Handbook for ECDC Families

Early Childhood Development Center, Inc
Saint Mary’s College
University of Notre Dame

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ECDC MISSION
The Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC), a not-for-profit organization, provides the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s College and the South Bend/Mishawaka communities with high quality, NAEYC Accredited early care and education for young children and their families. ECDC implements Best Practices that foster the children’s healthy social, emotional, physical, cognitive and creative development. ECDC’s active learning environment fosters the development of respect, responsibility, resourcefulness and responsiveness and includes highly qualified teachers, low teacher child ratios, child centered emergent curriculum and collaborations with families. ECDC is a model program for professional development, college student practicum experiences and research for faculty and students.

ECDC INTRODUCTION & HISTORY
The Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) founded in 1971 is a nonprofit, licensed preschool, kindergarten, childcare center partially funded by Saint Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame. ECDC provides both full and part time programs for children in the Saint Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame community. ECDC at Saint Mary’s College enrolls families from the public, if space is available. ECDC at Notre Dame does not enroll families from the public. In the fall of 1994, ECDC began operating two sites, 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 and operate with the same philosophy, curriculum, parent involvement, and college student involvement. Teachers educated and experienced in child development and early childhood education staff both sites. A 17 member Board of Directors that includes 2 members appointed by the President of Saint Mary’s College and 2 members appointed by the President of University of Notre Dame governs ECDC. The ECDC Board also includes 2 parent representatives elected by the parents from each ECDC program. The remaining 9 board members are general members from the Saint Mary’s and Notre Dame communities.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY
The ECDC program seeks to enhance the development of each child. The learning environment, activities, and daily schedule foster social, emotional, physical, cognitive and creative development through experience-based, hands-on activities and play. A central goal is the promotion of children’s self-confidence and the love of learning.

ECDC provides a nurturing environment within which young children grow and develop. We view ourselves as an extension of each child’s family. As such, we strive to develop supportive relationships with families throughout their ECDC involvement.

ECDC enrolls children with differing social and ethnic backgrounds from the Saint Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame communities. We are committed to providing all children enrolled with a multicultural curriculum and experiences. Each activity room has many multicultural materials, including books, blocks, musical instruments, dolls, baskets, play food, dress up clothes, and art materials. ECDC welcomes students of any race, color, religion, gender, and national origin.
LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND GOALS
Teachers use a variety of activities including children’s literature, indoor and outdoor play, art, music, movement, creative dramatics, and field trips to promote the individual, interpersonal and cognitive development of each child. ECDC’s approach to curriculum is based on the Project Approach to Curriculum and Creative Curriculum and is a literature-based program. When children are not engaged in project work, they are focused on in-depth studies. Teachers plan literacy, math, science, art, social studies, and physical activities in both projects and studies.

INDIVIDUAL GOALS – Awareness and control of the body and its movement in space; curiosity; understanding and control of the environment; expressing self verbally, artistically, musically, and dramatically; and self-help skills and independence.

INTERPERSONAL GOALS – Social and emotional development; expressing feelings and understanding the feelings of others; learning alternative problem-solving techniques; developing cooperation; developing friendships; learning to lend a helping hand; and learning to take the perspective of others.

COGNITIVE LEARNING GOALS – Language development, both expressive and receptive; conceptual knowledge regarding the world around us; emergent literacy skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing; number; math and science awareness; and perceptual skills.

CURRICULUM ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS
The ECDC program provides learning experiences and opportunities that are age and interest appropriate for all children. Teachers and Program Staff use several elements from the following programs to meet the needs of the children: Creative Curriculum, The Project Approach, and Constructivism. Our goal is to provide a nurturing and safe environment to support learning for the children, families and college students. The ECDC curriculum is based on accepted theories of child development by developmentalists such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey, Adler, and Erikson. The curriculum is individualized to meet the needs of every child. Each family’s culture is respected and family members are encouraged to participate in the program. The physical environment is safe, healthy, and contains a variety of toys and materials that are both stimulating and familiar. Children select activities and materials that interest them, and they learn by being actively involved. Adults show respect for children and interact with them in caring ways. Teachers have specialized training in child development and appropriate programming. Curriculum goals and objectives guide staff’s ongoing assessment of children’s progress, allowing them to individualize learning for each child. The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the children. The schedule provides time and support for transitions; includes both indoor and outdoor experiences; and is responsive to a child’s need to rest or be active.

