

The Evergreen State College Campus Children's Center Family Handbook

Last updated 2023

Vision: We are committed to creating an environment of joy where the talents of all children and adults are recognized, nurtured, and celebrated.

Mission: We provide the highest possible quality of care for the children of students, staff, faculty, and the community. We provide employment and the best possible on the job training to student staff.

Program Philosophy: We believe in learning through sensory and discovery experiences that are both challenging and enjoyable. We provide an environment that encourages each child to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. This is accomplished in a relaxed play and learning environment that balances structured and unstructured time, planned and emergent curriculum.

We provide developmentally appropriate activities based upon child growth and development theories, recent research in child development, and the time-tested culture of childhood. We recognize that as we all learn and grow our thinking must be flexible and open to review, modification and change.

We view parents as partners and we strive to support the family through involvement and educational opportunities at the Center.

We begin by acknowledging that we are on the ancestral lands of the Medicine Creek Treaty Tribes, which include the Nisqually Indian Tribe, the Squaxin Island Tribe, and Puyallup Tribe of Indians. The Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854 relinquished 2.5 million acres of tribal land to the United States in exchange for three 1,280 acre reservations, the retention of the tribes' land and rights, such as hunting and fishing in the usual and accustomed places, as well as all of the rights of a sovereign nation in regards to self-governance and self-determination.

Table of Contents

1	Mission, Vision, Philosophy		Your Family at the Center	14
2	Land Acknowledgement		Babysitting	14
3	Table of Contents		Families Get Involved	14
4	Welcome		Our Website	15
4	Program Goals		What to Wear	15
4	Nondiscrimination policy		What to Bring	15
5	Address		What Not to Bring	15
5	Hours and Days of Operation		Food Service	16
5	Licensing		Health Care Plan	16
5	Center Design		Rest Time	18
6	Curriculum		Holidays	19
6	Layout		Birthdays, Last Day Celebrations	19
6	Staff		Potlucks	20
7	Typical Daily Schedule		Field Trips	20
7	Enrollment		Kindergarten Readiness	20
7	Billing Rates & Fees		Assessing Children's Development	20
9	Leave of Absences		Transitions One Class to the Next	23
9	Arrival/Pick Up		Guiding Children's Behavior	23
10	Late Pick Up		Children's Inappropriate Behavior	24
10	Communication with Staff		Termination of Services	25
12	Academic Research		Emergency Plans	26
12	Parking		Unusual Closures	26
13	Adult Conduct Policy			
14	Child Protective Services			

Welcome to The Evergreen State College Campus Children's Center. We have provided licensed care for Evergreen Families since 1987. We provide care to Evergreen and community families regardless of race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. We do not engage in religious activities at the Children's Center, including holidays. We include families regardless of their physical, mental, or sensory disabilities to the best of our abilities.

The Evergreen State College, The Evergreen Student Services and Fees Allocation Board, and the USDA Child Nutrition Program all provide either financial or in-kind support. We are governed by Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families minimum licensing requirements, regulations, and Thurston County health codes. We accept DSHS subsidy for current student, faculty and staff families. We accept NACCRA subsidy from all eligible families.

Please feel free to ask any of the core staff or administrative staff if you have questions about this handbook or would like to have it more fully explained.

Program Goals

- ~ We strive to create a program that is all-inclusive, non-sexist, and anti-bias in approach. We want every child to build a positive self-image.
- ~ We encourage children to try new things, ask questions and express what they think and feel.
- ~ We want children to be confident, independent, cooperative and eager to learn. We provide experiences that offer legitimate opportunities to develop problem solving skills, respect for themselves and others.
- ~ We aspire to create an environment that fosters emotional literacy, social competence, healthy habits, respect for all living things and the environment and a natural curiosity.
- ~ We guide student staff as they grow professionally. We train them in child development, class management, and appropriate work conduct. We set realistic, appropriate expectations. We honor when they meet or exceed these expectations and we hold them accountable when they do not.

Nondiscrimination policy

The Evergreen State College is committed, as a matter of principle, and in conformance with federal and state laws, to prohibiting discrimination and behaviors, which, if repeated, could constitute discrimination. The President of the Evergreen State College, as the delegate of the Board of Trustees, directs that all personnel and student-related transactions, and the operation of all College programs, activities and services, will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, or status as a disabled veteran, a Vietnam era veteran or other covered veteran. Harassment on any of the above-stated grounds is a form of prohibited

discrimination. This policy applies to faculty, staff and students. This policy also prohibits retaliation for reporting possible violations of this policy, for cooperating with any related investigation, or for participating in such a complaint process.

Mailing Address:

Evergreen Campus Children's Center
2700 Evergreen Parkway NW, Bldg. 201
Olympia, WA 98505

Physical Address:

Evergreen Campus Children's Center
2824 Fireweed Lane NW
Olympia, WA 98505

Hours and Days of Operation

The Center is open year-round Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 5:30pm. We close for state holidays, staff in-service days, and emergency closures. Our calendar, including the planned days of closure, is available in our lobby.

Licensing

We are licensed by the Washington Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) to provide care for children who are one month through 7 years of age, although we only provide care until children enter kindergarten. All aspects of our program including administration, facility, curriculum, health, and safety practices are periodically inspected. The results of recent licensing visits are posted on a clipboard by the counter in the lobby. We are accountable to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) for licensed childcare facilities.

Center Design

Our Center is designed with two wings; an infant/toddler wing and a preschool wing. The infant/toddler wing has three classrooms: Hedgehogs, Bunnies and Owls. The Hedgehog admits children aged from 1 month to 12 months, and children are required to transition up to the Bunny room on their first birthday (licensing standard). The Bunny room typically consists of 12-21 month olds, and the Owl room typically consists of 21-30 month olds, although each child's placement in these rooms varies and is based on an agreement between the Director, the teachers, and the families. The preschool wing has two multi-age classrooms: Foxes and Bears. "Multi-age" preschool simply means children range in ages 2.5-5 years old. Benefits of this include – but are not limited to – older children act as mentors to younger children, younger children learn from their older peers, and children that may not have the developmental match to make friends their own age can still have friends / children to play with in their class.

