

Center of Special Care Child Care Center

(Revised 3/31/09)

PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the CSC Child Care program is to offer high-quality care and experiences to the children of CSC employees and community members.

Our role is to nurture, guide and encourage children so that each child can develop towards his or her potential. Much consideration is given to the different cultures and rates of development of each child so that a well-balanced program of developmentally appropriate experiences and activities can be offered to promote their individual intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth.

We believe that parents are their child's first teachers, and it is the goal of our staff to partner with parents to maintain open, daily communication so that they may effectively work together in meeting the needs of the child, family and organization.

MISSION

We will ensure exemplary care and high-quality growth experiences within the continuum of developmentally appropriate practice with sensitivity to families of diverse races, cultures, and languages.

We will seek out the involvement of the families we serve and strive to partner with parents in an effort to better meet the individual needs of their child and family.

We will anticipate and be responsive to the changing needs of our children, families and community by creating and offering innovative, affordable programs and services.

We will create a work environment and climate where employees are supported with the tools, training and resources needed to provide high quality experiences to our children and families, and will be afforded opportunities for personal and professional growth.

We will be, in all of the above, responsive and accountable to our children, families and community, for whose benefit we exist.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. To offer a variety of stimulating experiences that promotes learning through discovery and exploration.
2. To provide a supportive, caring and low-stress environment where positive self-concept and independence are fostered.
3. To promote a sense of respect for others and the environment through positive guidance, development of problem-solving skills, verbal and non-verbal communication, self-regulation and respect for materials and equipment.
4. To support and cultivate each child's natural curiosity about the world in which they live.
5. To provide experiences which present opportunities to learn about and appreciate differences in ways that value and respect diversity.
6. To broaden the child's understanding of his/her community and the world through experiences offered both in and out of the Center.
7. To monitor each child's general condition for the day, including mood, health, appetite, etc. and respond to his/her individual needs as appropriate.
8. To demonstrate support to parents by maintaining open, honest communication, an open door policy and encouraging parent involvement in a variety of ways.
9. To assess each child's individual development utilizing the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks and The Creative Curriculum and the corresponding assessment tools as a guide for planning and evaluating a program of activities and experiences which will generate positive outcomes.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

HISTORY OF OUR CENTER

The CSC Child Care Center began operation in 1989. In May of 1998, the program relocated into the new state-of-the-art facility where it exists today. The program is licensed by the State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health, Child Day Care Licensing Unit to provide full-day/full-year early childhood programs for a total of fifty-four children ranging from six weeks to five years of age.

In 1992, the CSC Child Care Center achieved accreditation by the National Academy for the Education of Young Children for meeting and maintaining the quality standards in early childhood education as established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

OUR STAFF

Our carefully selected professional staff is dedicated to consistently offering high-quality care and experiences to the children enrolled in our infant, toddler and preschool classrooms. Primary teaching staffs are assigned to each classroom to ensure continuity of care. This allows the staff and families to develop strong relationships that will enable the staff to more effectively meet the individual needs of the child and family. The combined education and experience of our staff has provided them with the knowledge and skills that allow them to plan and implement creative, stimulating and developmentally appropriate activities for the children based on their unique and individual interests and needs. Their effort to create a warm, inviting and developmentally appropriate environment is evidenced in every classroom.

As required by NAEYC and the State of Connecticut Departments of Public Health and Education, each staff member must follow a plan for professional development. Both on-site and off-site opportunities to attend trainings, workshops and seminars are made available to staff to enhance their personal and professional development. In addition, a minimum of one staff member certified in the administration of First Aid, CPR and emergency medications is with each group at all times.

The program recognizes that providing staff with a wide variety of opportunities to participate in staff development experiences is critical to meeting the program's goals for continuous quality improvement. Staffs are supported in their efforts to participate in trainings, workshops and college level courses that are relevant to the groups with which they work. The knowledge and experiences gained through these opportunities help them to create a rich learning environment and enhance the experiences provided to the children.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We apply an anti-biased approach to all areas of our program by helping children learn to respect and appreciate the diversity amongst us. We celebrate these differences through the involvement of families and open discussions that address rather than ignore stereotypes, gender biases and prejudices. Our enrollment is open to all children regardless of race, creed, disability, special need, socio-economic or ethnic background. We encourage families to share various aspects of their heritage through stories, songs, and recipes from their culture.

We strive to promote the inclusion of children with special needs. Our facility is fully handicapped accessible and our staff work closely with parents and supporting agencies (i.e. Birth to Three, public schools, etc.) to ensure that each child's needs are met.

OPERATING SCHEDULE

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The CSC Child Care Center is licensed to provide child care services during the following days and hours of operation:

Monday through Friday
6:30 AM* to 5:15 PM**
52 weeks per year

* Children may not be dropped off for care prior to 6:30 a.m. per DPH regulations.

** Parents must make arrangements for pick-up prior to 5:15 p.m. A late pick-up fee will be charged per child when children remain in care after 5:15 p.m. Please refer to the "Fees and Payments" for additional information regarding late pick-ups.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Child Care Center will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Thanksgiving

Memorial Day
Labor Day

Independence Day
Christmas Day

Please note that fees are formulated taking these holiday closings into consideration, and weekly fees will not be adjusted for holiday or emergency closings.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

It is the policy of the Center not to close or delay opening due to inclement weather. In extreme situations when it is determined that an early closing is in the best interest of the children, families and staff, parents will be notified by staff via telephone to make arrangements for pick-up.

ENROLLMENT

PROCEDURES

The CSC Child Care Center is open to all children regardless of race, creed, or ethnic background. Parents are encouraged to tour the Center prior to enrolling their child to discuss our program's philosophy, view the classrooms, meet staff and receive a general overview about how the program operates.

Once parents make the decision to enroll, they are encouraged to bring their child to the Center to visit his/her classroom and to meet teachers and children at least once prior to their first day of attendance. During this visit, parents will be provided with more specific information regarding classroom operations and procedures and their child will have the opportunity to explore their new environment.

In an effort to ensure a smooth transition into the program, parents are provided the option to have their child attend on a part-time basis and gradually ease into their full enrollment schedule.

WAIT LIST & ACCEPTANCE

Families wishing to enroll a child for an anticipated date or for a schedule that is not immediately available can be added to our wait list by completing a wait list form. A non-refundable \$25.00 wait list fee must be submitted with the wait list form to be placed on the wait list.

As space becomes available, it is offered on a first-come, first-served basis to those families on the wait list, taking the requested schedule and availability into consideration. Families declining a requested space at the time it is offered will be moved to the bottom of the wait list.

Children and grandchildren of CSC employees are given priority for placement over community members. In addition, full-time will be given consideration over part-time enrollment, and clinical staff will be given priority over non-clinical staff.

Once a family has been notified that an enrollment space is available, the enrollment application and a non-refundable deposit for the first full week's tuition must be submitted to secure enrollment.

FORMS AND DOCUMENTATION

The following forms must be completed at the time of enrollment and kept up to date and on site for all children enrolled per the State of CT Department of Public Health, Child Day Care Licensing Regulations and CSC policy:

- Enrollment Application
- Parent/Guardians Permissions (including Contacts for Emergency & Alternate Pick-up)
- Benefit Election Form (CSC Employees only)
- Child & Family Information Form (Provides information regarding family culture and needs)
- Parent Involvement Survey
- Handbook Acknowledgement
- Copy of photo identification for all non-employee parents/guardians/individuals authorized to pick-up
- Child Health Record (including immunizations and with exam date within one year)

The program collaborates with community agencies to ensure that children's vision, hearing, health and dental needs are met and screenings are conducted either on or off-site.

