

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT CHICAGO**

UIC Children's Center (MC 050)  
728 West Roosevelt Road, Room 287  
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7007

Dear Parent,

All of us at the Children's Center are pleased that you have enrolled your child in our program. We want you to feel welcome and a part of the Center. We ask that you look over this parent handbook and keep it at home for future reference.

You may find our policies and procedures similar to those you've experienced in other early childhood education programs, and there may also be some differences. Please keep in mind that there are reasons behind why we do what we do at the Center. Our primary goal is to provide quality early childhood education services to UIC families.

We hope that your experiences at the Children's Center assure you that your child will be well cared for. Please let the site directors, teachers, or me know of your questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. Fineberg, M.Ed.  
Director

**UIC**

Phone (312) 413-5330 \* Fax (312) 413-5333  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

UIC CHILDREN'S CENTER I  
East Site (RRB)

PARENT HANDBOOK

*Revised 2008*

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## ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Each of the Center's two sites has campus and street addresses, as well as multiple telephone numbers.

We have voicemail on the office telephone lines and automatic call forwarding on the teachers' line. Calls are forwarded to our west site on the fourth ring. Therefore, if you are calling the east site, your call may occasionally be answered by someone at our west site. You may leave a message or ask that your call be transferred to another number at the east site. Sometimes staff members are unable to answer the telephone. Should your call go unanswered, please try again after a short wait.

### **UIC Children's Center I (East Site)**

**Campus Address:** Roosevelt Road Building (RRB), Room 287, MC 050

**Street/US Mail:** 728 W. Roosevelt Road, Room 287  
Chicago, IL 60607-7007

<b>Telephones:</b>	Information	(312) 413-5330
	Site Director	413-5331
	Teachers	413-5332
	Center Director	413-5328
<b>Fax:</b>		413-5333

### **UIC Children's Center II (West Site)**

**Campus Address:** Applied Health Sciences Building (AHSB), Room 116, MC 525

**Street/US Mail:** 1919 W. Taylor Street, Room 116  
Chicago, IL 60612-7248

<b>Telephones:</b>	Information	(312) 413-5330
	Site Director	413-5326
	Teachers	413-5327
	Center Director	413-5328
<b>Fax:</b>		413-5329

Our website address is [www.uic.edu/depts/children](http://www.uic.edu/depts/children). The website contains general and site specific information, as well as parenting and early childhood education links.

## **UIC CHILDREN'S CENTER**

The Children's Center serves a number of purposes, but foremost is that of providing quality full-day early childhood education services to children of UIC students, faculty, and staff.

The Center also serves as a demonstration site for the constructivist early childhood curriculum developed by former UIC professors Constance Kamii and Rheta DeVries and based upon the theory of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget.

The Center is a site for practicum/internship experiences for students in early childhood education and related professions. It also serves as a resource for faculty and students who wish to conduct research with, and for the benefit of, young children and their families. The Center's research guidelines (including notification of parents) are included in this handbook and must be followed by researchers in planning and conducting research activities.

In 1998, both sites of the Children's Center were selected by the Chicago Public Schools to participate in the State Pre-kindergarten Program, which has since expanded into the *Preschool For All* program. The goal of *Preschool For All* is to ensure that all children are well prepared to succeed in school and in life. During expansion, programs serving children at-risk of school failure are the first priority for enrollment followed by families earning up to four times the federal poverty level. Those children who are between the ages of three and five years old and live in the city of Chicago are eligible to participate in the program. However, all children enrolled at the Center receive the same services.

The Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, a U.S. Department of Agriculture program administered by the Illinois State Board of Education. In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any United States Department of Agriculture-related activity should write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

Both Children's Center sites are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

## **HISTORY OF THE CHILDREN'S CENTER**

Our original program was opened on January 16, 1972, on the east side of campus, through the combined efforts of the members of a student organization (Circle Women's Liberation Union) and interested faculty and staff who wanted low-cost on-campus child care for students, faculty, and staff.

In 1974, the University assumed full responsibility for Circle Children's Center (the original name) following the awarding of an honorary degree to Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. The Center was assigned to the College of Education, and the University provided space, as well as an operating subsidy, so that the Center could continue its sliding fee scale based on family income and other financial resources. In 1981, the Center was transferred to Campus Auxiliary Services.

In 1984, through the efforts of the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women, the Center expanded its services to the west side of campus. Our second site was opened on September 17. UIC Children's Center is sponsored by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and is under the immediate supervision of the Director of Campus Auxiliary Services and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

## **THE CONSTRUCTIVIST CURRICULUM**

The Children's Center is a demonstration site for a constructivist curriculum developed by former UIC professors Constance Kamii and Rheta DeVries and based upon the theory of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. Using this approach, teachers encourage children to think and solve problems in their own way, rather than to memorize specific information and solve problems in an adult manner. Integral to this curriculum is the idea that young children think differently than older children and adults.

The Center's emphasis is on children's learning through play rather than teacher-directed, specific academic activities. As an integral component of any developmental curriculum, play is essential for children to learn. Through play, children have the opportunity to explore the world around them and pursue their own ideas. Teachers carefully plan the classroom environment, choose materials, and develop activities based on their formal educational training and in conjunction with observations of children's interests and current abilities. Play offers children the opportunity to use language, literacy, and mathematics in meaningful ways. Cooking activities, story dictation, and board games are just a few of the activities children engage in on a daily basis that help them develop the fundamental building blocks necessary for future school success. Play is also a valuable tool for social and emotional development. Through play, children begin to develop self-esteem, self-regulation, empathy towards others, and the skills necessary to become productive members of society. We stress the development of each child's curiosity, confidence, independence, and resourcefulness both in and out of the classroom. Teachers encourage children to discuss their ideas and to resolve problems using words and ideas. Children are cared for in mixed-age classrooms. Mixed-age groupings more naturally encourage older children to help younger ones and give younger children ideas and models. Children are assigned by the site director to a classroom of either three- and four-year-olds or four- and five-year-olds. This is the kindergarten experience for some children in the older group. Children must leave the Center when they are ready to attend first grade. The site director considers the age of the child and the make-up of the classroom in assigning children to a particular classroom. Most children start at the beginning of fall

semester; others are enrolled as openings occur.

The Center does enroll children with special needs (a generally recognized and persistent physical, cognitive, or emotional disability) whenever feasible for the child and the Center. In such cases, an appropriate statement from the child's physician or professional referring agency must be submitted at the time of enrollment. Center staff may obtain the assistance of a qualified consultant prior to and throughout the child's enrollment. If a child develops signs of special needs after enrolling in the program, Center staff will provide the parent with information about available resources for the diagnosis of the child's possible condition. Such diagnostic information will be required for continued enrollment in the program. The Center may also obtain the assistance of a qualified consultant to help develop appropriate program plans, to assess the feasibility of continued care at the Center, and to coordinate services with other agencies. In the event that the Center's program and staff can no longer adequately meet the individual needs of the child, the director will set a date for termination of Center services and will offer the parent(s) information about alternative resources.