Each classroom has a variety of activity centers that change according to program plans and developmental ages of the children. Activity areas may have items for dramatic play, blocks and construction, floor and table toys, literacy, art and creative expression, sensory

exploration, and places for privacy. Each classroom also has places where a child can play privately.

Curriculum

The curriculum is planned with the class and playground environments, children's needs, and children's interests in mind. Children have ample opportunities to play and work in mixed age groups because classrooms have adjoining doors and play yards.

The Center's curriculum is a blend of Creative Curriculum, Teaching Strategies Gold, the seasons, our Campus environment, what is planned by the teachers and what emerges from the children. We occasionally use photos of the children in our curriculum documentation and classrooms. If photos are used for purposes outside the building, we will notify you prior to use.

Layout of the Center

From the front door, there is a Baby Bank across from the Front Desk. Families donate children's clothing, maternity and nursing wear, and children's gear (e.g., high chairs). Anyone is welcome to take any of the items they would like. Down the hall on the left-hand side are: the Hedgehog room (infants), an adult bathroom, the younger toddlers (Bunnies), the older toddlers (Owls). Next is the lending library with children's books, books focused on a parenting perspective, and books focused on a teaching perspective. Anyone can borrow them – please return! And finally, we have two multi-age preschool classes (Foxes and Bear) at the end of the building followed by an exit-only door.

On the left-hand side of the building there is: the conference room, and then the Administrative Assistant's office. After this is the work room, for staff looking for a quiet place to work. Next is the kitchen, the second adult bathroom, and then the break room, where all staff are welcome to take their breaks.

Staff

The Children's Center meets or exceeds the state's required ratios of 1:4 infants, 1:7 toddlers, and 1:10 preschoolers at all times. As a general rule, the Children's Center adheres to the ratios identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which is the same as the state guidelines for infants and preschoolers, but is 1:6 for toddlers. The Children's Center is staffed with a director, an administrative assistant, and ten early childhood professionals.

We also hire Evergreen students as part-time classroom aides, substitutes, administrative assistants and food handlers in the kitchen. Evergreen student employees range from entry level staff whose primary responsibilities are attending to small groups of children and light housekeeping to more experienced staff whose work performance indicates they can work more independently. They will occasionally be responsible for the class; generally this will be for short periods of time such as lunch breaks, planning time etc. Professional staff absences are sometimes covered by student staff with support from the other professional staff or by shifting duties among the teachers.

Your child's teachers will be in the room to greet and set the tone for the day during the important morning hours, and to assist with the transition from Children's Center to home in the equally important afternoon hours as well.

The office staff (director and administrative assistant) assist with enrollment, updating family information, childcare contracts and billing arrangements. Please notify the staff, in writing, when your family or child pick-up information changes. We also use the Remind app for communication. Of course, if you have an urgent concern, please talk to your child's teacher or the Center Director immediately. Classroom contact information is below:

Typical Daily Schedule

The outline printed here is only a guide. Each classroom varies to meet their children's unique developmental needs.

7:30 - 8:30	Arrival and quiet activities
8:30 - 9:15	Breakfast and cleanup
9:15 - 11:30	Planned and free choice activities indoors and outdoors
11:30 - 12:30	Preparation and lunch (Youngest children eat first)
12:00 - 2:30	Older Infants, Toddlers, story and rest
12:30 - 2:30	Preschoolers rest and quiet activities
2:30 - 3:00	Rest time clean up and snack
3:15 - 5:15	Planned and free choice activities indoor and outdoors, "late snack"
5:15 - 5:30	Clean-up and departures
5:30	Center Closed / Doors Locked

Enrollment

We offer space at the Children's Center according to a family's position on the waiting list. We prioritize families who already have a child enrolled, then student parents, then faculty and staff, and finally, community families. Once your family is accepted, you will receive an email with a link to the registration forms. The forms must be completed before a child can be at the Children's Center without a parent or guardian present. It is important that your phone number and emergency contact phone numbers are kept current. Throughout your stay at the center, remember to inform the office staff (in writing) when any of these change.

Billing Rates and Fees

We offer care on a full-time basis only. We have a sliding fee scale for our student families, which is subsidized by The Evergreen Services and Activities Fund. Your placement on the sliding scale is based on your income and family size as reported on your FAFSA: If you are Pell-eligible or considered a Low-Income Graduate Students, you qualify as low income. Evergreen Employee rates and Community rates are listed separately on the fee schedule.

In order to qualify for the student parent rate, the student must have at least partial legal custody of the child enrolled, or act as a second parent within the child's primary home.

For every family a financial contract is drawn up stating tuition rates and dates of enrollment and withdrawal. This becomes your monthly financial commitment for childcare services. Each quarter the monthly tuition amounts are entered into your Evergreen account. You are welcome to pay for more than one month at a time; it will appear on your account as a credit.

Tuition is due on the last day of each month prior to the month of service. For instance, September tuition is due August 31.

Payment options include direct payment at Student Accounts by cash, check, or credit card, or payroll deduction for Evergreen employees. Since there is a fee for using a credit card, you are encouraged to use a debit card or a check. Another option is to set up an auto payment so your bank or credit union sends a check to Evergreen with your A number on the memo line

Failure to meet contract payments can result in termination of childcare services, disenrollment from academic programs or collection actions. The patron is responsible for all costs incurred in any attempt to collect delinquent accounts. Students with unpaid childcare fees are prohibited from registering, and a hold is placed on all Evergreen records until the account is cleared. Evergreen employees, and all childcare clients, will be ineligible for childcare services after 60 days of unpaid childcare tuition.