Additional forms and information is required for families with children enrolled in the School Readiness Program. Please refer to page 22 of this handbook for specific information regarding School Readiness.

It is critical that all information on file be kept up to date so that we may respond appropriately and in your child's best interest in the event of an illness or emergency. Parents will be asked to ensure all health and safety information is updated as needed, but at least quarterly.

SCHEDULES OF ATTENDANCE

At the time of enrollment, parents request a schedule of attendance based on their work hours and travel time needed to get to and from the Center. These schedules should indicate the earliest time a child will be dropped off and the latest time a child will be picked up on a “regular basis.” Parents are expected to adhere closely to these schedules, as they are critical in assisting us in determining our staffing needs on a daily basis to maintain compliance with state regulations.

Full and part-time schedules are available as follows:

Full-time: Unlimited hours, 6:30 am to 5:15 pm, 5 days per week
Part-time: Unlimited hours, 6:30 am to 5:15 pm, 2-4 days per week
Half-Day: (available to employees only) 6:30 am to 11:45 am OR 12:00 pm to 5:15 pm,
2-5 days per week

Permanent changes to a schedule must be requested in writing a minimum of two weeks in advance.

ADDITIONAL DAYS/HOURS OF CARE

Employees and community members may request that their child attend a full day that their child is not scheduled to attend. Requests for additional days must be submitted at least two business days in advance and will be approved on space/staffing availability.

Temporary changes (adding a day or employees swapping a day for work related reasons) may be requested by completing the Schedule Change Request form available in the file pockets outside the office. Approvals for all changes are granted on a space-available basis, and parents should never assume that a request will be granted. The following is given consideration when a request is received: staff availability; group size requirements; staff:child ratio requirements.

Hourly rates are available to HSC employees needing additional hours of care on a day their child is not scheduled to attend. A minimum of 2 hours and a maximum of 4 hours can be requested on an hourly basis between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm. Additional hours of care must be requested, approved, and paid for in advance. Requests will be approved on a space/staffing available basis for work-related reasons, with the understanding that the employee will remain on site during the period care is provided. This option is not available to community members.

Requests for more than 4 hours of additional care would require a request for a half-day and as a result would be subject to the half-day scheduling options.

Payment for all approved additional days and hours of care must be received in advance for a child to attend during the requested times.

REPORTING ABSENCES & CHANGES IN SCHEDULE

In the event a child will arrive late or will not attend on a scheduled day due to illness or for any other reason, parents are expected to notify the Center of the absence no later than 9:00 a.m. Parents are also asked to notify the Center in advance if their child will be picked up early or if there will be a change in who will pick up the child.

Although it is not required, it is appreciated when parents also notify the Center in advance if their child will not attend during holiday periods and/or an extended period due to vacation times so that staffing can be planned in accordance with the needs of the Center.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP PROCEDURES

At no time should a parent enter the building prior to 6:30 a.m. or if only one staff member is on site.

Children must be escorted into the building and to their classroom by a parent or other responsible adult at the time of arrival. For safety reasons, children should never be left unattended at the front door, in the hallway or in a classroom where a staff member is not present.

DPH requires that every child is signed in and out of the Center on a daily basis. Please be sure to accurately document your child's arrival and departure times as these records are critical to the staff in the event of an emergency.

Children will be released only to those individuals authorized by parents in writing. Individuals authorized to pick-up a child must be at least 18 years of age, be able to present a photo ID. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that individuals authorized to pick-up their child have the proper auto restraints in place to transport their child. Requests for individuals to pick up children are not accepted over the phone, however parents may fax or email written permission to the child care center in certain situations.

If a court order exists stating that any individual is not permitted to pick up your child, a copy of the order must be on file in the Center so that it can be enforced.

The Center closes at 5:15 p.m. Parents and individuals authorized to pick up are expected to remove children from the Center prior to this time.

LATE PICK-UPS

Parents or individuals arriving to pick up children after 5:15 p.m. will be considered a "Late pick-up".

Late pick-up fees will be assessed for *each* child remaining on site after 5:15 p.m. at a rate of \$10.00 for every fifteen minutes or portion thereof. Families with 5 or more occurrences of late pick-up in one calendar year (regardless of the individual picking up) will be subject to a late pick-up fee of \$15.00 for each child for every fifteen minutes or portion thereof for each additional occurrence of late pick-up.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

INFANT PROGRAM

Our Infant Room is licensed for up to eight infants at one time with a staff:child ratio of at least one caregiver for every four children being maintained at all times. In the infant room, the focus of the staff is to meet the needs of each child on an individual basis. There are as many schedules as there are infants. Prior to entering the infant room, parents of infants are asked to schedule a visit to orient them to the room and to work with the staff to develop an individualized care plan for their child. Staff follow each child's personalized schedule for feeding, diapering, and sleeping to ensure their individual needs are met. In addition, based on each child's development, staff plan a variety of stimulating, developmentally appropriate activities to promote social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth. Infants are held for bottle feedings and are given one-to-one attention by staff during care-giving routines and during various play activities offered throughout the day.

PREVENTION OF SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME (SIDS)

Infants under the age of twelve months, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, will be placed on their backs in cribs to sleep. Pillows, quilts, bumpers, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and other soft items are not allowed in cribs for infants younger than eight months.

BREAST FEEDING

A cozy, private area with a rocking chair is located in an area removed from the rest of the group in the Infant Room. This area is available for nursing mothers to breast-feed their children at any time and can also be utilized by mothers and fathers wishing to spend some quiet time with their child.

INFANT FOOD SAFETY

Parents are to provide pre-filled infant bottles on a daily basis. Bottles may not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. In addition, medications should not be placed in bottles for any reason. All bottles must be labeled by the parent with the child's full first and last name prior to placing them in the infant room refrigerator. Microwave ovens are not used in the Infant Room. Staff warm bottles and infant food in warm water and test the temperature of formula/milk/food prior to serving it to children.

Please note that after one hour, staff will discard any formula or milk that is served but not completely consumed. Infant food will not be served from the jar. Food will be placed in a dish and uneaten food left in the dish will be discarded.

ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME TO ENSURE THE COMFORT OF INFANTS:

- *Sippy cup (when age appropriate)*
- *Premixed formula in bottles (as many as your child needs, as well as an extra to store for an emergency)*
- *Cereal, jar food as appropriate*
- *Nutritious lunch (as appropriate for older infants and precut into pieces no larger than 1/4 inch square child can safely handle)*
- *Plastic bibs (2 for Eating)*
- *Cloth bibs (2-4 for Drooling)*
- *Crib blankets (2) (light weight)*
- *Crib sheets (2 Port-A Crib Size)*
- *Diapers*
- *Diapering needs (powder, ointment, including written consents to apply)*
- *Sunscreen (6 months or older, including written consent to apply)*
- *Sun hat and/or sun glasses (optional)*
- *Wipes*
- *Pacifier (as applicable, to be left on site)*
- *2 Complete changes of clothing (appropriate for the season)*

Please label all belongings with child's full first & last name to allow staff the ability to properly identify your child's belongings.