## **ASSESSMENT METHODS AND MATERIALS**

The Children's Center assessment plan integrates the three influences on our curriculum: developmentally appropriate practice, a constructivist approach, and the Illinois State Board of Education's Early Learning Standards. The purpose of assessment is to provide consistent documentation of what takes place in each classroom throughout the year.

Documentation is meant to show evidence of the growth of individual children in all curriculum areas, as well as track the progress made toward achieving the Benchmarks of the Illinois Learning Standards. Parents have access to information about their own child only.

Teachers meet with parents for a minimum of two conferences each year. Fall conferences include time for teachers and parents to collaborate on goals for their child.

Information will be documented in the following ways:

### **Observation Notes**

- ✓ regular recording of each child's actions, words, or behaviors
- ✓ considering what has been observed, teachers plan what they will do to foster each child's individual growth

### **Lesson Plans**

- ✓ current week's plans (with corresponding benchmarks) posted in the classrooms
- ✓ reflect individual and group goals
- ✓ incorporate children's interests and needs

- ✓ mindful of constructivist objectives (self-regulation, three types of knowledge, and cultivation of a sociomoral atmosphere)

#### **Child Portfolios**

- ✓ may include (but are not limited to) writing samples, drawings, artwork, photos, and anecdotal records
- ✓ these artifacts emphasize what a child CAN do and provide a more holistic, comprehensive view of a child
- ✓ periodic collections demonstrate progress and growth over time
- ✓ reviewed with parents during spring conferences and sent home with families at the end of the school year (or upon withdrawal from the program)

#### **Summary Report**

- ✓ written by teachers near the end of the school year (or when a child leaves the program mid-year)
- ✓ describes an individual child's physical development, relationships with teachers, relationships with peers, and interests and abilities
- ✓ becomes a part of the child's Children's Center file and is available to parents upon request

### **THE CHILDREN'S CENTER STAFF**

Our staff is made up of teachers and directors who have specialized training in early childhood education and child development. Teachers have either bachelor's or master's degrees, and directors have master's degrees in early childhood education. Teacher's aides are UIC students with an interest in working with young children.

The Center director administers the program, creates Children's Center policies and procedures, hires the professional staff, and is responsible for the financial operation of both sites. The Center director approves and monitors all research activities.

The site director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program, including supervision of the teaching staff, enrollment of children, hiring student employees, and scheduling classroom observers and practicum students.

The early morning teacher is a graduate assistant who opens the early morning room and provides care for children needing to arrive before the classrooms open. The early morning teacher then works in all three classrooms on a rotating basis, substituting for absent teachers as necessary. This is a part-time position.

Each classroom has co-teachers who work as a team. Together they plan activities for children, the classroom arrangement, the daily schedule, and how they will work with children individually and as a group. One of the teachers supervises the teacher's aide, who assists in the classroom part-time during nap/rest and afternoon snack. Teachers meet periodically with parents as a group and individually and are the primary source of information about classroom activities and events.

The customer service representative works full-time at the east site but provides assistance and support services for the staff of both sites. The customer service representative acts in a public relations capacity and is responsible for performing and coordinating a wide range of administrative and management activities.

The food service aide serves family-style lunches to each classroom, removes the serving dishes and utensils after lunch, and cleans the kitchen. This is a part-time position.

Each classroom has a teacher's aide who works from 1:00 to 3:30 to help settle the children for their nap/rest period. This is a part-time position for college students who are interested in working with young children. They make it possible for the teachers to get a short break, plan, attend staff and supervision meetings, and hold parent meetings and conferences.

Occasionally the Children's Center has practicum students from UIC and local colleges and universities, as well as volunteers seeking classroom experience with children ages three through six. Parents are notified when there are practicum students and volunteers assigned to their child's classroom.

## **SITE HOURS; STAFF AND DAILY SCHEDULES**

At the east site in the Roosevelt Road Building, 728 W. Roosevelt Road, the hours are from 7:45 am to 5:15 pm. Generally, the Center director, site director, or both are on-site between 9:00 am and 5:30 pm. In the event that both directors are off-site, a teacher will be designated to assume decision-making responsibilities, and his/her name will be posted on the site director's door. All of the teachers at the Children's Center are director-qualified per DCFS licensing regulations.

The classrooms are open from 8:30 am to 5:15 pm. Parents who need child care before the regular classroom hours, for either an 8:00 class or 8:30 work schedule, are asked to make advance arrangements with the site director to use the Early Morning Room. The number of children in each classroom is carefully monitored to ensure proper staffing and teacher-child ratios. While teachers try to accommodate emergencies, advance planning is necessary for most requests.

Teachers work on the following schedule:

Early Morning Room teacher	7:30 am to 1:00 pm
Three classroom teachers	8:30 am to 4:15 pm
Three classroom teachers	9:30 am to 5:15 pm

Parents who wish to speak with their child's teachers should keep in mind that teachers are in their classrooms with the children most of the day. The optimal time to reach the

teachers by telephone is between 1:30 and 2:45, during the children's nap/rest time. Teachers are able to speak briefly by telephone at other times. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at mutually convenient times, with the needs of the classroom a priority.

The daily schedule is posted in each classroom and is a combination of child-initiated and teacher-led activities. Mornings typically begin with child-selected activities, including art, physical-knowledge, block-building, and pretend play. Morning snack is available between 9:30 and 10:00. There is a group time for singing, movement, story reading, and class discussions.

Outdoor play is scheduled everyday throughout the school year. Exceptions to daily outdoor play are made only when meteorologists are reporting dangerous wind chills or heat indexes. During the winter months we ask that you send children with weather-appropriate clothing, including snow pants, boots, hats, and gloves. While we do have a limited supply of extra clothing, children prefer to wear their own. Based on our staffing plan, all children must go outside daily with their class. Parents who do not want their child to participate in outdoor activities must make other arrangements for their child during this time.

Lunch is served family-style in the classrooms, followed by a time for settling down for a nap/rest, including quiet time for hearing a story. After the children are resting, teachers leave the classroom under the supervision of the teacher's aides, also called the naptime teachers. Afternoon snack is available from 2:45 to 3:15 pm. Children select their own activities during the afternoon. The group may go outside, weather permitting.

All children are expected to arrive at the Center by 9:30 am. Because activities are scheduled, play groups are formed, and the morning is generally a busy time, we appreciate a telephone call if parents anticipate arriving after 9:30. While we can accommodate occasional late arrivals, they are disruptive to the classroom and difficult for the late child. **Children will not be accepted into the classroom if they arrive later than 9:30 on a continual basis.** When such a pattern develops, teachers will give parents a verbal warning, after which the child will not be accepted into the classroom for that day.

Children are also expected to be picked up each day at the time agreed upon with the site director and never later than 5:15 pm. **Parents who develop a pattern of arriving at the Center after the 5:15 closing time will be given a verbal warning and ultimately written notice of withdrawal from the program.**

## **ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING ABSENCES**

### *Signing Children In and Out*

Each day parents are asked to sign their child in and out on the classroom attendance sheet posted on the middle section of the hallway bulletin board. In the morning, please write your child's name and the time of arrival. At the end of the day, please indicate the time and the name of the person who picked up the child. Information on the attendance sheets is needed for Center records and for reports to the Illinois State Board of Education regarding our food service program.