The following information is for our community families (as opposed to parenting students, faculty, and staff):

If you don't already have a student i.d. (often called an A-number) number (you would if you've previously been a student or worked at Evergreen), you will need to obtain one so that we can bill you for your childcare payments.

An A number is an identification number that is used to register you in Evergreen's administrative software. It is the number that we enter when we're trying to bill your account.

You obtain an A-number by emailing accountspayable@evergreen.edu with the following information:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Mailing address
- Email address
- SSN

If you don't want to give her that information over the phone, you can email to set up an appointment (office hours may be limited).

Once you have an A-number, you need to give that information to the Children's Center director so the billing can be initiated.

Leave of Absences

A leave of absence or extended vacation leave must be requested in writing, two weeks in advance. You are entitled to one leave of absence during the academic year, which can be up to three weeks. If your child attends during the summer, weekly rates are available from the Monday after graduation in June through the Friday before fall quarter begins. You may withdraw your child from the Monday after graduation until the first day of the academic quarter and your child will not lose their spot.

On occasion we may need to close due to circumstances outside of our control (i.e. pandemic, or other emergencies), and without warning. During these situations we will initiate an emergency protocol that will impact tuition. For four or fewer days of unplanned closure, families will be charged full tuition. After five or more days (at least one full week) of closure tuition will be billed/refunded at 50%. If the Center must close for 10 or more days (two full weeks), a full refund will be provided for all days beyond 10 days.

Arrival/Pick Up

When you arrive and leave the center you are required to sign your child in and out twice: electronically at the front desk for accounting purposes and handwritten on the classroom for safety purposes. The classroom sign in sheet is the visual count for teachers and they take it with them when they leave the building on walks or fire drill. Signing in gives us legal responsibility for your child and signing out is your taking back the legal responsibility for your child.

Please help us teach the children that all center doors are only for adults to open & close. This helps model the expectation that children are to ask a teacher or a parent for help opening a door, always.

Also, please do not hold the front door open for anyone, no matter how well you know them. Occasionally, families and staff experience domestic violence. There may very well be someone you have seen at the center many times who is no longer welcome. Help us change the cultural narrative to emphasize "safe" over "polite."

When another adult will be picking up your child, be certain that you have listed that person on your child's pick-up list and informed our staff. Please provide that pick-up person's telephone number. We cannot release a child to anyone who has not been authorized by the parent or guardian to pick up his or her child. Any person picking up your child should be prepared to show a picture ID. It is our policy not to release children to any person under the age of 16 – even to siblings.

If a person, authorized or unauthorized, arrives to pick up a child but appears to be seriously ill or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, we will offer to call someone else on the child's emergency pick-up list or request Evergreen Campus Police assistance to evaluate the situation and decide how to get the child home safely. Information about

persons expressly not allowed to pick up your child should be included in your registration information.

Late Pick-ups

Children's Center closes at 5:30 PM. Please plan to arrive ten to fifteen minutes early to allow for transition time, otherwise you and your child may feel rushed. Each time a child is picked up later than 5:30 the teacher responsible for closing the center will complete a late fee form assessing a fee of \$25 per fifteen-minute increment.

If a child remains thirty minutes after closing and we are unable to reach emergency pick up designees or parents, Evergreen Campus Police and CPS will be notified for assistance.

Communication Between Families and the Children's Center

Age group	Name of class	Phone number	Remind code
n/a	Front desk	360-867-6060	n/a
Infants (1 month-1 year)	Hedgehogs	360-867-7001	@d63b49
Younger toddlers (approximately 12-21 months)	Bunnies	360-867-7002	@e838k8
Older toddlers (approximately 21-30 months)	Owls	360-867-7003	@3kaf6cg
Multiage preschool (approximately 30 months-just before kindergarten)	Foxes	360-867-7004	@37c939
Multiage preschool (approximately 30 months-just before kindergarten)	Bears	360-867-7005	@gbf889

When we want to get information to you, we may put a note in your parent pocket, send you a message on Remind, speak to you in person, or all three. Important general information appears periodically on the bulletin boards in the hallway, in the newsletter, and through email.

When you pick up your child, staff will offer a brief, general overview of your child's day. Because their primary priority at that moment is supporting and nurturing the children in their care, and out of respect for your child's privacy, it is highly unlikely they will share any concerns with you. Nor will they be in a position to address any concerns you may have. Concerns and collaboration on problem solving is best done in a private meeting. If staffing allows, private meetings can be scheduled or, if staffing allows, they can be done on an impromptu basis. If you would like to schedule a meeting, you can speak with your

child's teacher directly or you can contact the Director or the Administrative Assistant. We are more than happy to meet with you and want to offer the attention and privacy you and you and your child deserve.

We will post sign-up sheets for care during break and holiday weeks. Please expect to see them with your classroom sign-in sheet. We would like to know whether your child would be attending the center during break and holiday weeks so that we can better plan for meals and staffing needs. Accurate information such as this allows us to keep our costs to a minimum and therefore keeps tuition costs down for families.

Unless there are legal documents indicating otherwise, both custodial parents may make decisions regarding their child's enrollment. This includes determining who is authorized to pick the child up, allowing topical ointments and medication, and whether the child can be photographed. It also includes the sharing of information related to enrollment, billing, and payment of childcare tuition.