INFANT PROGRAM (cont'd.)

SHOELESS ROOM

In an effort to minimize the amount of soil and debris on the floors and carpets of the infant room where children crawl and play, parents, staff and visitors are asked to remove shoes worn outside the play area prior to entering. A bench is located at the entrance to the Infant Room, where parents can comfortably remove and put on their shoes upon entering and leaving the room.

WALKERS PROHIBITED

The use of walkers is prohibited in the child care center. Stationary "Exersaucers" are utilized to provide infants with the opportunity to sit up right.

TODDLER PROGRAM (1 & 2 YEAR OLDS)

Prior to any child entering both the one-year-old and two-year-old rooms, parents are asked to schedule a time to meet with the staff to discuss their child's needs and orient them to the room. In the one-year-old room, staff strive to find a balance so that schedules are flexible enough to meet the individual needs of the children but still provide opportunities to introduce a bit of structure to the group and establish more consistent routines. Throughout the day, a wide variety of developmentally appropriate and stimulating experiences are offered to the one-year olds to promote cognitive, physical, emotional and social growth. Activities are modified to meet each child's interests, needs and development and are offered to the children on a small group, large group and one-on-one basis. In addition, each child is provided one-to-one attention by staff during care-giving routines and during a variety of play activities offered throughout the day.

In the two-year-old room, staff continue to strive to find this balance however, they begin to provide opportunities for children to develop some independence and to experience a bit more structure in their daily routines. Just as in the one-year-old room, staff in the two-year-old room offer a variety of activities in music, movement, literacy, language, dramatic play, gross motor and fine motor development. Activities are planned to reflect the interests of the children on an individual basis and are modified to meet each child's needs.

ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME TO ENSURE THE COMFORT OF TODDLERS:

- *Sippy cup (optional)*
- *Plastic bibs (2)*
- *Nutritious lunch in a labeled box or bag (precut food into pieces no larger than ½ inch square child can safely handle)*
- *Nap blanket (bring home to launder weekly)*
- *Soft nap toy*
- *Diapers*
- *Diapering needs (powder, ointment, etc. including written consent to apply)*
- *Wipes*
- *Sunscreen (including written consent to apply)*
- *Sun hat and/or sun glasses (optional)*
- *Pacifier (as applicable, to be left on site)*
- *Toothbrush*
- *Toothpaste (children 2 years and older)*
- *2 Complete changes of clothing (including socks and appropriate for the season)*

Please label all belongings with child's full first & last name to allow staff the ability to properly identify your child's belongings.

TODDLER FOOD SAFETY

Staff does not offer toddlers foods that may present a risk of choking. Parents are asked to refrain from sending in the following: hotdogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; hard pretzels; chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole (1/2 inch square).

PRESCHOOL & SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM (3 & 4 YEAR OLDS)

The Preschool Program offers 3 and 4 year old children experiences to promote future success in learning. Interest Centers are set up in classrooms so that small groups and individual children can explore a variety of materials related to math, science, creative art, music, technology and literacy (both reading and writing). Also offered are large-group activities and additional interest areas such as a block center, dramatic play area, library corner and outdoor play area. The staff encourages independence and self-regulation through teaching and role modeling concepts such as taking initiative and giving and taking direction in socially appropriate ways. As the children learn to understand others and express their ideas more effectively, their environment becomes larger and richer. Parents are encouraged to schedule a time to visit the room with their child prior to enrollment to become familiar with classroom operations and to allow the child to meet the teacher, children and explore the environment.

Currently our program can enroll up to 15 children in slots designated for the State Department of Education School Readiness Program. These slots are integrated into our both of our preschool classrooms and are open to all 3 and 4 year old children meeting the school readiness eligibility requirements. The tuition fees for these slots are based on a sliding fee scale based on the DSS School Readiness sliding fee scale. Please refer to the "School Readiness Program" section on page 22 for additional information regarding eligibility and the guidelines for enrollment.

ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME TO ENSURE THE COMFORT OF PRESCHOOLERS:

- *Small nap blanket (bring home to launder weekly)*
- *Small nap pillow (bring home to launder weekly)*
- *Small cuddly nap toy (optional)*
- *2 complete changes of clothing (appropriate for the season)*
- *Toothbrush*
- *Toothpaste (optional)*
- *Sunscreen (including written consent to apply)*
- *Sun hat and/or sun glasses (optional)*
- *Nutritious lunch in a labeled box or bag (precut food into pieces no larger than ½ inch square child can safely handle)*

Please label all belongings with child's full first & last name to allow staff the ability to properly identify your child's belongings.

PRESCHOOL FOOD SAFETY

Staff do not offer children foods that may present a risk of choking. Parents of children under the age of four years, are asked to refrain from sending in the following: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; hard pretzels; chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole (1/2 inch square).

TRANSITIONS BETWEEN CLASSROOMS

Children are transitioned to the next classroom based on their individual development. Every effort will be made to ensure that all children remain with their teaching staff for a minimum of nine months prior to transitioning to a new classroom. The transition process is planned out well in advance and includes parent meetings with the staff in the new room, visits by the child to the new room, and the sharing of pertinent information between the current and new staff. The final step of the process provides parents with a survey that will provide the staff and administration with valuable feedback regarding their experience throughout the transition process and the overall program.

PRESCHOOL TRANSITIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

Every effort will be made to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten by the preschool children. As children prepare to transition, staff will read books and plan activities to help alleviate any anxiety or apprehension the children may feel about the upcoming change. Staff is also available to assist parents with the registration process, and will provide parents (and school systems as appropriate and with parental consent) with recent developmental assessments, portfolios and information that will prepare the children's kindergarten teacher for their arrival. Children leaving the program to attend kindergarten are provided with a backpack filled with age-appropriate school supplies in an effort to promote a positive kindergarten transition and experience and to provide the child with the tools needed for learning.

CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

The program's foundation for learning is based on an emergent curriculum that relies heavily on the environment and the role of the teacher in part, as an observer. Emergent curriculum describes the ideas used for the basis of planning activities inspired by the children's interests. Our Center utilizes The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers and The Creative Curriculum- Preschool as a guides for planning developmentally appropriate activities for each age group. We support The Creative Curriculum philosophy that young children learn best by doing. It is built on the theories of development that all children learn through active exploration of their environment, and therefore the environment plays a critical role in learning. The goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive and enthusiastic learners. The Creative Curriculum- Preschool is closely linked to and is used in conjunction with Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks for Children in Preschool Programs, developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Each of these resources help the teachers to take a closer look at, identify and plan for each child's unique abilities, interests and needs. Teachers assess each child's ability and plan activities to challenge individual critical thinking skills. Utilizing The Creative Curriculum Assessment Tool, the progress of each child is monitored and this information is utilized to set goals to promote further development. Outcomes from these assessments are shared with parents both in writing and during in developmental assessment meetings, which are conducted two times per year for infants and toddlers, and three times per year for preschoolers.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIPS

In an effort to provide the children with a wide variety of experiences, the program will on occasion offer field trips to various places that may present educational, social or cultural experiences to the children. Children will participate in field trips as developmentally appropriate. Transportation for field trips is provided by the HSC bus or may be contracted through a private transportation company. Laws regarding the use of child restraints will be followed at all times when transporting children off site. Parents are invited to chaperone field trips throughout the year.

ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

The program also offers on-site enrichment activities to the children. These activities may include visits and presentations by Nature Centers, musicians, various community helpers (e.g., a firefighter, police officer, dentist, doctor, etc.). Parents are always welcome to participate in these on-site activities and/or even present an activity to the children that may relate to their own culture, profession or interests.

STORYTELLING

On a monthly basis, a storyteller from the New Britain Public Library shares stories, songs, finger plays, puppets and felt stories with the children. Books that help to support learning in the classroom are also provided for staff to use during the month. Family & community members are also encouraged to come in and read books to the children at any time.

OTHER EXPERIENCES

The children often participate in nature walks on the hospital grounds, visit the on-site goldfish pond and greenhouse, and go for walks through the administrative areas of the hospital. Special activities are also planned for families, and programs and events are also often scheduled in the hospital Conference Center or cafeteria, in which large groups can come together to share.

CARING AND SHARING PROGRAM

The Caring and Sharing Enrichment Program is a voluntary collaborative program designed to promote all areas of development of children on the Pediatric Unit and the Child Care Center and provides the children the opportunity to increase diversity awareness and gain a greater understanding and appreciation for accepting differences. With parental consent, small groups of children from the child care center interact with the children on the pediatric unit in the pediatric common area in the hospital and share in activities such as circle time, songs, finger plays, crafts and manipulative play. In addition to these visits, individual children from the pediatric unit may also visit the child care center toddler and preschool classrooms for short periods of time to participate in the planned daily activities.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Our staff is trained to understand the multiple underlying causes of children's challenging behaviors and develop approaches to meet a child's individual needs.

A supportive, interesting classroom environment and supportive relationships are key factors in preventing many challenging behaviors. In situations where challenging behaviors are exhibited, the staff will guide the child in an effort to develop self-regulation and respect for others. This may be accomplished by encouraging children to problem solve and to use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication to resolve conflicts. With younger children, strategies may also include redirecting a child's focus from one activity or area to another to eliminate the conditions that may have prompted the behavior.

It is important that parents communicate any information that may directly impact a child's physical or emotional well being and may result in changes in behavior. Situations such as changes in the household environment or members; loss of a pet, friend or relative; and child and/or family health issues, illness, hunger or fatigue may trigger subtle or dramatic changes in a child's behavior. Sharing this type of information with staff in advance will assist them in understanding the potential reasons for unusual or disruptive behavior, and they will be better able to meet the needs of the child. When patterns of unusual or challenging behaviors develop, parents are notified so that they may partner with the staff to develop strategies and goals that may promote positive change and successful outcomes.

In situations where a child may place him/herself or others at immediate risk of physical harm, the child will be removed from the group and will have "quiet time" in an area closely supervised by staff until he/she can regroup. The child will then have the opportunity to return to the activity without disruption or presenting further risk of harm to the other children and staff.

It is the policy of the Center not to tolerate any child being subjected to any form of corporal, humiliating or physical punishment by a staff person, parent or other individual. Any such occurrences will be reported to the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families. Bullying of children by other children is also not tolerated.

In rare instances, when extreme behaviors occur and all options for improvement have been exhausted by the Director, staff and parents, it may be determined that it would be in the child's, other children's, or program's best interests for the child to discontinue enrollment.

TOILET LEARNING

Children are not required to be to be fully toilet trained when enrolling in our preschool and school readiness programs. We believe that determining when a child is ready to begin toilet learning has less to do with a child's age and more to do with their physical and emotional development. Staff will work closely with parents to determine if a child is showing signs of readiness for toilet learning and to ensure consistency between home and the center. The most important thing to remember is that children will learn to use the toilet when they are ready both physically and emotionally. The process can not be rushed and is different for every child. It is very normal for children to make progress and have periods of regression. The important thing is that both staff and parents continue to encourage the child in a positive manner, and success is sure to come!

NAPS

All children scheduled to attend full-day are provided a nap period on a daily basis. Infants are offered naps on flexible schedules based on each child's individual needs and are placed in their cribs on their backs for all naps. Toddlers and Preschoolers are offered naps on individual cots after lunch time. Nap periods are approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours in length for children who sleep. Children who do not sleep are encouraged to rest quietly for at least 30 minutes and are then allowed to engage in quiet activities on their cots or at the classroom tables. Cribs and cots are labeled for individual children and are not shared unless sanitized between use. Parents are responsible for providing nap blankets (as well as sheets for infants) and bringing soiled items home to launder at least weekly.

MEALS

Proper nutrition is key in the development of young children. We encourage healthy food choices so that children get the nutrition they need to get through their activity-filled day. The hospital's food services department provides morning and afternoon snacks (including milk or juice) and milk for lunch. Whole milk is provided for children under the age of two years and 2% milk is provided for children over two years. It is each family's responsibility to supply their child with a nutritious lunch. There is a refrigerator in every classroom and a microwave in each of the toddler and preschool classrooms for the storage and heating of lunches.

All toddler and preschool lunches and snacks are served family style at regularly established times (refer to the daily schedule posted in each class) and are served at least two hours, but not more than three hours, apart. During our family style meals and snacks, staff sit with the children and act as role models as they encourage children to try new foods. In addition, staff provide assistance to children as they develop skills in the pouring and scooping of their own servings of food and beverages.

Breakfast is not offered as part of the daily program in the toddler and preschool classrooms. Staff mornings are filled with activity as they greet arriving parents and children, prepare for the day's activities and supervise children playing. As a result, staff is limited in their ability to also supervise meal service during this busy time. Therefore, only parents dropping off their child prior to 7:30 a.m. may opt to bring in breakfast for their child to consume upon arrival. Breakfast service for these children will be available until 7:45 a.m. only. Any child arriving at 7:30 a.m. or after should be offered breakfast prior to their arrival.

LUNCH

Please utilize the following guidelines when preparing lunches for children:

- Cut all food into bite-sized pieces as appropriate (see "Food Safety" under Program Information)
- If the meal needs to be heated, please place the food in a microwavable container labeled with child's full name.
- Frozen meals are not allowed due to the length of time required for heating.
- Please prepare food so that it is ready to eat according to individual child's preferences, (e.g., peel fruit, cut into slices, remove crusts, etc.)
- Good nutrition is promoted during all meals. Please avoid sending in sweets & treats. Parents should refrain from placing any type of candy, gum and soda in a child's lunch at any time. Please reserve these treats for home.
- Children are provided with the opportunity to make choices during lunch. Staff will encourage children to choose healthy foods first, with less nutritious choices to be eaten after healthy choices have been consumed.
- Children's food consumption will be noted on the daily sheets and shared with parents in each classroom on a daily basis.
- Untouched foods will go back in their containers and sent home so that parents will know what foods their child consumes and meals can be varied accordingly.
- Any items not intended for consumption the same day as brought into the Center and are stored in the refrigerator or food cabinet must be labeled with the child's full name and date.

SNACKS

Our snack menu has been developed by the Child Care Center's Nutrition Consultant in accordance with the USDA nutritional guidelines for children. The amount of snack, juice, and milk served will be limited to the serving portions suggested for meeting USDA recommended serving size guidelines for each age group. Our snack menu rotates on a four-week cycle and is posted near the Parent Information Board in the main entrance. If a child has a restriction or allergy to any food, parents must bring it to the attention of the staff, as on occasion the kitchen will substitute items not readily available.