### *Release of Children*

If you plan for someone else to pick up your child, for your child's protection, the Center must have this information from you in writing. Upon enrollment, parents are asked to provide the Center with a list of persons who have their approval to pick up their child. This authorizes the Center to release the child to any person listed.

In an emergency, should parents want someone other than a listed person to pick up their child, the parent must provide written authorization in the form of a note or letter. Include the child's name, the date, the person to whom we are requested to release the child, and the parent's signature. The person must be prepared to show a driver's license or other picture identification to the teacher or site director before we may release the child.

Under the laws of the state of Illinois, both parents have the right to pick up their child unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list must provide an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, or divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, Center staff may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.

To assure the safety of our staff and children, Center staff members will not become involved in or referee custody and visitation difficulties between parents of any child left in our care. Should a dispute arise on Center premises, a staff member will call the UIC Police to intervene. Staff members will make every attempt to work with both the parents and the child(ren) to ensure a smooth transition between home and school. However, if the situation becomes administratively disruptive to the Center, the child will be withdrawn from the program.

It is always helpful for you to introduce your child's teachers and/or the site director to other persons who may occasionally pick up your child. We also ask that you talk with your child about any different arrangements made for pick up in order to prepare your child for a change in the daily routine and to ease the departure from the Center.

### *Reporting Absences and Changes in Your Child's Schedule*

All parents are expected to adhere to the daily schedule agreed upon with the site director. We ask parents to inform teachers of changes in their child's normal routine, particularly if it affects their day at the Center. This may include planned or unexpected

absences and earlier or later arrival or pick-up times. A brief call to the teachers will help us prepare your child for the change, make adequate staffing plans, and/or inform other children that your child will be absent. It is especially important that you let us know if your child will have a longer day at the Center. A child anticipates his/her parent's arrival and can become worried or anxious if not picked up at the usual time.

Because consistency in daily routines is so important to young children, parents and teachers need to communicate openly and frequently about the schedule that works best for them, their child, and the classroom.

### *Withdrawing from the Program*

When you decide to withdraw your child from the program, we appreciate as much advance notice as possible. Keep in mind that the Children's Center requires a minimum of two weeks notice be given to the teachers and site director. Advance notice allows the teachers to prepare the children for this important change, and for budgetary reasons, gives the site director time to enroll another child into the program. **Parents who do not provide the Center with the minimum notice must pay fees for a two-week period after notice is given, even if the child no longer attends.**

## **SEPARATION**

Learning to be away from a parent or other caregiver for short periods of time is a major developmental task for three- to six-year-old children. Each child's methods and ability to cope with brief separations are different. At the Children's Center, teachers make every effort to help each child become a part of the classroom, but the parent is the key person in the transition from home to school.

Parents of newly enrolling children (or other persons with a close relationship to the child) are asked to remain at the Center during the first few days. Some children need their parent for only one or two mornings; others need a longer time before they are able to stay without the parent present. Parents and teachers will make a progress plan for each day during the period of initial separation and adjustment to the classroom.

Some children seem to handle the beginning of their school experience with ease and later have difficulty in entering the classroom and letting their parents leave. By working closely together, parents and teachers can develop strategies for helping children separate and feel confidence in themselves and their teachers.

Naptime is another time when young children experience feelings of separation. As they rest quietly on their cots, children are away from their parents, their class friends, and their teachers for a short time. During this quiet time, children often think about their parents and home, and separation feelings may resurface.

Young children also experience separation as they leave their classroom and the Center each day. Some children say goodbye cheerfully, while others need help with ending their day and preparing to leave. Children often need time to finish what they are doing. A child may also need his/her parent to wait, just as the child has waited for the parent's return.

Please talk with your child's teachers should you or your child feel uncomfortable with your reunion at the end of the day. Together you can make plans that, hopefully, will ease the transition at the end of the day. And please don't feel embarrassed if your child seems unhappy when you arrive. Almost all young children experience a range of feelings when reuniting with their parent, including sadness and anger.

Parents are encouraged to talk with their child's teachers about separation experiences and issues, including their own feelings of being away from their child. These discussions often lead to good classroom adjustments and experiences for both children and adults.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES, DAILY CONTACTS, AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents and teachers have brief daily contacts as children are brought to and picked up from the classrooms each day. These are important times, as valuable information is exchanged about the day's events.

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time during the fall semester and again before the end of the spring semester. Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of either parents or teachers. During conferences, parents and teachers have more time and privacy for relaying information and concerns.

Teachers keep notes on their observations of the children and at conferences share these observations and their ideas on the individual child's participation in the program. There is no "report card", but teachers as trained observers of young children have much to impart to parents. Often parents want to know what their child is like in the classroom, and teachers get a more complete picture of each child from the parents' observations and experiences. Conferences offer an opportunity for parents and teachers to exchange information and establish common goals for each child. Teachers will attempt to make your child's experiences and discoveries visible through photographs and work samples.

When teachers or site directors have concerns about a child, they will discuss their concerns with that child's parent(s) and together develop a plan for addressing those concerns. Sometimes the plan may be simply to wait and see. Other times a new strategy may be tried in the classroom, at home, or both places. Additionally, teachers may recommend an evaluation by a competent professional who is knowledgeable about the growth and development of young children. By working together, parents and teachers can help children cope better with both developmental tasks and life's events.

There are instances, however, in which the Center director must decide that a child's participation in the program is not appropriate, usually because of the child's disruptive behavior, inability to adjust to the program, seriously past-due fees, or chronic lateness. The child will then be withdrawn from the program, with two weeks notice when possible.

Parents are welcome to visit at any time their child is at the Center. Sometimes, however, unexpected visits can be difficult for a child or the group of children. We encourage parents to let teachers know when they would like to spend time in their child's classroom to observe, to have lunch or snack, or to volunteer by reading stories, carrying out an activity with the children, or helping on a field trip.

We strongly believe in maintaining open lines of communication, and your child's teachers want to hear from you. Please inform us of any events in your child's life that may affect his or her behavior, such as serious illness or death in the family (including pets), an expected new baby, separation of parents, visiting grandparents, travel plans, etc. We may be able to help your child during such times, as well as understand what s/he may be going through. Unfortunately, arrival and departure times may not be adequate for lengthy and/or private conversations with your child's teachers. Please feel free to phone or email teachers or directors anytime, and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We may also phone or email you to let you know about happenings throughout your child's day. Parents and teachers who work together create a community in which children feel valued and significant.

The UIC Children's Center Parent Partnership is made up of parent representatives from each classroom, the director, both site directors, and a teacher representative from each site. The purpose of the Parent Partnership is to: establish a reciprocal support and communication system between home and school; discuss the needs of young children and how they can best be met; provide opportunities for parents and staff to share information and problem-solve; and discuss curriculum goals and Center accomplishments. Parents interested in serving on the Children's Center Parent Partnership are asked to nominate themselves on nomination forms provided by the classroom teachers early in the fall semester. All parents are welcome to attend Parent Partnership meetings.