It is rare, but possible that someone representing an outside agency will come to the center to speak with a specific child without first obtaining parent permission. This will most likely be a social worker from CPS or a police officer. If the person coming has the jurisdiction to see your child, and their visit is related to the safety and well-being of the child or another person – say, a social worker following up on a report of suspected abuse, or a police officer investigating a domestic violence complaint or conducting a well-child check – we will allow the person to see and speak with your child. We will make every effort to stay with your child through the conversation if we are allowed to do so. If a person such as a police officer comes to talk with your child, and it has to do with a matter not directly related to an investigation or your child's wellbeing – say, as a witness – we will make a sincere, legal effort to not allow them to see or talk with your child until we have contacted campus authorities, contacted you, and obtained your permission. If you have any questions or concerns about any of the scenarios listed above or the center's policies in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact the director.

In the event of withdrawing from the center a minimum of two weeks' notice is required, with notice given by a Monday and the last billing day being a Friday. Clients are bound to the original contract for two weeks following written notification of the center. In the event that you do choose to withdraw from the center we ask that you clean out your child's classroom cubby and make sure that you gather all of their belongings on your last day. We will hold your child's things for two weeks, after which we will donate them items to our free clothing baskets or to the classroom spare clothes.

Academic Research

Occasionally college students, generally from The Evergreen State College, South Puget Sound Community College and Saint Martin's University, will request to use the Children's Center for their internship or independent learning contract (ILC). The following conditions must be met in order for the person to be considered:

- Students must provide a copy of their assignment identifying the class, their faculty, and the college/university where they are enrolled.
- The Evergreen State College students must be in good standing with the Student Conduct Office.
- A signed acknowledgment of our ethical standards.

Students here for academic purposes may:

- Observe and interact with children.
- Make notes to further their education and use these notes to write academic papers.
- Discuss their experiences with Children's Center staff and with other students who have met this same criteria.

Students here for academic purposes are encouraged to:

- Focus on overall experiences rather than specific children's development.
- Paraphrase children's language rather than document literal translations.
- Avoid specifics such as names, children's idiosyncratic language, or using so many specifics as to make a child easily identifiable. E.g., "The four-year-old child is precocious and talkative, she loves to read books and play with dolls, she is light skinned with brown eyes, brown hair, and freckles."

Students here for academic purposes may not:

- Falsify any documents whatsoever
- Photograph, film, or audio record children, staff, or parents
- Publish their findings
- Be alone with children, even if they have a cleared DCYF background check

The Children's Center will display the name, photograph, relevant academic assignment (including institution's name and faculty name), and expected dates of attendance on our "Interns and Observers" board, along with the Ethical Agreement.

Parking

You may park in the lot marked "Children's Center Drop-Off Lot" adjacent to the Children's Center for up to half an hour to load and unload. Beware, if you park there for longer, you risk a ticket, being "booted," or having your car impounded. The parking office patrols the Children's Center every day and will issue citations to cars parked on Fireweed Drive in front of the center.

You can also purchase a daily or monthly parking pass and park in the gravel area adjacent to the Children's Center or in the parking area between the Children's Center and the Central Utility Plant. We discourage idling vehicles of any kind in our parking areas, except if needed to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.

The easiest way to obtain a daily parking pass is via the Flowbird app.

Adult Conduct Policy

It is important that everyone in our Children's Center have a safe environment where they are protected and know they will be treated with respect and consideration. Due to the number of small children here, we have a low threshold for adults who do not respect others' boundaries. While in the Children's Center, please conduct yourself in ways that help all children and adults feel safe. Families enrolled are responsible for the conduct of any guests accompanying them on our premises.

Please do not ...

- Use, or threaten to use any form of corporal punishment at the Children's Center or anywhere on the property.
- Smoke at the Children's Center or anywhere where children can see you or smell the smoke.
- Come to the Children's Center under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Wear or carry anything advocating violence, the limitation of civil rights, the promotion of bigotry, etc.

Please do ...

- Speak in a friendly, calm voice.
- Be respectful when speaking with your child, teachers and staff, or other people's children and their families.
- Guide your child to walk in the hallways by holding their hand or encouraging them to walk so their heels touch the ground (children run on their toes).
- If you see a child other than your own being hurtful or unsafe, inform the teacher and allow the teachers to intervene.
- Observe the campus wide scent free policy out of respect for the sensitivities of others and observe the Children's Center nut free policy out of respect for those children/adults who are allergic.
- Wear shoes in the Children's Center at all times, except for the infant room.

If a conflict arises that cannot be resolved between the two individuals, they may ask the director to mediate in a formal meeting. If the issue remains unresolved, the Children's Center will partner with the individual to resolve the conflict at the Olympia Dispute Resolution Center.

Child Protective Services

All Children's Center Staff are mandated reporters. Licensed childcare providers and their staff are required by Washington State Law to report suspected incidents of abuse and neglect (RCW 26.030(1)). In doing so, they have civil immunity under the law for good faith reporting. Failure to report can result in a gross misdemeanor charge.

Additionally, those making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect will be immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action unless it is proven that the report was malicious. The director or designee will determine if or how the information will be conveyed to the parent or guardian. The rights of the child, the person alleged to have harmed the child, and the person making the report will all be considered.

If a staff member is reported for child abuse or alleged child abuse at the center, the director will gather information from the staff member accused of the child abuse as well as any other staff member or volunteer who witnessed the incident and this information will be reported to their supervisor, the Center Licensors, and CPS. The director or designee will follow the guidance of CPS, the licensors, and legal counsel.

The relationship we have with our Licensors, CPS, Health Department, and Fire Marshall is one of partnership, for the safety and well-being of children.

Your Family at the Children's Center

Your family is important at our Center because we know that families are the most important people in children's lives. We want to hear about what is important to you and how your family does things. Our staff wants to work as partners with parents to provide the best care possible. We want to ensure children feel comfortable and familiar at the Children's Center so they will feel free to explore, learn, try new things and enjoy their day. We strive to create a center that is a safe and interesting place where children can make friends, learn about themselves and become excited about learning to understand the world around them.