Curriculum Adaptation and Individual Planning The benefits of child-centered curriculum planning is easy to see. Children become fully involved in activities, actively explore their environments, feel proud when they can do things for themselves, and enjoy playing and learning with others. Individualizing gives each child the capacity to grow and learn now and in the future. At ECDC, classroom teachers engage in an ongoing cycle of individualization: assessment—planning—implementation and ongoing assessment. Teachers and Program Staff use a variety of strategies to get to know and plan for children, build partnerships with parents, and assess children’s progress. Individualizing is most successful when staff and families build strong partnerships and communicate frequently about a child. By combining the information gained from the two perspectives, families and staff can use the curriculum to plan and implement an individualized education.

Child-centered planning is an ongoing process that continues throughout a child’s participation in our classrooms. To effectively individualize, teachers a) use multiple sources of information including parent reports/forms, ongoing observations, and results of standardized screening (ASQ) to learn about needs, interests, abilities, culture, home language, and life experiences; b) develop a partnership with each family to share information about a child’s culture, life experiences, skills, needs, interests and abilities, and plan how to encourage growth and development at home and in the classroom; c) plan ways to address individual needs through all aspects of the curriculum—the learning environment, daily routine, learning activities and interactions; and d) document
children’s work using a variety of strategies including observations, developmental milestones, parent reports/forms, learning checklists and examples of children’s work.

**Identifying Children’s Interests and Needs**  ECDC teachers and staff observe children for strengths, interests, and needs on an on-going basis to determine individual curriculum planning and to establish individual goals. Teaching teams meet at least weekly to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of individual children. Individual goals are prepared and planned for every child on an on-going basis. Families have opportunities to share results of observations from home to contribute to the individual planning process. Teachers work closely with families to ensure that the assessments used are sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.

**WHAT SHOULD YOUNG CHILDREN BE LEARNING?**
Just because young children can do many things like recite numbers in rote fashion or repeat the days of the week, fill out worksheets or read from flash cards, it is not sufficient justification for requiring them to do so. According to Lilian Katz, from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, "Young children usually do willingly most things adults ask of them. But their willingness is not a reliable indicator of the value of the activity. The developmental question is not, ‘What can children do?’ Rather it is, ‘What should children do that best serves their learning and development in the long term?’" There are four categories of learning that are of importance in the education of young children:

**Knowledge:** Facts, concepts, ideas, vocabulary, and stories. “A child acquires knowledge from someone’s answers to his questions, explanations, descriptions, and accounts of events as well as through observation.” Lilian Katz, 1987.

**Skills:** Physical, social, verbal, counting, drawing, cognitive, problem solving. “Skills are small units of action which occur in a relatively short period of time and are easily observed or inferred. Skills can be learned from direct instruction and improved with practice.” Lilian Katz, 1987.

**Dispositions:** Curiosity, friendliness/unfriendliness, cooperativeness/bossiness, creativity, respectfulness, and helpfulness. “Dispositions can be thought of as habits of mind or tendencies to respond in certain ways. Dispositions are not learned through instruction or drill. The dispositions that children need to acquire or to strengthen - curiosity, creativity, cooperation, and friendliness - are learned primarily from being around people who exhibit them.” Lilian Katz, 1987.

**Feelings:** These are subjective emotional states, many of which are innate. Among those that are learned are feelings of competence, belonging, and security. Feelings about school, teachers, and other children are learned in these early years.

Children are persistent, curious, creative, and active learners and each exhibits a different learning style. Thus, the younger the children are, the greater the variety of teaching methods and opportunities there should be. The learning environment should remain informal and encourage spontaneous play in which children engage in whatever appropriate play activities interest them. The learning environment also provides opportunities for children to interact in small groups as they work together on projects that help them make sense of their experience.

**HOW WE ARE LEARNING:**
**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT APPROACH**
*(Taken from the book Young Investigators by Judy Helm and Lilian Katz)*

**What is the project approach?**
The project approach is a method of teaching in which an in-depth study of a particular topic is conducted by a child or group of children.
How is it different from other ways of learning?
Our children study one topic for a long period of time. The topic is selected partly because they were interested in it and it is meaningful to them and their lives. The children will go into great depth and often at a higher level than many adults would expect for this. The teacher integrates content knowledge like math, reading, and science into the project.

How is a project planned?
The children make many of their own plans with the teacher’s help. Plans usually include an on-site visit and/or interviews with experts. An expert is anyone who knows a great deal about the topic of study.