Another way we like to involve parents in our program is through participation in the hiring process. Director, site director, and teaching positions at the Children's Center are all academic professional positions, appointed through the academic search process as outlined by UIC's Office for Access and Equity. When positions become available, two parent representatives from each site are invited to serve as members of the search committee to review resumes, interview candidates, and advise selection. Parents interested in serving as a search committee member should let the site director or director know early in the spring semester.

Several times throughout the school year, you will be invited to attend special events.

Some may be Center-wide, such as potluck dinners or picnics, and others may be classroom-related, such as curriculum meetings, sing-a-longs, children's art shows, or story dramatizations. Occasionally we offer parent support and/or education groups to address common parental concerns such as discipline, nutrition, or health issues. We want parents to participate as often as they are able or interested, but we also understand that the lives of working and/or studying parents are busy and complex! Our goal is to include parents in whatever ways work best for each family.

At the end of each school year, all parents are asked to assist us in evaluating and assessing our program by completing a comprehensive questionnaire. Your fulfillment of this request not only gives you a voice in expressing your level of satisfaction with your child's school, but it also enables us to maintain our accreditation and strive for continuous improvement. We appreciate your serious consideration in evaluating the service we have provided you over the course of the year.

## **CHILDREN'S CENTER POLICY STATEMENTS**

The Center has established a number of policies concerning program and classroom practices. The Center director has developed these policies, often with the assistance of the Children's Center Parent Partnership, and in keeping with University and state licensing regulations. The following policy statements are included in this handbook:

Discipline Policy  
Toileting Routines  
Children Who Are Ill

Video, Photography, and Tape Recording Guidelines  
Research Guidelines  
Observing Birthdays and Holidays

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The purpose of all discipline at the Center is to help children develop self-control and become responsible for their own behavior. We are committed to helping children become part of their group by learning to express feelings appropriately, to consider other people's feelings, and to negotiate their own conflicts and differences.

We use non-punitive methods of discipline which are directly related to the child's behavior and encourage his/her participation. We ask the child to think about the problematic behavior and to find ways to remedy the situation. This approach depends upon cooperation and negotiation and requires the adult to maintain a non-punitive attitude.

The following actions are strictly prohibited at the Children's Center:

- ✓ Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear;
- ✓ Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or use of the bathroom;

- ✓ Abusive and profane language;
- ✓ Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment;
- ✓ Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child. *(Section 407.270 IL Dept. of Children & Family Services Licensing Standards for Daycare Centers)*

If a staff member, parent, or any other adult engages in any of the above-mentioned prohibited practices while at the Center, the director will take necessary steps to ensure that there is no reoccurrence of the practice.

Teachers observe all children and document any problem behavior to help ascertain any patterns or precipitating factors. Teachers will communicate behavior concerns to parents as soon as they are observed, as well as the actions taken to rectify the situation.

Should a child exhibit disruptive and unsafe behavior on a continual basis that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, teachers will discuss the situation with a supervisor and parents to develop a plan of action in working with the child.

Staff will keep parent(s) informed of progress in resolving the problem. If staff members feel that additional assistance is needed, they may **with parental permission** consult community resource persons and/or refer the child for an evaluation. If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations for special needs, the program will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they do not place undue hardship on the program, as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

All reasonable attempts will be made to work with the child and the family to resolve the behavior problem. If parent(s) refuse to work with the staff in resolving the problem and/or the child's placement in the classroom compromises the health, safety, and/or well-being of other children or staff members, enrollment will be terminated. In this case, parent(s) will be given two weeks written notice of withdrawal except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns. Staff will try to assist the parent(s) in selecting an alternate program. Written documentation of all of the above steps will be provided to the parent(s) upon request and placed in the child's file.

## **TOILETING ROUTINES**

In order to be enrolled at UIC Children's Center, youngsters must be toilet trained. Each child is expected to use the children's restroom for his/her classroom, with doors remaining open at all times. Children should not use the adult bathroom. Children may

use the toilet as needed, but are reminded by their teachers to do so before and after playground time, lunch, and nap/rest time.

Children may go unescorted to the bathroom. A teacher should supervise when several children are waiting, or when an adult is otherwise needed. Children are to be discouraged from playing in the bathroom or remaining there after hand washing routines are completed.

Children are expected to lower their own clothing in order to use the toilet. The teacher will assist when necessary, especially with buttons, snaps, zippers, belts, etc. Likewise, children are expected to clean themselves afterwards and to wash their hands before returning to the classroom.

Parents are asked to dress their children in clothing which is easy for a young child to manage unassisted and to keep a complete change of clothing at the Center in case of toileting "accidents" or other soiling occurrences. In those instances, children are expected to change their own clothing in the children's restroom, with the teacher providing assistance only when needed and with the child's permission.

When a child requests to use the toilet during playground time, a teacher must accompany him/her to the children's restroom and wait for the child before returning to the playground.

Teachers will assist a child who has specific toileting problems, such as diarrhea, by first encouraging the child to clean his/her own body as much as possible and then asking the child if he/she needs the teacher's help. This is in order to give the child as much control as possible over the cleaning procedure. If the situation requires contact of a personal nature, the teacher should ask the site director or another staff member to be present. The teacher should inform the child's parent without delay that such assistance has been provided. In the event of diarrhea, the child's parent is asked to remove the child from the Center as soon as possible, as diarrhea is highly contagious. When it is necessary for a teacher to assist a child in any unusual circumstance, the teacher will follow up by completing an accident/incident report and submitting it to the site director.

Center staff should discuss particular toileting problems with the site director and the child's parent. **A child who is not toilet trained may not remain in the program.**

All adults (including parents, staff, and visitors) are asked to use the adult bathroom and not those assigned to children.

## **CHILDREN WHO ARE ILL**

The Children's Center strives to provide a healthful environment for enrolled children, parents, staff, and visitors. Children and staff (including volunteers) must present a current medical report upon joining the Center and every two years thereafter.

Medical documentation must be provided on an Illinois Department of Children and Family Services form given at the time of enrollment. The form must be signed by a medical doctor and show that the child has had an exam within three months of enrollment and current immunizations. Additional reports from a health care provider may be necessary in order to return to the Center following a contagious disease, serious injury, or extended illness.

Due to staffing limitations, the Center is unable to care for a child who is ill or has a fever and is, therefore, unable to participate in the daily program. Because young children who are ill need parental comfort and care, when a child becomes ill while at the Center, the parent(s) or person designated by the parent will be contacted and requested to pick up the child. **Parents should not bring an ill child to the Center as staff will be unable to accept him/her that day.**

Many childhood diseases are contagious and easily spread in group care. When someone at the Center has a contagious disease (other than a cold), a notice will be posted to advise parents of the occurrence of the disease and its usual symptoms. Parents should bring written authorization from a health care provider upon the child's return to the Center following a contagious disease or extended illness.