If you would like quality time to discuss your child's progress, development, a special problem or just want to visit about your child, the lead teacher's planning time would be an excellent time to schedule an appointment.

Babysitting

If you wish to employ a member of the staff to provide care for your child either after hours or away from the Center, it is a private agreement between you and the staff member.

Families Get Involved

We want families to feel welcome at the Children's Center. Each family has their own interests and free time; the important thing is that you enjoy the way you choose to take part. Here are some suggestions of ways to be involved:

- Share family traditions, music or crafts
- Arrange a mini field trip to your campus work or study place
- Talk with other parents
- Come to a Family Night Potluck: weeks 2 and 6 of each academic quarter, from 5:30-6:30
- Read to children in the book corner
- Share a portion of your child's day- play in/out – mealtime – rest time
- Share a talent or passion

Website

www.evergreen.edu/childrenscenter.

What to Wear

Children should wear clothes that are comfortable, washable, and appropriate for outdoors and messy play. Please have them wear shoes and shirts even in hot weather. The Children's Center tries to use only water-soluble materials, but stains may still occur.

Labeling helps us return your child's clothes if misplaced.

What to Bring

- Children in diapers need diaper wipes and at least one diaper for every two hours your child is in care. *Please note the policy concerning cloth diapers in the health section of this handbook.*
- Staff will notify families when more diapers or wipes are needed.
- Infants and toddlers need three changes of extra clothes (please label) to be kept in your child's cubby in case of wetting accidents, mishaps with paint, spilled juice or a wild puddle. Preschoolers need at least one change of clothes.
- A warm jacket, a rain jacket and puddle boots.
- Anything your child is comfortable resting with: a small pillow, a small blanket, a small stuffed animal or other comfort items.

What Not to Bring

The teachers spend a great deal of time and resources planning our learning curriculum for the children. We ask that you leave your children's toys at home or in the car and use our toys and equipment while at the center. Small comfort items from home, including family photos, are always welcome for rest time. Toys and other personal belongings will be placed in the child's cubby or in the parent pocket to go home.

Due to allergies, nuts are not allowed in the center.

Additionally, neither weapons nor cannabis are allowed on college property. Pepper spray, medications, alcohol, tobacco and vape products, and any other potentially dangerous substances should be secured out of reach of children.

Food Service

We offer meal service through the USDA Child Care Food Program. We contract with Campus Food Service for breakfast (8:30-9:15) and lunch (11-12:15) and provide two snacks daily snack (post-rest and 5pm). Our 2-week cycle of menus are posted in the lobby, in each classroom, and on our website.

If your child has a documented allergy to a particular food, please ask your doctor to fill out the USDA Medical Disability Statement for Food Substitutions form and return it to the Office Assistant. We will then provide all the substitutes we can. We serve soy milk or Ripple milk instead of cow milk if you fill out the Fluid Milk Substitution Form.

We serve vegetarian meals upon written request and do not require a USDA Doctor Allergy Letter in order to do so.

If you feel for any reason that you have been discriminated against in any USDA related activity, please contact the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington D.C. 20250.

Health Care Plan

All staff are trained in First Aid/CPR, food handling, and procedures for preventing the spread of blood borne pathogens. The following summary is part of the Children's Center's Health Policy that is available upon request and can be found on the parent's bulletin board and in each classroom.

It is a state requirement (WAC 170-295-3040-1) for children to wash hands upon arrival in the classroom. Please make this part of your morning routine together.

Medication: We give prescription and nonprescription medication after the parent or guardian has signed a medication release form. Prescription medications and those whose labels indicate to consult a physician before prescribing must be accompanied by a signed prescription from a physician. Medication is kept in a locked box in the classroom cupboard or the kitchen refrigerator and is given according to instructions on the label. Please do not store medication in your child's diaper bag or backpack.

Sunscreen: If you would like your child to wear sunscreen, please apply the long-lasting, waterproof kind in the morning before you come to the center. If you would like sunscreen to be applied again in the afternoon, please fill out a medication form and give it to the teacher. We are obligated to treat sunscreen as a medication.

Diapers: Please provide one diaper for every two hours your child will be in care. We do our utmost to support the use of cloth diapers and also honor the licensing guidelines we must follow. (WAC 170-295-4120).

If you use cloth diapers...

- Please provide a small hands-free diaper pail and waterproof liner.
- Used cloth diapers will be returned to you un-rinsed, not shaken out, and individually bagged.
- Used cloth diapers must be removed from the Center daily.
- Please provide at least 12 disposable diapers for use as back-ups.
- If there is an ongoing issue, we may request that your child use disposable diapers at the Center.

Diaper procedures: The children are changed about every two hours. We give children the option to stand while being changed to make the experience as relaxed and pleasant as possible. Children who wish to go to the bathroom are taken at diapering times, as well as any other time they ask or appear to need to go. You can refer to the chart at the end of the day for diapering/toilet information about your child.

Illness: WAC-110-300-0205 We conduct a daily health check as each child arrives at the center. For all covid-related symptoms, please see our most recent covid mitigation strategies document (ask Director or Admin Assistant). Ill children cannot remain in childcare and must stay (or return) home. Children are considered “ill” when:

- Their condition prevents them from participating in normal activities
- Their condition requires a higher level of care than the staff can provide
- The amount of care the child needs compromises or places at risk the care and attention of other children
- There is a risk the child's condition will spread to other people.
- Unless covered by an individual care plan or protected by the ADA, children will be isolated and then sent home when they have:
 - A fever of 101 or higher for children over two months or a fever of 100.4 or higher when they are younger than two months as well as changes in behavior or another sign of illness such as an earache
 - Vomiting two or more times in twenty-four hours
 - Diarrhea two or more times in twenty-four hours or any mucus/blood in stool
 - A rash not associated with heat, diapering, or an allergic reaction
 - Open sores or wounds discharging body fluids that cannot be adequately covered with a waterproof dressing
 - Mouth sores with drooling
 - Lice, ringworm, or scabies. Children will be sent home at the end of the day and cannot return until nit free.