*Please refer to **ALLERGIES AND RESTRICTIONS** on page 15 for information regarding children having special dietary needs.*

HEALTH INFORMATION

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

In accordance with the State of CT Child Day Care Licensing regulations, an-up-to date record of required immunizations and documentation of a yearly physical exam must be on file for each child enrolled in the Center. Parents are notified 90, 60 and 30 days prior to the expiration date of their child's last physical exam to provide them with ample time to schedule an appointment with their child's physician so that an updated health record can be obtained. Parents are responsible for providing the Center with updated immunization records at the time of administration.

In order to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all children enrolled, DPH regulations prohibit the attendance of any child who does not have an up-to-date health record on file. You may contact the office if at any time you would like to verify the date of your child's health record on file, immunization due dates or to obtain a new form for your child's physician to update.

ROLE OF THE HEALTH CONSULTANT

The Health Consultant for the Center is an R.N. on staff on the Pediatric Unit at Hospital for Special Care. The Health Consultant conducts weekly on-site visits and is available to assist staff in evaluating and addressing any health and developmental concerns exhibited by the children. The Health Consultant also reviews all child health records to ensure they meet DPH requirements and to identify any health issues that need to be shared with staff.

ACCIDENTS/INJURIES/INCIDENTS

In the event of a non-life-threatening injury, parents will be notified by phone or at pick-up time, depending on the severity of the injury (i.e., bite vs. knee scrape). Only First Aid trained and certified staff is permitted to administer first aid. All injuries, accidents and incidents are documented on a Child Accident/Incident Report. The parent/guardian is responsible for reading and signing this report to ensure that they have been made aware of the injury and treatment if applicable.

ILLNESS & EXCLUSION

The Center will post notices on the classroom doors and in the foyer informing parents when their child may have been exposed to a potentially contagious condition. These notices also include the signs and symptoms that a child may exhibit as a result of the exposure.

Should a child exhibit symptoms that may indicate a contagious or condition, he/she should not attend the Center until such time there is no longer a risk of exposure to the other children and staff. These symptoms may include, but are not limited to, diarrhea, vomiting, discolored nasal discharge, fever of 101° F or higher and undiagnosed rashes and conditions. Some of the contagious illnesses that may require exclusion include viral and bacterial infections; conjunctivitis; scabies; chicken pox; strep throat; roseola; ringworm; fifth disease and Coxsackie's virus.

Children who are ill and/or are exhibiting potentially contagious symptoms may return to the Center after being symptom free and fever free without the administration of a fever-reducing medication or other medications that may mask symptoms for a full 24 hours from the time of the last occurrence; has received appropriate treatment; does not require one-on-one care; and/or has a written medical clearance from the child's pediatrician stating he or she is no longer contagious.

Should symptoms develop while a child is in our care, the Director of Child Care, or designee, will evaluate the child to determine if further evaluation is needed by the Nurse Consultant. Every effort will be made to contact parents in the event that the Nurse Consultant has been contacted. Once the child is evaluated, the parent will be informed of the outcome. If it is determined that the child's symptoms do not present a risk, the child will continue to be monitored by staff. If the condition worsens, or presents immediate risk of spread of infection to the staff and other children, the parents will be contacted to make arrangements for the pick-up of their child. Parents are asked to pick-up their child within one-hour from the time the call is received. During this time, the child will be provided a cot to rest on in a quiet, supervised area away from the group.

Although we strive for consistency, illness must be addressed on a case-by-case basis taking many factors into consideration. If you have a question regarding our exclusion policy, please speak with the Director or the Nurse Consultant.

INFECTION CONTROL

In an effort to minimize the spread of infections, the staff is extremely conscientious about disinfecting the classrooms, including all toys and equipment, and ensuring that proper hand-washing procedures and diaper changing procedures are followed for the children and staff. Parents, children and visitors should also be required to wash their hands entering a classroom.

ALLERGIES AND RESTRICTIONS

Food-related and non-food related allergies and restrictions must be shared in writing at the time of enrollment or when they are discovered. A copy of the snack menu is provided to all parents of children with food allergies and restrictions so that parents can review the snack menu carefully and inform staff of those foods that should not be served to their child. The Center will provide appropriate snack substitutes for children with allergies documented by a physician. Parents are responsible for providing snack substitutions for children having restrictions that are not documented by a physician.

MEDICATIONS

In accordance with our current DPH Child Day Care License and CSC Child Care Center Policies, certified staff may administer the following medications with a current (within one year) authorization form signed by the parent:

- Non-prescription topical ointments & creams (free of antibiotic or steroidal components)
- Medicated powders
- Teething gel
- Insect repellents (children older than two months only)
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher recommended and free of amino benzoic acids [paba] or its derivatives)
- Lip balm

Certified staff may administer emergency medications with current written authorization from the parent and the child's physician, which must include a written plan for administration:

- Epi-pen auto-injector and/or Benadryl
- Inhaler (on an emergency basis only)
- Nebulizer

Parents are responsible for informing the Center, in writing, of any changes regarding their child's prescription(s) and administration. It is also the responsibility of the parent to ensure that prescription medications on site are current and are replaced prior to their expiration.

No other prescription or over-the-counter medications of any type will be administered by staff, including but not limited to: Tylenol, oral antibiotics, cough medications, allergy medications, eye drops, prescription creams and ointments, and non-prescription creams and ointments containing antibiotic or steroidal components.

It is imperative that medications *NEVER* be left in diaper bags, lunch boxes, back packs or placed in a child's food, drink or bottle and brought into the Center. This presents a serious risk to the other children.

ORAL HEALTH PRACTICES

All children over the age of one year participate in oral health routines on a daily basis. Parents are asked to provide a toothbrush so that children can brush their teeth after lunch. Toothpaste will not be used for children under two years of age. Toothpaste for children over the age of two years is optional and is provided by the parent. Only brands of toothpaste that have been previously used by that child at home should be provided to ensure there will be no adverse reaction. Toothbrushes and toothpaste should be clearly labeled with each child's first and last name. The program has established a collaborative agreement with the Special Care Dental Clinic and the New Britain Oral Health Collaborative to ensure that all children have access to dental screenings and services.

SAFETY INFORMATION

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Written Emergency Plans for life-threatening, non-life threatening, fire and other emergencies are posted in every classroom. In addition, an emergency evacuation plan is posted in every area of the Center indicating the primary and secondary escape routes in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Evacuation Drills (also referred to as fire drills) are conducted monthly to ensure that all staff and children are prepared to evacuate quickly and safely in the event of a true emergency. These drills are unannounced and are planned and coordinated by the Director of Child Care and hospital security personnel.

In the event of a power outage, the Center is equipped with a generator that will automatically restore power. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the Conference Center on the lower level of the hospital is our designated alternative shelter.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

It is the policy of the Hospital not to tolerate threats, threatening verbal or physical behavior, or acts of violence against or involving the children, parents, employees, volunteers or visitors of the Child Care Center and Hospital. This includes any act that may harass, interfere with or disrupt an individual or group, or may create an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment. Such conduct by a parent, family member, volunteer, visitor or person affiliated with a family having a child enrolled in the Child Care Center may result in immediate termination of enrollment for that family.