Children's Center staff may not give a child non-prescription drugs. This includes sunscreen, bug spray, hand lotion, and lip balm. Staff may administer medication prescribed by a doctor for that particular child, with written authorization from the parent. This is done by means of a form (available from the teachers or site director) that calls for specific information and instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. The prescription label must be affixed to the original container for the medication. In the case of sunscreen, bug spray, hand lotion, and lip balm, authorization must come from a health care provider on an official prescription pad or stationery and clearly labeled with the child's name. Notes may be faxed to the Center. All medications, non-prescription as well as prescription, should be given to the teacher for safe storage. **Please do not leave medication in your child's backpack or cubby.**

The following are some (but not all) common contagious childhood diseases:

chicken pox	mumps
colds and flu	pinworm
conjunctivitis (pink eye)	ringworm
diarrhea, nausea, vomiting	roseola
head lice	rubella (German measles)
impetigo	scabies

measles

strep throat

Parents are encouraged to discuss specific health concerns or problems with their child's teachers or the site director. When consulting with their health care provider for advice on a particular illness or disease, it is important for parents to inform him/her that their child is enrolled in a daycare program.

The best way to reduce the transmission of infectious disease is to practice proper hand washing procedures. Children are taught hand washing techniques and are monitored and/or assisted by the teachers. All children and adults are asked to wash their hands upon arrival into the classroom each day, before eating, after using the toilet, after handling bodily fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, touching any mucus, blood, or vomit), before and after water table play, before preparing and/or serving food, before administering medication, and after cleaning and/or handling garbage.

### **OBSERVING BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS**

Each child's birthday is recognized by Children's Center staff as a special day for that youngster, as well as for his/her classmates and teachers. The birthday celebration, however, is purposefully kept simple and child-centered. The birthday child's parent(s) is asked to bring either a simple packaged, store-bought birthday cake or cupcakes to be shared with the classroom group at snack or lunch. His/her parent(s) are also invited to take part by joining the children and teachers for snack or lunch.

Because birthdays, as well as other special days, are observed in a low-keyed manner at the Center, parents are asked to **not** bring ice cream, gum, nuts, balloons, party favors, decorations, or gifts. The child's birthday observance at the Center is not intended to take the place of each family's special observance at home.

The same low-keyed, child-centered approach is also taken during observances of holidays. The cultural and ethnic aspects of holidays, rather than the religious, are emphasized as Center staff plan activities for the classrooms. We tend to "observe" rather than "celebrate" holidays, in order to keep the activities educationally oriented and appropriate to the children's developmental levels. Too often special holiday activities for young children seem geared more to the adults' needs and expectations than to those of the children. The result is frequently an overwhelmed, confused child.

The Center's approach to holidays and birthdays should not be construed as simply ignoring or not observing such occasions. Much social knowledge is learned and a sense of community develops among the children through such observances. And they can be just plain fun!

It is Center policy that families and staff do **not** exchange gifts at the Center. The purpose of this policy is to avoid the problems that inevitably occur in a group setting

when gifts are exchanged, such as competition and expectations for favored treatment. Families wishing to express their thanks to Center staff are encouraged to do so verbally or in writing, rather than through material gifts. Occasionally a child may wish to give his/her teacher(s) a gift. Parents are asked to suggest to their child that he/she draw a picture or make some other token of affection or appreciation for the teacher(s).

While gifts to the Center are not solicited from parents, those who wish to make a monetary or material donation to the Children's Center should discuss their interest with the Center director, who is responsible for determining if the contribution can be accepted on behalf of the Center. All contributions accepted will be acknowledged and processed according to the University's gift-reporting procedures.

### **VIDEO, PHOTOGRAPHY, AND TAPE RECORDING GUIDELINES**

Video equipment at UIC Children's Center is primarily for staff development purposes. Its use is for teachers and their supervisors to increase knowledge of their teaching styles and to enhance their professional development as teachers of young children. All use of the video equipment is coordinated by the site director.

We ask that parents **not** bring in their own personal video equipment or cameras to tape or take photographs in the classroom. While we understand that some parents would enjoy filming their child at school, other parents specifically request that their child **not** be taped or photographed by anyone other than a staff member. If you would like to take a picture of a special occasion (such as your child's birthday celebration), please discuss it beforehand with a teacher. With the teacher's permission, a parent may take a picture of the child with his/her teacher(s) and/or parent(s), as long as no other children are in the photograph.

In terms of videotape viewing, the Center's goal is for children to be actively involved in learning, rather than passively entertained by commercial or Center-made videotapes.

The equipment may be used to show a videotape made in that classroom in order to see an activity, such as a story dramatization, a puppet show, or other "productions" carried out by the children. Carefully selected commercial videotapes, such as favorite stories, may be used in conjunction with other classroom activities.

Videotapes are not used simply for recreational viewing. Because staff judgment must be used to ensure that such viewing has educational purposes, we ask that parents **not** bring in videotapes from home to be shown in the classroom. Teachers must use discretion in planning the use of videotapes with children and are expected to discuss their plans in advance with the site director.

With the approval of the site director, videotapes may be shown at parent meetings to help parents better understand the Center's program. Only videotapes showing positive

behaviors of all children should be used. Videotapes are not to be used to show a child's misbehavior or troubling behavior, nor as part of a referral for evaluation or counseling. No identifying information should be used other than the normal classroom use of children's first names.

## **RESEARCH GUIDELINES**

UIC Children's Center, the early childhood education program at the University of Illinois at Chicago, recognizes the value of and supports ethical research with and for the benefit of young children. The Center has served and continues to serve as a research site. The following guidelines are to be adhered to in considering research proposals and in monitoring research carried out at the Center.

Research at UIC Children's Center may be done not only by UIC faculty and students, but also by researchers from other recognized institutions.

Research carried out at the Center must meet the Research Guidelines of UIC Children's Center and those of the UIC Institutional Review Board--Protection of Human Subjects. The Center is a small one and may be unable to accommodate simultaneous multiple research. Preference will be given to research which directly benefits the Center.

Parents of children at the Center must be advised of all research done at the Center. Public notice of research focused on the total classroom will be given by means of a bulletin board notice at the Center, the Center's newsletter, etc. Individual notices and signed parental permission forms are required when individual children are to be interviewed and/or tested. No exceptions may be made regarding the need for individual written permission for participation in the aforementioned research activities. Parental authorization in writing is required for the use of audiotapes or a child's picture, including still photographs, moving pictures, and videotapes.

The child must be willing to participate in the individual interview, observation, and/or test. No coercion, directly or indirectly, shall be applied to the child, and he/she may withdraw from the research activity at any time.

Research activities must not disrupt the classroom schedule or activities. During the research there must be no activity or attitude that could be harmful to the child, physically or emotionally, as in his/her sense of well-being and self-esteem. The Center director ultimately is responsible for monitoring all research in progress at the Center and for determining whether the research activity or the researcher's attitude toward the child is considered harmful.

Identifying information, such as the child's name, may not be used by the researcher. Research data shall be coded or names otherwise disguised. No individual test scores and/or results are to be given to the Center's staff, but summarized results of the

findings, without identifying information, are expected upon completion of the research activities at the Center.

The Center's records are not open to the researcher. All information about the child and/or the family must be obtained from his/her parent(s). Necessary information may be obtained by questionnaires and/or interviews with the child's parent(s).

UIC Children's Center is to receive a citation or other appropriate acknowledgment for published research findings from research activities completed at the Center.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

University of Illinois  
Official Notice

### **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The commitment of the University to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving students and employees be based on individual merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms.

