The Early Childhood Development Center, Inc. (ECDC), founded in 1971, is a nonprofit program accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), licensed by the Indiana Bureau of Child Development and Paths to Quality level 4, the highest level of quality in Indiana’s Quality Rating System. ECDC offers two programs for young children, one on the campus of Saint Mary’s College (ECDC-SMC) and the other on the campus of the University of Notre Dame (ECDC-ND). Both sites are governed by one Board of Directors, which includes parent representatives from each ECDC program. Parent paid tuition primarily funds ECDC. ECDC is partially funded by Saint Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame to serve their communities. The ECDC program at Saint Mary’s is the only ECDC program that enrolls families who are from the general public and not affiliated to ND or SMC.

Enrollment and Hours of Operation:
ECDC-SMC serves children ages 3 through 5 during the school year and 3 through 9 during the summer. There are approximately 135 children enrolled in the ECDC-SMC program with 90 children in attendance each day.

ECDC-ND serves children ages 2 through kindergarten during the school year and 2.5 through 9 during the summer. There are approximately 185 children enrolled at ECDC-ND with 130 children in attendance each day during the school year and 165 children in attendance during the summer.

ECDC at Saint Mary's is open from 7:00am until 5:30pm. Morning Arrival Times - most children arrive in the morning between 8:00 and 8:45am.

ECDC at Notre Dame is open from 6:30am until 5:30pm. Morning Arrival Times - most children arrive in the morning between 8:00 and 8:45am.

ECDC serves families affiliated to the University and College. ECDC-ND enrolls families who are affiliated to ND or SMC in the categories of faculty, administration, staff, student and alum. ECDC-SMC gives priority to the enrollment of families who are affiliated to SMC or ND in the categories of faculty, administration, staff, student and alum. If ECDC-SMC has enrollment openings after enrolling affiliated families, nonaffiliated families from the community are enrolled. Please note - ECDC-ND does not serve families from the community. Historically, both programs operate at capacity enrollment and have waiting lists for most age groups. Waiting lists for the younger groups, 2’s, 2/3’s, 3’s and 3/4’s, are typically the longest.

The ECDC Teaching Staff is composed of teaching teams with at least one degreed Lead Teacher in every activity room. Several teachers have been with ECDC more than 20 years, with the Executive Director more than 30 years. Undergraduate students studying early childhood education, nursing, speech and communication, sociology and psychology at the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s College, IUSB, Bethel College and IVY Tech participate in the ECDC program as interns, practicum students, student teachers and volunteers.

ECDC Registration takes place during the spring for both the upcoming summer and school year programs. Registration due dates are March 1 for the summer program and April 1 for the school year. Registration for the ECDC kindergarten is due February 15. Full time and part time enrollment schedules are available. Regardless of the child's enrollment schedule, the children enjoy a robust curriculum with art, music, literacy, math and science, free choice playtime both inside and outside and enrichment opportunities. Registration forms are posted on the ECDC website in early January. Currently enrolled families receive priority in the registration process with an early registration period that takes place in February. Registration procedures are detailed at the following link - http://ecdc.nd.edu/registration/registration
Tuition at ECDC-ND is an income based tuition schedule. ECDC-SMC tuition is flat rate tuition, with a few scholarships available to families with financial need. Visit the website at ecdc.nd.edu/ or call ECDC-ND: 631-3344 or ECDC-SMC: 284-4693 for tuition info. ECDC accepts Child Care Voucher from qualifying families.

The ECDC program embraces the following early childhood principles:

* Children learn and grow as whole persons. Children learn best when their physical and emotional needs are met and they feel safe and secure. The child’s self-image strongly affects his or her eagerness to learn and ability to do so. The ECDC program fosters the child’s social, emotional, physical, creative and cognitive development.

* Children grow and develop through predictable stages, but at individual rates. All children can learn, and given appropriate settings, want to learn. Children are persistent, curious, creative and active learners. The ECDC program enhances each child’s love of learning.

* Children learn through active engagement and through conversation and dialogue concerning their experiences. Young children are concrete learners who construct knowledge based on direct sensory experiences. For children, play is serious work. ECDC offers a wealth of inquiry based play opportunities with rich materials for children to play with and learn from.

* Children learn quickly when material is presented in meaningful ways at appropriate times. Young children learn best when actively involved in activities they have a role in initiating.

* Children exhibit different learning styles. Learning activities at ECDC are varied and offer multisensory experiences and frequent opportunities to choose from a variety of materials appropriate to their individual learning styles and interests.

* Child guidance and discipline at ECDC fosters the development of respect, responsibility, resourcefulness, and responsiveness, which assist children in appropriate decision making skills, the development of self-regulation, conflict resolution skills, and altruistic behavior.

* ECDC teachers and staff recognize and celebrate the diversity of our children and families. We are committed to establishing an anti-bias curriculum that supports our multicultural community.

* ECDC provides a positive environment within which young children thrive. We view ourselves as an extension of each child’s family, building partnerships with families. Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled two times per year, once during fall semester and once during spring semester. The thirty-minute conferences are designed to provide opportunities to discuss individual child development, learning, strengths, interests and goals and to provide an opportunity for the family and teacher to collaborate to support the child’s holistic development.
Enrichment Opportunities:

**Dance/Creative Movement** - parents may register children, for a small fee, for a series of Dance Classes/Creative Movement each semester with Bonnie Baxter.

**Gymnastics** - through Gymnasts in Motion, parents may register, for a small fee, for a weekly gymnastics program. This supports gross and fine motor development, balance and agility.

**Specialists and Resource Experts** – visit the classrooms to share their interests, talents and special information. These resource experts include storytellers, puppeteers, musicians, artists, community helpers, health practitioners, naturalists, animal experts, etc.

**Field Trips** - children enrolled in the 4’s, 4/5’s and Kindergarten groups participate in a variety of field trips in the community providing experienced based learning. ECDC owns a 30-seat special activities bus (2006 Bluebird Bus) with seatbelts and integrated child restraint seats that is used for field trip transportation. A licensed school bus driver drives the ECDC special activities bus. Teachers and parent helpers accompany the children on all field trips.

**Speech and Language Screenings** are provided once per year during fall semester by the Saint Mary’s College Speech and Language graduate students who also provide speech and language therapy at the ECDC program sites during the school year under the supervision of SMC faculty members.

**College Students** from Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s College, Indiana University South Bend, Bethel College and IVY Tech bring enthusiasm and extra adult hands and attention to the children and classrooms as they learn about young children and early childhood curriculum. Undergraduate students are involved in all classrooms as part time employees, practicum students, interns, observers and volunteers. All college students are provided with orientation and training regarding the ECDC philosophy, curriculum, child guidance and policies and procedures; college students work under the direct supervision of the ECDC professional teaching faculty at all times.

**Family Enrichment Seminars** entitled “Conversations about Everyday Life with Children” are offered monthly. These topical parent presentations are provided on a regular basis to support families in their important role of parenting.

The Early Childhood Development Center admits students of any race, color, religion, gender, and national or ethnic origin.

*Please visit the ECDC website at [http://ecdc.nd.edu/](http://ecdc.nd.edu/) or call ECDC-ND at 631-3344 or ECDC-SMC at 284-4693 for further information.*