How will children learn?
Children use a variety of resources to find answers to their questions. These include traditional resources like books. They also conduct in-depth investigations and on-site visits. The children plan questions for interviews and have assigned tasks for trips or for interviewing experts. They make field notes and draw or write on site. They make plans for building structures and play environments that will help them sort out what they are learning about the topic. Children do their own problem solving with the teacher structuring problems and assisting in finding solutions and resources. Children will redraw and rewrite as their knowledge grows. Some of the ways that they will record their learning are project books, posters, murals, artwork, graphs, charts, constructions, and journals.

How does the teacher know if children are learning?
The teacher collects children’s work, observes what they do, and analyzes their work. This is called documentation. The curriculum goals of the center are reviewed and documentation is planned to be sure that children are learning concepts and skills specified in the goals. Often a display will be prepared that shows what children are learning.

Is this the only way children are learning?
The project approach is one way among a variety of ways that children learn. The project integrates much of the same knowledge and skills presented in more formal ways in the classroom. Projects have the added advantage of providing an opportunity for children to apply and use what they are learning as they solve problems and share what they know. It provides opportunities for developing group skills such as working with others and challenges children to think, which supports brain development.

How can others help with projects?
Realize that children have their own questions and are learning to use you and many resources to find answers. Take their questions seriously, and listen to what they have to say. Provide space and opportunities for them to draw or photograph what they are studying. Children learn best when many senses are involved so anything that they can touch, see up close, or hear is helpful. Things that can be borrowed for study in the classroom are valued and appreciated, especially parts of machines, tools, samples of products, and so forth. We hope that you follow up, view our documentation, and find out how children have processed what they have learned from the projects.

LITERACY (READING & WRITING SKILLS)
Language and literacy (reading and writing skills) have become a popular topic in education, government, and the media. Because this is such an important topic, ECDC wants to share our approach as well as some of our strategies. This information is research based and is based on the latest findings as well as what has always been known as best practices in early childhood education for many, many years.

We know that the early childhood years, zero to age eight, are a very critical time for the development of language and literacy skills. We also know that this time period is one in which typical children's development is very individualized and can be uneven. This makes a single approach or "magic formula" difficult to address every child's individual needs and learning style. This also means that a language and literacy curriculum should not just be an isolated subject or taught only at certain times of the day. Language and literacy are most effective when they are part of a curriculum that addresses the whole child's development: social and emotional, creative, physical, and cognitive. There are times for direct teaching: one-on-one, in small groups, and large groups but most importantly they occur throughout the day during daily routines and during hands-on learning in all of the...
learning centers in the classroom and outside. ECDC is committed to this approach because we know that this is how young children learn best.

**How is ECDC preparing children to learn how to read?**

**Rich Teacher Talk**
*Teachers talk to children in large group, small group and one-on-one situations.*
*Teachers extend children’s comments into more descriptive, grammatically mature statements.*
*Teachers use project work to promote cognitively challenging content.*
*Teachers use words that children are unlikely to encounter in everyday conversations and help children learn the meaning of new vocabulary words.*
*Teachers listen and respond to what children have to say.*

**Storybook Reading**
*Children are read to throughout the day, exposing them to stories, poems, and information books.*
*Conversations and activities before, during, and after reading take place to stimulate children cognitively.*
*Favorite books are read over and over again to increase the likelihood that children will attempt to read those books on their own.*
*Books that positively reflect the children’s identity and culture are read.*

**Phonological Awareness Activities**
*Children are provided with activities that increase children’s awareness of the sounds of language. These activities include books, poems, and songs that involve rhyme (words which end with the same sound), alliteration (several words that begin with the same sound), and sound matching (matching words which begin with a specific sound).*

**Alphabet Activities**
*Teachers encourage children to use materials, which promote identification of alphabet letters. These materials include alphabet books, magnetic letters, alphabet blocks, alphabet stamps, and puzzles.*
*Teachers use direct instruction to teach letter names which are meaningful to the children, such as talking about the letters in a child’s name or in a word that is of interest to the child.*

**Support for Emergent Reading**
*Teachers encourage children to attempt to read by providing a large collection of books which children have access to throughout the day, by rereading favorite books, by creating and allowing children to read books created by the children, by creating a print rich environment which is functional to the children (helper charts, labels for toys, labels for cubbies and lockers, etc.), and by including literacy materials in the dramatic play and block learning centers (signs, menus, telephone books, etc.).