All staff are expected to follow the same standards as children.

Children who become ill during the day will be given a cot to rest on, away from other children, until they are picked up. When your child returns after a contagious illness, we may require a call or a note from your health care provider stating that your child is no longer contagious. They must be fever and medication free for 24 hours.

Immunizations: All children enrolled must be fully immunized or have a personal/religious exemption signed by a parent on file. We report communicable diseases to the local health department and notify parents with notices via email and on the front counter. In the event of a vaccine-preventable disease for which your child is exempt, your child may be excluded from attendance in our program for the duration of the outbreak. There is no refund in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness which requires exclusion from the program.

Accidents: Staff are trained to handle minor illnesses and injuries. Major injuries or illnesses requiring more than first aid will be reported immediately to parents and staff will call 911 if necessary. If a child needs to be taken home and you cannot be reached, we will call your emergency contact numbers. In emergencies requiring hospitalization, we use: Capital Medical Center, 3900 Capital Mall Dr. SW, 754-5858 www.capitalmedical.com

Documentation: All injuries, illness, and incidents are recorded on an Incident Report Form and require the parent's signature. If there is a form needing your signature, it will be noted by your child's name on the sign-out sheet and ready for your signature in your parent pocket.

Outdoor Play: Please dress your child for the weather and for physical play. We play outside nearly every day and do not have extra staff to keep one child inside because they are sick. When a child is too ill to go outside, they are too ill to participate in our program.

Pets We have a fish tank in the lobby. One of the staff maintains it by replacing the water with clean water, turning the gravel over to kill algae. The potential risks for children include Mycobacterium and Salmonella; to prevent this, children should not put their hands in the fish tank.

Pesticides: Pesticides are rarely used. When they are, it is by a licensed professional, using nontoxic techniques when feasible, as part of an Integrated Pest Management system. There will be a sign on the front door to notify all families and staff in advance. The application will occur when children will not be on the premises for at least 12 hours.

Rest Time

We promote rest time as a healthy habit. We do not use the word nap because in our setting, sleep is a choice but rest is not. Everyone rests. It is a time to rest the body, relax the muscles, and engage the senses so the brain and body can grow. It is also a time to rebuild the energy supply spent in the morning. Rest time is an opportunity for staff to spend time with each child, sometimes rubbing their back or feet, if the child wishes. We always allow toddlers younger than 30 months to sleep until they wake up themselves, as per WAC 388150.140.

Holidays

In our efforts to promote and support anti-bias attitudes and education; because of our desire to minimize stress in children's lives, and in order to respect the cultural diversity represented by families of all children enrolled at the Children's Center, we as a Center have chosen not to celebrate traditional holidays. We ask that you do not send children in costume on Halloween or with Valentines in February. The staff have agreed that holidays are family celebrations with particular family values. It is difficult to include all children with respect to cultural diversity, and it is difficult to give holidays meaning that is developmentally appropriate for young children. We recognize holidays may be part of children's lives and we talk about the ways families are celebrating – or not. Holiday times are often stressful for children and we would rather remain as a warm, nurturing, and stress free haven for the children to play and learn, pressure free. We do celebrate life, milestones of growth and development, personal accomplishments, individual successes, people, natural wonders, special days and the changing seasons. We hope you will join us in these celebrations.

Birthdays, Last Day Celebrations,

There are times when parents would like to bring treats from home for a celebration – their child's birthday or their last day in childcare.

Please consider non-edible treats, such as stickers, bubbles, sidewalk chalk, or a book that can be read to the class and donated to the library.

Parents often wish to bring something edible and something sweet is the most popular. You are more than welcome to do so. Because we have children enrolled who have potentially life-threatening allergies to nuts, we sometimes cannot serve the special treats that have been brought in. Different factories have different processes for cleaning equipment between batches of one cookie or another.

The following are treats that have been identified as consistently, safely nut-free. If you would like to bring in an edible treat for a celebration, it must be one of the following:

- Regular Oreos
- Lofthouse brand "fancy" cookies with icing and sprinkles (marked with red peanut free warning)
- Keebler Vanilla Wafers, original or mini
- Kellogg's Rice Crispy Treats – original
- Barnum's Animal Crackers – original (in the little box)
- Goldfish crackers – cheddar flavor
- Minute Maid Juice Bars – 12 pack varieties: Cherry, Grape, Orange
- Breyers Pure Fruit Bars – 12 pack (Strawberry, Orange, Raspberry)
- Fresh, uncut fruit to be prepared in our kitchen

Please do not bring balloons unless they are Mylar (deflated or broken latex balloons are a choking hazard).

If you plan to have a home birthday party for your child please print names on the invitations and put them in the parent pockets. Please be sensitive to the potential upset for children who are not invited.

Potlucks

The Children's Center hosts two center-wide potlucks per quarter from 5:30-6:30, usually held in one of the two preschool classes.

Field Trips

Our campus has a wealth of places that the children can experience. We take walks and adventures away from the center throughout the year, many spontaneously. These mini field trips are covered by the blanket permission request found in your registration packet. We check the sign-in sheet to see when your expected pickup time will be before taking your child on an excursion around campus. Field trips away from the Evergreen Campus will be scheduled in advance, require special parent permission, and are exceedingly rare.

Babysitting

If you wish to ask a staff member for after-hours or weekend care for your child, it is a private agreement between you and the staff member.