It is the policy of the University of Illinois not to engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military, or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders, and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in the University programs and activities.

University complaint and grievance procedures provide employees and students with the means for the resolution of complaints that allege a violation of this Statement. Members of the public should direct their inquiries or complaints to the appropriate equal opportunity office.

For additional information or assistance with the equal opportunity, affirmative action, and harassment policies and procedures of the University of Illinois at Chicago, please contact:

Office for Access & Equity (M/C 602)  
717 Marshfield Avenue Building  
809 South Marshfield Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60612-7207  
(312) 996-8670

## FEES

The Center's operating budget is based upon fees paid by the parents of enrolled children, a University subsidy, participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Chicago Public Schools' *Preschool For All* program, and other grants and contracts.

For student parents and staff parents of *Preschool For All* eligible children, fees are on a sliding scale based upon each family's gross income before taxes and other financial resources, such as child support, financial aid, savings, assistance by other family members, incomes from rental property, etc. All other parents will pay the designated weekly rate. Each child's weekly fee is determined at enrollment and reviewed at the beginning of the fall semester each year. Fees may also be re-evaluated at any time there is a change in the family's income and financial resources. When the site director establishes each family's fees, income and other financial verification may be requested. Any deviation from the Center's fee scale requires the Center director's approval.

Fees are determined by enrollment, not the number of days or hours attended. Fees are set by the week, but may be paid in advance by the week, two weeks, month, or semester. Parents are given a copy of their annual tuition agreement and are expected to notify the site director when there is a change in their income or financial resources.

Fees are payable in advance by cash, check, or money order (made payable to the University of Illinois) at the Cashier in the Marshfield Building, 809 S. Marshfield, and at the Cashier in Student Center East, 750 S. Halsted. The Cashier will issue the parent a receipt, and parents should provide a copy to the Children's Center for our records. The payment is then recorded on the child's account ledger at the Center. Parents may have a copy of their individual account ledger detailing the record of charges and payments.

Parents who are unable to pay their fees in person at the Cashier may mail (US or campus mail) their check or money order (**no cash**) in specially marked envelopes available from the site director. The Cashier will notify the Children's Center that the payment has been made. **The University charges a fee for all returned checks.** Please let the site director know if you want a receipt for dependent care or other reimbursement, or if you want information for a claim form. The site director keeps the Center's fee records and will give updated information to parents as requested.

Parents who are unable to pay their fees on the plan agreed upon at enrollment or at the start of the fall semester should speak to the site director and make a plan for payment. Children may not continue in the program in the next semester or summer session if fees are in arrears. Space in the program will not be held for a child whose parent(s) have not paid past-due tuition. Parents who are behind in their payments will

receive a written reminder. Those who fail to respond will be given a two-week notice that their child will be withdrawn from the program for failure to pay tuition. Because tuition is an obligation to the University of Illinois, payroll deductions and financial aid funds can be secured by the Bursar's Office. An encumbrance will be placed on the academic records of those parents who are or have been UIC students.

Upon the initial decision to enroll a child (and by the end of each spring semester thereafter), parents are asked to pay a deposit of the annual registration fee and the first week's child care fee. This **non-refundable** deposit reserves a child's place in the program and lets the site director know how many places will be available for new children. Space will not be held for a child without this deposit. Please discuss your questions about the deposit with the site director.

No requests for additional payments for supplies, field trips, meals, etc., are made. Parents who wish to make a donation to the University for the Children's Center should discuss their plans with the Center director, who is responsible for accepting all monetary gifts, according to University policy.

The Children's Center accepts families participating in the Illinois Department of Human Services subsidized child care program. Parents are responsible for the initial application (or re-determination) process, as well as submitting any required documents to *Action for Children*. Weekly tuition will be collected until the subsidy is approved **in writing**, at which point parents will be responsible to pay their weekly/monthly co-payment according to the procedures outlined above. There is a minimum amount that the Children's Center must collect each month, depending on each individual family's assessed tuition level and the number of weeks in a particular month. Any shortfall must be made up by the parent out-of-pocket. If at any point a parent is dropped from the subsidized child care program, s/he will be responsible for fees based upon the current household income level. Please see the site director if you are interested in more information on the subsidized child care program.

At the east site, designated semester-break weeks are considered "optional". Parents may choose not to bring their child to the Center during optional weeks and will not be charged fees for those weeks. If the child attends any days during the break week, the parent will be charged the full weekly fee. We use a sign-up system to identify children who will attend the program during optional weeks. We can then plan the appropriate number of lunches and snacks and schedule vacations for some staff while attendance is reduced. Sign-up sheets are prominently posted on the hallway bulletin board prior to scheduled optional weeks. There are three designated optional weeks: two weeks between the fall & spring semesters and spring break week.

The same sign-up system is used for the summer program at the east site. Parents may choose not to attend the summer session and still return for the fall semester. Parents choosing to attend the summer session must plan to attend the entire session. There will be no reduction in fees for weeks not attended.

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION ABOUT ENROLLED CHILDREN

All information regarding children and families of the Children's Center is regarded as confidential and the property of the Center and the families involved. Students, researchers, or other visitors who conduct observations or studies at the Children's Center are not provided with personal information about children or families. Staff of the Children's Center will provide information about a child enrolled in the program only to that child's parent or legal guardian. Parents who anticipate needing information released to schools, physicians, social-service agencies, etc., should notify the site director well in advance, when possible. Written authorization from the parent or legal guardian is required before the Center will release any information to third parties.

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), records related to children and their families are to be shared with other staff or University officials only if that person has a legitimate educational interest (i.e., on a "need to know" basis only). Requests from third parties, including outside agencies, must be evaluated by the Center director. If necessary and appropriate, University counsel will be consulted before any disclosure is made. Information will not be released over the telephone to a child's relative or a parent whom we have not met. In most cases, information cannot be disclosed to any third party without the written consent of the child's parent or legal guardian.

As required by the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, teachers and directors must report suspected child abuse or neglect and provide information to representatives of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services if they suspect that a child is being abused or neglected or if contacted during an investigation of such a report. These reports are always handled confidentially within the Children's Center program.

Annually each site director distributes a list of the names, home addresses, and telephone numbers of enrolled children and their parents. This list is for parents' use in contacting each other and for staff use in emergencies. When this list is being compiled during fall semester, parents are informed by means of a notice posted on the hallway bulletin board or Center doors, as well as by email. Parents who have a new address or telephone number, or who prefer to be omitted from this list, should contact the site director before the posted deadline.

Upon enrollment, parents are asked to give standing permission for the University to take pictures, still and video, of the children in typical program activities. Children's Center staff members are not authorized to give permission for other persons, even parents, to take pictures of enrolled children. This includes photos of children's birthdays and other special occasions (See **Video, Photography, and Tape Recording Guidelines**, p.19).