Any individual who feels he or she has been threatened or has witnessed threatening behavior against another person should not hesitate to immediately inform the Director, any staff member of the Child Care Center or Hospital for Special Care Security Services.

BADGE ACCESS

Parents are issued an access badge at the time of enrollment. This badge provides parents with access to the Center during normal operating hours. For security reasons, parents are not to loan their badge to anyone at any time. Individuals without badges who need access to the Center can ring the doorbell and a staff member will give them access.

Badge Request for Non-Employee

Any individual who is not an HSC employee and is requesting a badge for access to the Childcare Center for the purpose of picking up/dropping off children must present photo identification prior to the badge being issued, and a copy will be placed in the child's file. Individuals required to provide photo identification include spouses, friends and family members of employees, and all community members. A photocopy of the identification provided will be kept on file. Parents are asked not to allow anyone to enter the building who is unfamiliar and does not have a badge. Please notify a staff member immediately so that identification can be requested to determine if the individual is authorized to enter the building.

PARENTAL COMPLIANCE WITH DPH REGULATIONS AND CSC CHILD CARE POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The Center is responsible for the health and safety of all children regardless if a parent is on site. DPH regulations, NAEYC criteria and CSC Child Care Center policies, procedures and practices must be adhered to at all times by the staff, parents, children and/or other individuals visiting, dropping off or picking up a child at the Center. This includes, but is not limited to, the proper supervision of children both indoors and out (including following classroom and playground rules), maintaining ratios and appropriate group size, and behavior management (please refer to the Behavior Management on page 11 in this handbook). ***Parental presence does not exempt a child, sibling or parent from complying with the Center's policies, procedures and practices and rules.***

FEES AND PAYMENTS

Tuition payments received by employees and community members will not be prorated for any reason including, but not limited to, holidays, vacations, illness or non-attendance for personal reasons.

TUITION PAYMENTS FOR CSC EMPLOYEES

Tuition payments for CSC employees (HSC, Brittany Farms & the Satellite) are made through payroll deduction. Employees are required to complete a benefit election form at the time of enrollment so that deductions are effective on their child's first day in attendance. Employees opting not to pay tuition through payroll deduction will be required to pay the community member rate. Employees may opt for tuition payments to be deducted pre-tax. The amount allowable for pre-tax deductions will be calculated on an individual basis by the Compensation and Benefits Department.

TUITION PAYMENTS FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Tuition is due bi-weekly, by the Thursday prior to each tuition cycle. Parents are provided a schedule of tuition due dates prior to the start of each calendar year. Payments in the form of check or money order made payable to HSC are accepted. Non-payment of tuition for 2 or more weeks may result in termination from the program.

LATE PAYMENT FEE

Late payment fees in the amount of \$10.00 per week will be assessed on all accounts with payments past due, including payments for regular bi-weekly tuition, tuition due for additional days/hours of care, late pick-up fees, and tuition due as a result of a missed/incorrect payroll deduction. Late payment fees will accrue on a weekly basis until the total amount due, including the late payment fees, is paid in full.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

Please refer to "Late Pick-Up" Under Arrival and Departure on page 6.

TUITION REFUNDS

Tuition refunds will not be issued to employees or community members for any reason.

PAYMENT OF FEES FOR LATE PAYMENTS, LATE PICK-UP & ADDITIONAL DAYS/HOURS OF CARE

Payments for requested and approved additional days/hours of care must be made in advance. Payments for late pick-up must be made within 5 business days of the occurrence. Payments in the form of a check or money order made payable to HSC are accepted for late payment and late pick-up fees. Non-payment of late payment fees, late pick-up fees and/or fees for additional days/hours of care may result in termination from the program. Schedule changes and requests for additional days/hours of care will not be approved for any family with outstanding fees.

RETURNED CHECKS

A fee will be charged for checks returned due to insufficient funds or for any other reason. Accounts with 2 or more returned checks will require that all future payments be made by bank check or money order.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

Assistance may be available for families meeting income eligibility through the State of CT Child Care Assistance Program (Care 4 Kids). Staff is available to aid families in accessing the Care4Kids program and will also assist families in the application and re-determination process as needed. Families may contact the Center office or go to www.ctcare4kids.com to obtain information about this program.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

A sibling discount will be offered to employee families with two (2) or more children attending the CSC Child Care Programs on the same schedule. A 10% reduction will be applied to the tuition fee of the oldest child enrolled. Families paying a reduced fee in the School Readiness Program and/or participate in the Care4Kids Child Care Assistance program are not eligible for the sibling discount.

COMMUNICATION

Mailboxes - Each family has an assigned mailbox in their child's classroom where they may obtain notes, newsletters and other important information about their child and the program. Parents are urged to check mailboxes daily to promote effective communication.

Newsletters - Monthly newsletters and calendars are published at the beginning of each month to keep you well informed of the Center's recent and upcoming activities. Additional flyers and memos are distributed when information needs to be shared during the month.

Daily Sheets – Infant, Toddler and Preschool parents are provided with a daily record indicating when their child ate and how much, naps, diaper changes, use of the toilet, and any other comments about their child's day. Preschool parents are also provided with a daily sheet that indicates how their child ate, napped, and the types of activities offered during the day.

Classroom Communication Boards (Preschool) - Parents are provided with an outline of activities the children in that class participated in during the day.

Curriculum Board - Staff post their carefully planned lesson plans at the beginning of each week so that parents may: view the activities planned for the week; utilize this information to reinforce concepts with their child at home; and help promote discussions between the parent and child about their child's day. In addition to the activities, goals and objectives are documented to help give parents a better understanding of how each of the activities will meet their child's educational, emotional, physical and social needs.

Parent Information Board - The Center Parent Information Board is located in the hallway directly across from the Main Office. This board displays copies of recent newsletters and notices, resources, snack menus, and other types of informational flyers.

Program Information Board - The Program Information Board is located in the foyer as you enter the building. This board displays the Center's licenses, approvals and certification, policies as well as the process for sharing a complaint or concern.

E-mail - Parents with access to e-mail during the day who would like to utilize this form of communication with the Center should be sure to include their e-mail address with their enrollment information. Please refer to the Center Contact Information List provided in the enrollment packet for specific information regarding e-mailing center staff.

Telephone & FAX - Parents are welcome to call the Center at any time. However, please understand that staff must make supervising the children their priority and may not be readily available to accept a call from parents. In that case, please leave a voice mail and the staff in your child's classroom will get back to you at their earliest opportunity. If a matter needs to be discussed immediately, please call the office where staff can assist you. The number for the direct fax line to the Center is (860) 827-4870. Feel free to utilize this line to transmit information to the Center as appropriate.

Parent Meetings - Although Assessment meetings are offered to parents at various times throughout the year, parents are encouraged to request meetings with the staff and/or Director at any time should questions or concerns arise regarding their child.

Arrival and Departure Communication - Keep in mind that arrival and departure times present valuable opportunities for parents to communicate with the staff. If possible, please allow for a few minutes to connect with your child's teacher at arrival and departure times to discuss your child's day and to promote smooth transitions between home and the Center.