The Evergreen State College, including its officers or employees, is not responsible for any agreements between private parties resulting from announcements made by The Evergreen State College or the Childcare Center for private childcare services.

Kindergarten Readiness

Just past our lending library, you will find a display with the dates and times of each local school districts' kindergarten information sessions as well as suggestions from the districts on how to best prepare your child for kindergarten.

Each fall, we will host a kindergarten readiness Q&A panel where early elementary educators will share their perspectives and answer questions.

Assessing children's development

Assessments are an essential component of determining the most effective strategies to meet a child's needs. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines child assessment as "formal and informal measures as tools for monitoring children's progress toward a program's desired goals." In our program, children are assessed through observation, Teaching Strategies Gold Checkpoints, the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Ages & Stages Questionnaire Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE).

Teaching Strategies Gold "can be used to assess all children, including English-language learners, children with disabilities, and children who demonstrate competencies beyond typical developmental expectations." [from the Teaching Strategies Gold website]

Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ®) provides reliable, accurate developmental and social-emotional screening for children between birth and age 6. Drawing on parents'

expert knowledge, ASQ has been specifically designed to pinpoint developmental progress and catch delays in young children—paving the way for meaningful next steps in learning, intervention, or monitoring. [from the Ages and Stages Questionnaire website]

Why do we assess children? We assess children for several reasons: primarily, as NAEYC states, to “ensure that [The Campus Children's Center] meets its goals for children's learning and developmental progress as well as inform[ing] program improvement efforts.”

Specifically:

- to identify a child's interests and needs and to describe their developmental progress and learning.
- to inform and improve curriculum improvements or plan program improvement.
- So “teachers may learn from assessments how they need to adapt their teaching practices or their learning environments.
- So administrators can target specific professional opportunities to specific staff members so they can better meet the needs of the children enrolled in their classes.
- So administrators can adjust the distribution of program resources (time, money, energy) to better meet the needs of children enrolled in their classes.

Where are children assessed? Whenever at all possible, children will be assessed by adults who know them and in a familiar environment. Sometimes they will be assessed individually but far more often, they will be assessed while they are participating in classroom activities, either with other children or alone. For instance, the Teaching Strategies Gold checkpoints are addressed by the child's primary teachers, in the classroom. The ASQ and ASQ-SE are administered by families, in the family home.

How frequently are children assessed? Informal observational assessments are conducted on a continual basis how are they entered into TSG. A portfolio of Teaching Strategies Gold checkpoints are completed twice per year in December and June. The ECPS 2 is primarily responsible for their completion but make delegate a portion to the ECPS 1. The ASQ and ASQ-SE are offered to parents for completion within 90 days of enrollment; follow up ASQ's are offered each September unless warranted more often.

How can families contribute to the assessment process? Families are strongly encouraged to complete the ASQ and/or the ASQ-SE. Additionally, families are welcome to share informal observations of their children. They are also strongly encouraged to share any formal assessment the child has received, e.g., from a developmental preschool, occupational therapist, speech therapist, counselor or psychologist.

How do we share assessment results with families? Informal observations are shared daily via the Remind app or in conversations with families. Conference times are offered over each academic quarter's eval week and break week where parents and lead teachers can meet in person or via videoconference to discuss their child's development in more detail. Teaching Strategies Gold checkpoints are shared in writing (or electronically via email or Remind) twice per year. If a family chooses to meet with the teacher, they will be shared at

the meeting. Otherwise, they will be sent home with the child. The results from the ASQ and ASQ-SE are shared in writing shortly after the family turns them in.

Although families are welcome to do so at any time, conferences are a wonderful time for families to raise questions or concerns about how the assessment methods are meeting their child's needs.

Culturally relevant assessments are essential. As mentioned above, it is essential that children be assessed in a familiar environment, by adults whom they know and trust, whenever possible. Family culture and experiences, a child's abilities and disabilities, and home language are all essential components of an effective assessment strategy.

What are we assessing?

- Observational assessments examine cognitive skills, language, social and emotional development, approached to learning, health, and physical development (including self-help skills).
- Teaching Strategies Gold checkpoints address the following: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and The Arts.
- The ASQ addresses the following:
 - *Communication*: A child's language skills, both what your child understands and what he or she can say.
 - *Gross Motor*: How a child uses their arms and legs and other large muscles for sitting, crawling, walking, running, and other activities.
 - *Fine Motor*: A child's hand and finger movement and coordination.
 - *Problem Solving*: How a child plays with toys and solves problems.
 - *Personal-Social*: A child's self-help skills and interactions with others.
- The ASQ-SE addresses the following:
 - *Autonomy*: A child's ability or willingness to self-initiate or respond without guidance (moving to independence).
 - *Compliance*: A child's ability or willingness to conform to the direction of others and follow rules.
 - *Adaptive functioning*: A child's success or ability to cope with bodily needs (sleeping, eating, toileting, safety).
 - *Self-regulation*: A child's ability or willingness to calm or settle down or adjust to physiological or environmental conditions or stimulation.
 - *Affect*: A child's ability or willingness to demonstrate their own feelings and empathy for others.
 - *Interaction*: A child's ability or willingness to respond to or initiate social responses with parents, other adults, and peers.
 - *Social-communication*: A child's ability or willingness to interact with others by responding to or initiating verbal or nonverbal signals to indicate interests, needs, or feelings.

Do these screening tools meet professional standards? All professional staff (ECPS 1's and 2's) complete Teaching Strategies Gold Interrater Reliability verification. All professional staff receive training in interpreting ASQ scores from the Childcare Action Council.

Teaching Strategies Gold and the ASQ/ASQ-SE meet professional standards for standardization, reliability, and validity.