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES**

Children's Center staff members take care to ensure each child's safety and well-being while at the Center, but children may become ill or injured. In the event of a medical emergency, Children's Center staff will follow these procedures:

1. Assess the immediate situation and determine if the child is ill or injured, the extent of the injury, and whether first aid is needed to assure breathing, control bleeding, and limit further injury.
2. Determine a course of action, including notifying the parent and contacting University Police for paramedic services (if needed) to transport the child (accompanied by a parent or teacher) to the UIC Hospital emergency room. All parents are required to sign an emergency medical authorization allowing staff to obtain emergency medical treatment in the parent's absence.
3. Staff may use the following procedures with a child:
  - a. Wash a minor cut, scrape, or puncture with soap and water and apply a bandage.
  - b. Apply ice to a bump to reduce swelling and bruising.
  - c. Ask a child to sit or lie quietly until the parent arrives. An adult will remain with the child until the parent arrives.
  - d. Use first aid, such as the Heimlich maneuver, mouth-to-mouth breathing, and application of pressure at the point of bleeding. Disposable gloves will be used if a child is bleeding; a microshield will be used for mouth-to-mouth breathing.
  - e. Administer prescription medication when authorized in writing by the parent; for example, for an asthma attack.

Parents will always be informed by teachers immediately (by telephone or messenger) if the illness or injury is serious, or at the end of the day for a minor injury. Parents are expected to come to the Center without delay if requested by staff. Emergency contacts may also be called when a parent cannot be located.

Parents are required to carry health care insurance for their child(ren). The Center is not responsible for medical costs due to illness or injuries that occur at the Center. The site director has available information regarding State of Illinois health care assistance for families. Children without medical insurance must be withdrawn from the Center.

## **CENTER FORMS**

The following forms are regularly used at the Center:

Changes/Current Information is used to report changes in parents' home and/or work addresses and phone numbers, employment, family income, etc. Available in the site director's office, this form should be completed any time there is a change in the above information.

Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication must be completed by the parent when a child is to be given prescribed medicine while at the Center. You are asked to fill one out each time your child needs a new medication or needs a new series of a previous medication. Teachers may not administer any medication unless it is prescribed by a physician and this form is completed. This includes over-the-counter medications, lotions, bug spray, lip balm, etc. This form is also used to record the dates and times the medication was given to your child. Teachers have the form available in the classroom.

Tuition Agreements are completed at the time of your child's initial enrollment, at the beginning of the fall semester, and when there is a change in your family's income or schedule of payment. The site director reviews fees with each child's parent.

Class Schedule is completed each semester by parents who are UIC students. This gives Center staff information about where you will be while your child is at the Center. Class schedules are available on the hallway bulletin board at the beginning of each semester and in the site director's office.

Certificate of Child Health Examination is the form used for a child's initial physical required for enrollment in the program. It will be returned to you every two years for an updated physical exam.

Discipline Policy Agreement describes the methods of discipline utilized at the Center, as well as those actions that are strictly prohibited. Parents are asked to sign this form indicating that they have read, understood, and agree to follow it (see **Discipline Policy**, p. 14).

Child and Adult Care Food Program Parent Application must be given to all parents of enrolled children. The Site Director will give you the CACFP parent application and letter at enrollment and annually at the beginning of the fall semester. You will also be asked to update your application at any time there is a change in your household income.

## **THINGS TO KEEP (and not to keep) AT THE CENTER**

To help your child feel more comfortable while at the Center, we ask you to bring a few things to keep in his/her cubby. Each child will need a full change of clothes, including a shirt, pants or shorts, underwear, and socks. Children get wet through water play, painting, spills, or bathroom accidents, and they often feel better when they can change into their own dry clothes. Younger children, or those newly enrolling, may need two

sets of clothing. It helps if you mark each item with your child's name. Please check your child's extra set of clothing periodically to assure that the clothing still fits and is appropriate for the current season.

While we provide a cot and small blanket for your child's use at nap/rest time, many children like to have a soft toy, like a stuffed animal, to rest with on their cots. For reasons of sanitation and storage, we ask that your child NOT bring his or her own blanket or pillow.

Because things from home can be a source of comfort and reassurance to children, they may also bring other toys to play with at the Center. However, you will want to help your child think about the kinds of things he/she may bring. Toy guns, weapons, or toys containing weapons of any kind should not be brought to the Center. Because toys can easily be broken or lost, your child should not bring a treasured or expensive toy, game, or book. The Children's Center cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

While children are not required to share their things from home, it is often difficult for classmates who may want to play with those items. Therefore, the teachers may ask your child to keep the toy in his/her cubby if the use of the toy causes conflicts with other children. Some children use toys as a means of entering into a playgroup or getting attention. Books are especially easy for children to allow others to look at and enjoy. Please feel free to talk to your child's teachers when you are unsure about toys or other possessions that your child may wish to bring to the Center.

We ask that you **not** allow your child to bring the following items to the Center: candy, gum, soft drinks, money, medications, or weapons (real or toy). Because we encourage children to create their own artwork and problems to be solved, we ask that coloring books, workbooks, etc., not be brought to the Center. We also ask that you not bring pacifiers, diapers or pull-ups, bottles, or sippy-cups to the Center. Remember, your child is about to transition out of toddlerhood and into the wonderful world of preschool!

## **HALLWAY BULLETIN BOARD AND PARENT RESOURCE LIBRARY**

In the main hallway at each site there is a bulletin board for posting notices to parents about the Center, the University, and general parent/child information. You will find a variety of articles and forms, including licensing information, sign-in sheets, bulletins about contagious illnesses, information on campus assistance to parents, and other resources available to you (community events, parenting tips, articles, books, etc.).

While we like to speak to parents directly about most issues, at times it is quicker and simpler to post a general notice. Please look at this bulletin board regularly, as you sign your child in and out each day. If you would like to post something on the hallway board, please ask the site director.

Each classroom has its own bulletin board with notices related to that classroom's schedule and activities. Please ask your child's teachers to point out the parent bulletin board in the classroom.

Each site has also developed a Parent Resource Library. The east site library is located in the parent area at the south end of the building. The library contains books on a variety of child-development topics, as well as family-related issues. Parents are welcome to check out books by following the checkout procedures posted in the library. Our Parent Resource Library also contains a variety of pamphlets and articles that you are welcome to take. If you are looking for a specific topic and do not see it, talk with the site director or your child's teachers. We will do our best to help get you the information.

## **FOOD SERVICE AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER**

Daily lunches and morning and afternoon snacks are catered by University Dining Services, with lunch delivered each morning. Weekly menus are posted on the hallway bulletin board; substitutions are sometimes made.

Lunch is served family-style in each classroom. Children serve themselves and select the amount of food they want to eat. Lunch includes an entree, vegetable, salad (or another vegetable), bread, fruit, and 2% milk. The Center serves a variety of foods but **NOT** pork, preserved meats (such as hot dogs), or foods with added sugar.

Please discuss any food allergies or other food restrictions your child may have with the site director and classroom teachers and complete a *Medical (or other) Exception Statement for Food Substitution* form available from the site director. In order to protect children with food allergies from contact with the problem food, we ask parents to give consent to post information about the child's food allergy and possible allergic reactions as a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the day.