Confidentiality - We will maintain confidentiality and will respect your family's right to privacy in accordance with the HSC Confidentiality Statement, HIPPA and the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. All information obtained from parents will be kept in confidence and information in child files will be stored in the Child Care Center office and will be made available only to individuals who have consent by the parent or legal guardian for access to records, parents or legal guardians and regulatory authorities on request.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are viewed as their child's first teachers and play a key role in their child's development. In an effort to promote positive collaborative relationships between the family and center, parent involvement is encouraged and welcomed at all times. Involvement comes in many forms and may include:

Parent/Staff Forum - Meetings are held quarterly or more frequently if needed. The purpose and goal of these meetings is for parents and staff to collaborate regarding program issues such as the planning of supplemental educational and social activities for the children and parents as well as fundraising efforts and to discuss program goals.

Family Functions - Several times a year, functions are planned which can include parents, siblings, and grandparents. Family functions have included activities such as sing-a-longs, crafts, performances, luncheons, ice cream socials, storytelling, picnics, and an annual Family luncheon which provide the staff and families with opportunities to interact get to know and support each other.

Fundraising - In an effort to supplement the educational and social experiences for the children and families, fundraisers are held to generate funds to help offset costs and make these activities possible. Examples include book fairs, bake sales and candle sales. Participation in fundraising activities is optional; however, we greatly appreciate the support from parents and staff in reaching our goals.

Parent Volunteers - Parents may volunteer their time in the classroom reading stories, assisting with a special program or activity, or sharing a special talent, skill, or information regarding their job or culture. In addition, parents may volunteer as chaperones on field trips and assist with organizing activities. The program is open to learning new ways parents can be involved!

Assessment Meetings & Parent/Teacher Conferences - Parents are given the opportunity to discuss their child's development with their child's teacher during meetings conducted three times per year. During these meetings, the child's teacher shares a written summary of the child's progress in mastering developmentally appropriate skills. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback to enable staff to better meet their child's individual needs. Should a parent decline the invitation to one of these meetings, the parent is provided with a copy of the written assessment. Additional meetings may be requested by parents or staff at any time as needed.

Transition Meetings - Transition meetings are offered to parents prior to their child's transition into another classroom. The staff in the room into which the child is transitioning conducts the meeting. This meeting provides staff and parents the opportunity to become familiar with each other, open the door to communication, help staff learn more about the child, and allows staff to share classroom practices, schedules and expectations with the parent.

Open- Door Policy - The Center has an open door policy for families with children enrolled in the Center. For security reasons, any individual not having children enrolled must make an appointment to schedule a tour. *On rare occasions, a visit from a family member may cause a child distress and/or may be disruptive to the class routines and/or separation may be difficult for a child. Family members are encouraged to consult with the staff to assess the outcome of visits and to ensure that visits are a positive experience for everyone.*

Continuous Quality Improvement – Parents and staff are invited to participate in a variety of surveys to provide feedback for continuous quality improvement. Family and Staff annual program surveys are conducted annually. The results of these surveys are analyzed to determine how improvements can be made to better meet the needs of the children and families and the results are shared with the parents and staff in a written summary. Transition or exit surveys are conducted with parents when children transition from one classroom to another or are withdrawn from the program. All surveys are confidential and anonymous.

Lending Library - Each classroom has a lending library available for parents to sign out Math, Science and Literacy backpacks filled with books, props and activities that parents and children can share at home. These backpacks offer children opportunities for children to build important skills and families opportunities to spend quality time together!

Parent Education –During the year, information regarding on-site and off-site trainings, workshops and parent education opportunities is available for parents. Child Care is provided for on site activities. Parents are encouraged to share their needs and suggestions for educational activities.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Nap belongings (infant sheets/blankets and toddler & preschool blankets) are to be brought home at the end of each week, laundered, and returned on the first day a child attends the next week.
- Outdoor play (weather permitting) is an important part of the daily activities for all children. Children should have the appropriate clothing (including sneakers or suitable closed-toe shoes) to participate in outdoor play. During the summer, parents should provide such items as a bathing suit, water shoes, and towel. In the winter, cold weather gear including jackets, hats, mittens and boots should be provided to ensure comfort.
- At minimum of one extra complete change of clothing is to be kept on site at all times. (Including pants or shorts, a shirt, socks and undies as applicable). Two sets are recommended for children in the process of toilet learning.
- Please be sure to label all children's personal belongings brought into the Center.
- Plastic bags of any type should not be used to store children's belongings in their cubbies or mailboxes. Vinyl or canvas bags or backpacks may be used.
- Lesson plans are posted on the board outside each classroom door for parents to view.
- Sharing time (a.k.a. Show & Tell) may be included in your child's classroom activities. Your child will be given the opportunity to bring in something from home to share at group time during a designated week. Please see your child's Teacher for the schedule noting when it will be your child's turn. Toys that promote violence or aggressive play are not permitted at any time. (For example, superheroes, swords, guns, etc...) Toys from home are not to be brought in at any other time.
- Celebrations (i.e. birthdays, welcoming new siblings) are welcome; however, please check with your child's teacher to find out if any child in the class has food allergies or dietary restrictions. Your child's teacher may be able to offer suggestions regarding what would be best to provide for your child's special day. Please keep in mind that all food brought into the center to be shared must be store bought, in its original, unopened package or must be a whole fruit or vegetable.
- All individuals removing a child from the Center must follow the State of Connecticut auto restraint laws and utilize the appropriate car seat/booster seat for children when leaving the Center.
- Cars must never be left running and unattended in the parking lot for any reason.
- Children under the age of 12 should never be left unattended in vehicles at any time as per Connecticut State Law.
- SMOKING is NOT allowed in the Center or on the grounds of the center at any time by staff, parents or visitors.
- The center is not responsible for infant and child car seats and other personal items left in the foyer and other common areas of the center.
- Staff are not permitted to provide private child care/babysitting services to any family with children enrolled in any of the CSC Child Care Programs. Parents requesting staff to provide these services may be subject to dis-enrollment.
- Children will be protected from harmful chemicals and fumes in areas that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled or otherwise renovated. All renovations will occur during off hours when the the children and staff are not present and the HSC maintenance staff will ensure that the area is well ventilated prior to the return of the children and staff.

DISCONTINUED ENROLLMENT

The Center follows established guidelines to evaluate if the continued enrollment of a child is in the best interests of that child, the other children, the staff and the program.

This procedure includes observations, written documentation of the concerns, and input by the classroom staff, parents, Director of Child Care, and Nurse Consultant. Every effort will be made to set goals, make modifications, use work resources and outside agencies as appropriate, provide recommendations for referrals, and offer feedback to promote positive outcomes and the continued enrollment of the child.

Considerations for discontinued enrollment may include, but are not limited to, behaviors that may cause concern for the physical or emotional well being of the child, other children or staff; non-payment of tuition and/or other fees as per policy; failure to provide up-to-date health and enrollment information as required by DPH; failure to maintain compliance with School Readiness requirements.

If it is determined that the child's enrollment will be discontinued, parents will be provided resources and a minimum of two weeks' notice to find alternate care. The length of notice given may be reduced if there is a continued risk of physical or emotional harm to the child, other children and or staff or if the tuition payments are two or more weeks in arrears.

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

A minimum of two weeks' written notice is required when withdrawing a child from the program for any reason. Payment for these two weeks is required regardless of attendance.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Individual child and classroom concerns should first be directed to the classroom teacher.

If an issue or concern discussed with the classroom teacher is not resolved or if for any reason the parent is not comfortable discussing the issue with the classroom staff, the concern should be brought directly to the Director of Child Care.

