Safety

Conduct of Adult Community Members

As members of a community, every adult who spends time at the CSDC (including staff, parents, guardians, students and visitors) should strive to provide the children with a model of civil and respectful behavior. Interactions by and between adults at the center should support a caring and safe environment for everyone.

Given that differences in opinions can arise within any community, it is particularly important that adults at the center are mindful of the behavior and interactions children observe when there is the potential for conflict. Children can learn a great deal by seeing adults approach and solve differences in a positive way. Conflict between adults, particularly if it is loud or emotional, can also be very stressful to young children who may not understand the context or meaning of the dispute. Given that children are present at CSDC we expect adults to organize a suitable time and place away from children to discuss issues that may give rise to strong or difficult emotions. Regardless of the problem, we expect community members to approach differences in opinion with an open mind and with respect for the other person and CSDC policies.

When difficulties and differences arise in interactions between families and program staff the following procedures shall be followed during the initial incident:

- All conversations occur away from children and in a private space;
- Staff are trained to de-escalate the situation by listening to the family perspective and identify the main issues;
- Staff will ask for family feedback regarding optimal outcomes and then determine if those solutions can be implemented.

When the above defined procedure does not remedy the situation, the assistant or executive director shall be included in further conflict resolution. This may include:

- Setting up a formal time to meet;
- Listening to all parties' perspectives;
- Gathering relevant information, including licensing and accreditation standards;
- Consider dismissal from the program for family or staff depending on the nature of the issues.

The assistant or executive director will collect this information and work to support all parties' depending on the situation or issue. This may conclude the process or result in increased formal proceedings.

Language or behavior that is disrespectful, harassing, rude, or abusive to others, including children, is never acceptable within the CSDC environment. This policy extends to all forms of communication concerning CSDC business. Any adult who is unable to abide by a staff member's request to act in a civil and respectful way will be asked to leave the CSDC grounds. If necessary, the Executive Director may take further action including exclusion from the CSDC facility, terminating enrollment, or, in the case of employees, appropriate UNH disciplinary action.

Arrival and Departure Safety

Because of the flow of traffic close to the CSDC entrance, it is particularly important that families are mindful of arrival and departure safety. When arriving and departing each day please be sure that your child is within arm's length of you and help us in reminding children that running is *not* allowed in the hallway at the CSDC. While we typically encourage children's autonomy we do not permit children to open the front door or playground gates. This practice ensures that an adult is always taking responsibility for safe comings and goings from the center. During the program, CSDC teachers also model these expectations. Because of the potential for confusion at departure time, it is also important to note that families are responsible for their children once they arrive for pick-up regardless of whether we are inside or out on the playground. At arrival and departure, families should bring children to the teacher *and* check-in verbally before leaving. This procedure helps us with maintaining an accurate count of children in the group.

In accordance with best practices, we want to remind you that children should be left in a car unattended. We understand that this can be inconvenient at times and we truly appreciate your support in ensuring the safety of everyone at CSDC.

Authorization for Pickup

At the time of enrollment, families must provide the names and telephone numbers of persons authorized to drop-off and pick-up the child. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the center of any changes in this authorization. If someone other than authorized persons indicated on the Child Emergency Form is to pick up your child, the CSDC must be notified in writing/phone by the parent/guardian and delivered by the parent/guardian in advance. We will release children to authorized persons only.

Photo identification or other official identification may be requested by a staff member before the child is released. Copies of legal documents must be provided to the office before any staff member can actively prevent non-custodial parents from picking up their child.

Emergency Plans

The CSDC conducts monthly evacuation drills and has posted emergency information in all classrooms, adjacent to all telephones, and in the office.

The CSDC has a comprehensive emergency action plan (EAP). The center has the primary responsibility for initial emergency management activities. The top priorities for incident management are to:

- Protect and save lives, and protect health and safety of children, staff, families, visitors,

- responders, and recovery workers.
- Protect property and mitigate damages and impacts to individuals, the community, and the environment.