When will teachers collaborate to plan, based on this assessment data? Teachers should use the time when their student staff are at lunch and the children are asleep to check in with one another, interpret assessment results, and use them to align curriculum and teaching practices with the interests and needs of the children. Additionally, planning time will be offered for both teachers together as staffing permits.

Transitions From One Class to the Next

Generally, children transition based on their development, relative to the development of the children of the children in their current class and the development of the children in the next age group up.

The exception is when children move from the infant room to the one-year-old room – that happens on the child's first birthday, as required by state licensing, unless the baby has a developmental delay and the state licenser gives approval for the one year old to remain in the infant room. In the month or so leading up, the teachers will visit the infant room and then the soon-to-be-toddler will, along with a teacher, visit the toddler room. We take this transition as slowly and gently as we believe each soon-to-be-toddler needs.

When a child is moving from one room to the next, teachers will share developmental information with one another. We also arrange visits, either in the younger classroom or the older, so that children and teachers can get to know one another. Your child's current teacher will let you know the transition is coming and then your child's new teacher will reach out to you, either in person, by phone, or by email, to introduce themselves and to answer any questions you may have.

Guiding Children's Behavior

Our goal is to help children behave in a responsible way, motivated from within themselves, rather than to please adults. The word "discipline" and "disciple" come from the same root, meaning, "to teach." We want to help children learn to make healthy choices for themselves, develop problem-solving skills, and embrace the basic human values of respect, trust, honesty, and caring for others. **Our basic premise is that no one may hurt themselves, others, or destroy property.**

We strive to provide children with familiar routines and a clear set of limits to help children feel emotionally secure and safe. The teachers explain the reasons for rules with the children and follow the same rules in order to model the behaviors we encourage. We facilitate conflict resolution; communicating our requests and expectations in positive ways that influence children to cooperate. We also try to be healthy role models for children by

being open and honest about feelings. We want to help children get in touch with and identify their feelings.

Our goal in dealing with aggressive behavior is to attend to the needs of the person who has been hurt and to attend to the needs of the aggressor by working through the issues. We place a great deal of emphasis on teaching empathy by focusing first on the victim, rather than teaching aggression by immediately focusing on the aggressor. However, we consistently monitor children who are hurting others, helping them work out their underlying feelings and plan better ways of solving their problem the next time.

The following consequences of inappropriate behavior are never used at the center, as well as being forbidden by law: corporal (physical) punishment, including striking a child with hand or an object, shaking, shoving, spanking or any form of aggressive contact; any form of harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form including verbal, emotional and physical abuse.

Consequences of Children's Inappropriate Behavior

We strive to have our consequences for inappropriate behaviors respect the child's spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. We honor typical developmental behaviors and address behaviors beyond the scope of what is typical for the child's developmental stage.

We occasionally use a *short* "breather" to help children calm down, but we do not use timeout as a teaching tool because it only halts undesired behavior. It does not teach the desired behavior or teach coping skills in dealing with others or their own emotions.

Through clear, consistent teacher responses we address a child's pattern of inappropriate behavior in an effort to name and bring to awareness the inappropriate behavior. Redirection and/or choices are offered to the child. Redirection is offered less often, as again, it teaches avoidance and does not teach skills to deal with situations.

If this proves ineffective, teachers and the director meet to discuss the child's difficulties and plan a program to assist the child. The difficulties and program are then discussed with the child's family and then the program implemented. In some cases this may include referral outside the center (e.g., counseling).

If a child is unable to regain self-control and requires more individual attention than can be given within child to staff ratios, we will contact a parent. Staff may use limited physical restraint when:

- Protecting self and others from physical injury
- Obtaining possession of a weapon or other dangerous object
- Protecting property from damage

Staff will document any incident involving the use of physical restraint and inform parents in writing.

If it becomes clear to the staff that the Children's Center is not able to meet the needs of a child, we will assist the family in finding alternate care and will dis-enroll the child from care here.

Termination of Services

The Children's Center may terminate your child's enrollment under the following circumstances or may choose to continue a child's enrollment but bar a parent, guardian, family member or friend from the premises. This may occur without prior notice and at the discretion of the Children's Center Director.

- Non-payment for childcare services and/or lack of adherence to tuition payment policies.
- Falsification of information on enrollment forms or childcare related forms or documentation.
- Non-compliance with the policies set forth in this Handbook.
- Lack of cooperation with the Center's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
- Inappropriate or abusive behavior and/or verbal abuse or threats toward the Children's Center staff, other adults or children.
- The continued enrollment of the child poses a risk to the health and/or safety of other children or adults present or continued enrollment of the child constitutes an undue burden on the Center's resources.

Emergency Plans

We practice emergency preparedness with regular earthquake drills, fire drills, and lockdown drills. The Children's Center is stocked with emergency supplies. For our monthly fire drills, we evacuate to the fence on the far edge of the playgrounds. Our designated evacuation site away from the Children's Center is the tennis court on the soccer field. In case of an emergency evacuation, we may not be able to release any children to their families until all children are accounted for.

When the college is closed due to inclement weather, we are closed as well.

There are several ways of obtaining Evergreen closure information:

1. The Evergreen State College has implemented an emergency alert system using OmniAlert. OmniAlert enables us to send important campus information to you via email or text.
2. To sign up for this service go to <http://www.evergreen.edu/facilities/emergency/>
3. You can call the Campus Operator at 360-867-6000
4. You can check for updates on Evergreen's website at www.evergreen.edu
5. We will provide information via Remind and email as we are able (the other sources of information are managed at a college-wide level).

Unusual Closures

There may be circumstances, on campus or in the area around the College, where the Director or the person acting in the Director's absence may make the determination that the Children's Center will close while the College remains open. In these cases, we will make every effort to share the message via Remind, email message, and/or notifying every family by phone.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR CHILDREN AND YOURSELVES WITH US!