If the problem or issue is still not resolved, it may be brought to the attention of the Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer.

If the matter is still not resolved or in the case of an emergency, parents should contact the State of CT, Department of Public Health, Child Day Care Licensing Unit at 1-800-282-6063.

In cases of suspected abuse or neglect, parents should contact the State of CT, Department of Children and Families at 1-800-842-2288.

All matters discussed between the parents and staff will be kept confidential and shared only as necessary and appropriate.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This handbook serves as an overview of the policies and guidelines for enrollment in the Child Care Center and is not all-inclusive. Should you have a question regarding any issue, please bring it to the attention of the Director of Child Care so that it may be addressed.

Parents are required to sign and return the CSC Child Care Center Parent Handbook Acknowledgment form at the time of enrollment to indicate that they have reviewed this handbook and agree to comply with its policies, procedures and practices. This form is included in the enrollment packet.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES SDE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

School Readiness Legislation, Connecticut General Status 10-16o through 10-16u, outlines the framework for the establishment of school readiness programs that provide high quality education and care.

The Center of Special Care Child Care Center is pleased to participate in the New Britain School Readiness Program giving all 3 and 4 year old children residing in New Britain access to our quality program on a full-day/full-year basis. This section of the handbook is designed to be a supplement to the Center of Special Care Child Care Center Parent Handbook to provide parents with children enrolled in School Readiness with the information and guidelines for that program. Parents enrolling in CSC School Readiness slots must complete all Center enrollment paperwork and are obligated to read and agree to all the policies, procedures and conditions set forth in our Parent Handbook.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in the CSC Child Care Center and School Readiness Program is open to all children regardless of race, creed, ethnic or cultural background. Requirements for eligibility include that the family must live in New Britain and the child is enrolled and on a full day/full year basis.

Participation in the CSC School Readiness Program will require parents to provide the Center with additional information that may not be asked of parents enrolling in our Center who do not participate in the School Readiness Program. This information includes but is not limited to: family income verification, the child's social security number, health & nutrition information, parent education and training needs, referrals for social services, proof of residency, etc.

During the enrollment process, parents are asked to complete a Family Information Questionnaire that will help the program to identify areas in which the child and family are in need of support and/or services.

The center collaborates with the community a number of community agencies to ensure that these needs are met and families are able to secure services and/or assistance with access to the families' literacy education/training needs, adult education programs, job training and public library services. In addition, assistance will be provided to families in accessing on-going well-child care, immunizations, health, dental and nutritional screenings. Some of these services may be provided on site by the program's consultants and/or collaborating agencies. For services not offered on site, the program will assist families in accessing these services in the community.

Families who do not currently have health insurance will be referred to the *HUSKY PLAN*. The Center of Special Care Child Care Center will provide assistance to families in obtaining information and applying for *HUSKY*.

ELIGIBILITY

Both the legal parent/guardian and the child enrolled in the School Readiness Program must be legal residents of New Britain. Families moving out of New Britain will no longer be eligible to maintain enrollment. A copy of the child's birth certificate and the proof of residency must be submitted prior to enrollment. Our program's School Readiness slots are intended for families in need of care on a full-day and full year basis due to parent work schedules.

ATTENDANCE

The Center of Special Care has been approved to provide full day/full year School Readiness slots. Children eligible for these slots must be consistently in need of services for a minimum of 7 hours/day, 5 days/week for 50 weeks per year. Attendance is critical for children's success in our program. If a child is going to be out for any reason, parents must call our office to notify the staff of the absence. If a child has had extensive sick days, we may ask parents to provide a note from the child's pediatrician indicating the child is under medical care. As a School Readiness provider, we are also obligated to establish an attendance protocol. If a child is absent for three days without a phone call from the parent, our Director or designee will contact the parent via telephone. If we are not able to reach a parent/guardian, a letter will be sent home. If a child has been absent for 10 school days and there has been no contact from the parent or response to our attempts to make contact, the child's School Readiness slot will be forfeited and assigned to another eligible family from our wait list. It is the responsibility of the program to insure that slots are utilized in a manner that most effectively uses funding while serving the families that are in need of full day/full year care. Children not in attendance a minimum of 7 hours/day, 5 days/week for 52 weeks per year may be disenrolled in the program.

FEES

The parent share of tuition fees is calculated on a sliding scale based on the School Readiness Income Guidelines established by the State of Connecticut Department of Social Services. There will be no tuition costs to School Readiness parents other than the sliding fee amount, however parents with children enrolled in School Readiness are required to pay late payment and late pick-up fees as applicable. Parents approved for child care assistance through the Care4Kids program will be required to pay the family share fee calculated by Care4Kids in lieu of the sliding fee amount. Parents are provided with a copy of the DSS sliding fee scale guidelines whenever fees are calculated. Fees calculated will be reviewed with the parent and the parent will provide a signature acknowledging they have received a copy of the fee calculation form.

FEE RE-DETERMINATION

In order to maintain enrollment in the School Readiness Program, family income must be verified every six months. Parents are provided with a written reminder of the date of re-determination approximately 3 weeks prior to the date due. This notice will outline the process as well as an outline of the documentation that you will be required to submit. Please note that any change in family income may affect the parent share of the established child-care fee.

All enrollment, income and fee information obtained will be kept in confidence. We will maintain confidentiality and will respect your family's right to privacy in accordance with the HSC Confidentiality Statement and the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The Center of Special Care Child Care Center is committed to developing effective strategies to involve all families in the education of their children. In addition to the family involvement opportunities outlined in our Parent Handbook, CSC will use six partnership standards defined in the *Guide to Using the Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships in Early Care and Education Programs* as a guide for planning family involvement opportunities. These standards are defined as parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Our program's governing body is defined in our program as the Parent/Staff Forum. This forum actively involves parents in collaborating ideas regarding program issues such as the planning of supplemental educational and social activities for the children and parents as well as fundraising efforts. In addition, CSC will create a School Readiness Parent/Staff Forum. All parents are encouraged to participate in this forum and provide input for decision making for the School Readiness Program. The board will meet quarterly during the program year. The purpose of this board will be to identify parent training needs and interests, plan field trips and special events for the program, and conduct program evaluation. *For more specific family events & activities, please refer to the "Parent Involvement" section in our Parent Handbook.*

ASSISTANCE for FAMILIES

In an effort to support both the child and family needs, families are provided with resources and support in accessing programs and services including but not limited to, adult education, job training and public library services. The center has established collaborative agreements with a variety of community agencies in an effort to coordinate services

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

All families wishing to enroll a child in the School Readiness program and are eligible, are required to apply for Child Care Assistance through the State Child Care Assistance Program (Care4Kids). Staff is available to aid families in accessing the Care4Kids program and will also assist families in the application and re-determination process as needed. Families may contact the Center office or go to www.ctcare4kids.com to obtain information about this program.

Once approved, it is the responsibility of the parent to continue their approval status to insure there is no disruption in the receipt of childcare assistance funds. Families that do not cooperate fully with the Care4Kids application process will not be allowed to maintain enrollment in the School Readiness program.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

At least annually, School Readiness parents will be asked to complete a program survey that will identify whether your child's and family's needs are being met. The input you provide is a valuable tool in the overall assessment of our program and allows us to set goals for continuous quality improvement.