The emergency functions that may be performed by the program generally parallel some of the routine day-to-day functions. To the extent possible, the same personnel and material resources used for day-to-day activities may be employed during incidents.

Access to the EAP may be available, at all times, in the office and individual classrooms. This is a separate document and each classroom should have a copy of the document with their emergency backpack.

Parking and Traffic

Parking is available directly across from the CSDC entrance and in the upper student parking lot. If you have UNH Faculty/staff permit there is also parking in the rear lot. No parking is permitted in the marking Fire Lane along the front of the building or along the wooden fence as you enter the parking area. Leaving a car idling while in the vicinity of the CSDC is never permitted. Fumes from cars quickly enter into our main hallway and on to the classrooms.

The safety of the CSDC community is our foremost concern. As you drive past the large CSDC sign your car should come to a CRAWL until you leave the driveway loop; that's less than 5 miles an hour. This speed will enable you to stop if a child should dart in front of you.

Teacher to Child Ratios and Group Sizes

Recognizing the correlation of small group size and smaller numbers of children per adult to quality care and education, CSDC's standards for group sizes and teacher to child ratios are based on best practices (see chart below). Classroom coverage meets the CSDC staff/child ratios. When primary classroom teachers are absent, classroom coverage is provided by our multi-classroom teacher and teaching assistants. Ratios and group size are met during all hours of operation including: indoor time, outdoor time, and during field trips. The assistant director in conjunction with the teaching staff ensures ratios are met throughout the day.

A weekly schedule is created to cover all operational hours of the day, in classrooms and other indoor settings, as well as outdoor settings. Teachers sign in and out of the classroom throughout the day and maintain child attendance records. In addition to the information above, when there is illness or lack of compliance to meeting ratios, classrooms teachers immediately communicate with the administrative team to support covering the classroom and/or reaching out to the substitute list.

| Name of Classroom | CSDC Group Size/Ratio | NH State Licensing | NAEYC Accreditation | CSDC Staffing |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| MAP 2 Ages: 2.9 to 5.0 Hours: T/TR 9:00 – 4:00 | Group Size: 16 Ratio: 1:6 | Group Size: 18 Ratio: 1:6 | Group Size: 12 Ratio: 1:6 | 3 Full time teachers HDFS 635 Interns |
| MAP 3 Ages: 2.9 to 5.0 | Group Size: 16 Ratio: 1:6 | Group Size: 18 Ratio: 1:6 | Group Size: 12 Ratio: 1:6 | 3 Full time teachers HDFS 635 Interns |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Hours: M/W/F 9:00 – 4:00 | | | | |
| Infants Ages: 6 weeks to 17 months Monday - Friday | Group Size: 9 Ratio: 1:3 | Group Size: 12 Ratio: 1:4 | Group Size: 8 Ratio: 1:4 | 3 Full time teachers Part time teaching assistants and HDFS 709 Interns |
| Toddlers Ages: 18 months-3 years Monday - Friday | Group Size: 12 Ratio: 1:5 | Group Size: 15 Ratio: 1:5 | Group Size: 12 Ratio: 1:6 | 3 Full time teachers Part time teaching assistants and HDFS 709 Interns |
| Preschool 1 Ages: 3-4 years Monday - Friday | Group Size: 15 Ratio: 1:6 | Group Size: 24 Ratio: 1:8 | Group Size: 20 Ratio: 1:10 | 3 Full time teachers Part time teaching assistants and HDFS 709 Interns |
| Preschool 2 Ages: 4-5 years Monday - Friday | Group Size: 18 Ratio: 1:10 | Group Size: 24 Ratio: 1:12 | Group Size: 20 Ratio: 1:10 | 3 Full time teachers Part time teaching assistants and interns |



FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, _____, acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the UNH Child Study & Development Center Family Handbook and its policies, including (but not limited to) the following sections: Challenging Behaviors (pg. 16), Policy on Child Illness (pg. 28), and the Emergency Action Plan (pg. 38).

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Child(ren's) name(s)