As a participant in the Child and Adult Food Care Program we are required to serve a protein for lunch, as well as milk. If your family is vegetarian, we ask that you send your child with a protein substitute on days that meat is offered. We try to plan one or two meals per week without animal protein (e.g., grilled cheese, bean burritos). Teachers will be happy to supply you with the weekly menus to better help you plan for your child's lunch at school.

Teachers eat in the classrooms with the children, assisting them as needed and encouraging them to taste new foods. Lunch is a time both for nutrition and conversation, with the goal of having a relaxing mid-day meal. Children are not required to eat more than they want. Food is never used as a reward or punishment at the Center.

If you have any concerns about your child's eating habits, please share them with the teachers. And don't be surprised if your child eats a previously disliked food at the Center. Sometimes it helps if a friend tastes and likes it!

Parents are welcome to join their child's class for lunch. Please let your child's teachers know in advance when you would like to have lunch with the group. Teachers will invite you to join the class for lunch or snack when your child's birthday is observed.

## **COOKING ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL SNACKS**

The Children's Center strives to provide nutritious meals and snacks to the children, including classroom cooking activities. Teachers provide a variety of recipes for the children to use in preparing food for their classmates to enjoy. These recipes contain no added sugar or reduced amounts of sugar. It is important for young children to learn that special treats can be good tasting, good for them, and fun to prepare!

Parents who wish to bring a special snack for the class should keep in mind that the food should contain no added sugar. Examples of nutritious snacks include fresh fruit and vegetables or dried fruit (such as raisins). Foods which reflect the family's culture are particularly appreciated and help us learn more about one another's cultures.

The exception to the Center's no-added-sugar policy is on a child's birthday when parents are asked to bring a small packaged, store-bought birthday cake or cupcakes to be enjoyed by the birthday child and his/her classmates. You are invited to join the class for lunch or snack when your child's birthday is observed. Please talk with your child's teachers about your schedule and plans (See **Observing Birthdays and Holidays**, p. 18).

## **FIELDTRIPS**

As the weather warms up in the spring, classrooms begin to plan short morning fieldtrips. Trips are planned utilizing the rich opportunities here on campus (e.g., UIC Police Station, cafeteria) and in the surrounding neighborhood (e.g., parks, libraries). In addition, children always enjoy visiting their parent's workplace. If you are interested in having your child's class come for a visit, talk with your child's teacher, who will help to plan the trip with you.

As part of the enrollment paperwork, parents sign a general fieldtrip permission form. Parents are notified in advance of fieldtrips and are always welcome to join the class on trips. Depending on distance, children and teachers walk or use the campus shuttle bus for transportation.

## **PARKING**

Hangtags and Lot 06 special user keycards will be issued by the site director to parents needing to enter the lot in order to bring their child to or pick him/her up from the east site. The hangtags must be displayed on your rear-view mirror while you are parked in Lot 06. Please keep in mind that parents who have been issued a hangtag and keycard are not authorized to park in Lot 06 for longer than 60 minutes. Those who do so risk receiving a parking ticket from the UIC Police or Parking Enforcement staff.

Please return the keycard and hangtag to the site director when you no longer need them or upon withdrawing your child from the program.

Should you lose the keycard issued to you by the Children's Center, you must report the loss to the Parking Office and pay a replacement fee. The Children's center cannot issue you a replacement card.

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## **PUBLIC FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

These procedures have been implemented to address complaints of discrimination on the basis of age and/or disability in any activity, policy, rule, standard, or method of administration that is related to the operation of University's programs.

### **II. ELIGIBILITY**

These procedures may be used by any member of the public who alleges age (Under the Age Discrimination Act) or disability (Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act) discrimination on the basis of class. However, anyone who wishes to challenge a decision made about them by an agent of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in the course of their employment or enrollment at UIC must utilize the UIC Academic Grievance Procedures.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. **GRIEVANCE:** A written statement submitted by a Grievant identifying the activity, policy, rule, standard, or method of administration he/she claims to be discriminatory on the basis of age and/or disability and explaining the manner in which that activity, policy, rule, standard, or method of administration discriminates. All Grievances must be signed by the Grievant and must outline the Grievant's allegations in as much detail as possible.
- B. **GRIEVANT:** Any member of the public who submits a Grievance.

- C. GRIEVANCE OFFICER: The assigned investigator of the UIC Office for Access and Equity can be contacted at the address below:  
Office for Access and Equity, MC 602  
809 S. Marshfield Avenue, Room 718  
Chicago, IL 60612-7207  
(312) 996-8670 Fax (312) 413-0055  
[www.uic.edu/depts/oe](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oe)
- D. APPEALS OFFICER: The Associate Chancellor for Access and Equity or his/her designee.
- E. DAYS: Any reference to “days” herein shall refer to business days (excluding weekends and federal holidays).
- F. RECORD: The complete record of a Grievance will consist of the original Grievance and any supporting information or documentation submitted with that Grievance, the Grievance Officer’s findings, the Appeal (if any), and any additional information or documentation submitted with the Appeal, the Appeal Officer’s findings, and any communications and notices relative to the Grievance. The Record will be maintained for at least five (5) years following the final decision.

### **III. GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

- A. FILING OF THE GRIEVANCE: The Grievant must file his/her Grievance with the Grievance Officer no later than ten (10) days after he/she becomes aware of the offending activity, policy, standard, or method of administration.
- B. INVESTIGATION: The Grievance Officer shall conduct an appropriate investigation of the issues raised in the Grievance. The Grievant shall be given an opportunity to submit any relevant evidence he/she may have to support the Grievance. Within fourteen days (14) of submission of the Grievance, the Grievance Officer shall issue his/her findings. In the event the Grievance Officer finds evidence of discrimination in the activity, policy, standard, or method of administration, he/she shall make recommendations for change(s) and shall coordinate the efforts for change(s) with the department/unit/college whose activity, policy, standard, or method of administration is at issue. Furthermore, in the event that the individual was adversely affected by a decision made pursuant to a discriminatory process, policy, activity, standard, or method of administration, the individual will be given the opportunity for the decision to be reconsidered according to the revised process, policy, etc. In those cases where the Grievance Officer finds no evidence of discrimination, he/she shall send written notice of that finding to the Grievant within that 14-day time period. Said notice shall inform the Grievant of his/her right to appeal the finding to the Appeals Officer within five (5) days of receipt of the notice.

- C. APPEAL: An appeal of the Grievance Officer's findings must be in writing and must state the basis for the appeal, providing any additional evidence or information that may support the Grievant's claim of discrimination. The Appeals Officer shall review the Grievance Officer's record and any information/evidence submitted with the Appeal and shall issue findings within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal. In the event the Appeals Officer finds evidence of discrimination in the activity, policy, standard or method of administration, he/she shall make recommendations for changes. In those cases where the Appeals Officer finds no evidence of discrimination, he/she shall send written notice of that finding to the Grievant within that 10-day time period. There shall be no further levels of review or appeal beyond the Appeals Officer.
- D. DEVIATION FROM THE PROCESS: Upon proof of extenuating circumstances, the Chancellor (and only the Chancellor) may approve a deviation from these procedures (e.g., extension of a deadline).  
*(Effective date of policy is September 1, 2005)*