**Support for Emergent Writing**
*Teachers encourage children to use emergent forms of writing, such as scribble writing, random letter strings, and invented spelling by providing a writing center stocked with various writing materials, paper, and book making materials, play-related writing materials in the dramatic play and block learning centers, and functional writing opportunities connected to class activities (computer sign-up sheet, signs for saving a block structure, etc.).
*Teachers use shared writing demonstrations in which the teacher writes down text dictated by the children.*
*Teachers create written webs of vocabulary and ideas related to projects.*

**Shared Book Experience**
*Teachers use big books to point to the print as it is read.*
*Teachers teach basic concepts of print such as the distinction between pictures and print, left to right, top to bottom sequence, and book concepts (cover, title, author, illustrator, etc.).
**Integrated, Content –Focused Activities**  
*Teachers use the project approach to curriculum and provide children with opportunities to hear topic related information books, gather data using observation, experiments, interviews, etc., use emergent writing to record information, and engage in dramatic play to express what they have learned.**

**LITERACY SUPPORT MATERIALS**
ECDC is pleased to offer families the opportunity to borrow quality early childhood materials to support the development of literacy at home. Literacy bags may be checked out in the office area for families to use. ECDC also has a variety of children’s books in our lending library and families are welcome to borrow books at any time.

**ASSESSMENT OF CHILD GROWTH AND PROGRESS—OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING & SHARING DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

**Developmental Screenings**  
ECDC uses the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) which parents complete and submit to the office at designated intervals. During the first 6 years of life, your child will achieve very important developmental milestones that set the stage for success in school and later life. It is our goal to ensure that each child is supported in ways that allow her/him to gain the experiences and skills that she/he needs during the early childhood years; therefore, we are interested in working with families to follow your child’s growth and development. Families can help us by completing a questionnaire called the ASQ Developmental Screening that will be given to you. If we have concerns about your child’s development, you may be asked to answer questions about some things your child can and cannot do, and to bring the questionnaire back to the ECDC office.

If there are areas of concern indicated on the ASQ, we will contact you directly so that we can further understand the issues and consider resources that may be of help to your child. You may also wish to have your child’s doctor or another professional conduct further assessment. All information about your child and your family will be kept confidential. We thank you for completing ASQs when requested and for collaborating with us in supporting your child’s growth, development and learning.

**Authentic Assessment Plan**  
ECDC evaluates and keeps track of each child’s development, learning and progress on an ongoing, comprehensive and authentic basis. Authentic Assessment means evaluating children’s growth through their daily activities, instead of using something that is not part of their regular routine, such as standardized tests. Teachers and programs choose authentic assessment because they believe that everyday experiences most accurately reflect what children have learned and the progress they have made.

**Individual Authentic Portfolios** are a planned collection of “documentation” about each child’s learning and development. Documentation in each child’s individual portfolio is evidence of a child’s experiences and learning; and includes 1) photos of the child’s experience and photos of the child in action, and 2) work samples that the child has created. To go along with each photo and work sample, the teacher writes an “anecdote” - a note describing what was happening with the child at the time the photo or the work sample was made. Teachers collect specific pieces of documentation over several months across different developmental areas (cognitive, language/literacy, social and emotional, creative, fine motor, gross motor, etc.).

**COR Advantage (Child Observation Report)** During fall and spring semesters, teachers gather observations and work samples using COR Advantage, Highscope’s research–validated child assessment tool, to prepare a “COR Report” for each child. The report assesses the child’s learning, development, growth and accomplishments. All co-lead teachers receive training for COR Advantage directly from Highscope through an online workshop. The COR Report and the individual child’s portfolio are shared with each child’s family during parent teacher conferences. The teachers and family members conference two times per year to celebrate learning and development, to set goals, and make plans to support each child’s growth both at home and at ECDC.

**Parent Teacher Conferences**  
Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice per year, once during Fall Semester in November/December and once during spring semester in March/April. Conferences are thirty minutes in length and are held during the day as well as during an evening to accommodate parent schedules. Teachers share with families the child’s adjustment to school, overall development and learning using the child’s
portfolio and the COR Report, peer relationships, school involvement including favorite activities and friends, and will answer parent questions. If parents would like to have a conference at a time other than the scheduled conference times, please make arrangements with your child's teacher or contact the ECDC office. We respectfully request that parents not bring children to Parent Teacher Conferences.

TEACHING FACULTY & STAFF CONFIGURATIONS

Classroom Teaching Teams  Each preschool and kindergarten activity room is typically staffed with two co-lead teachers. The 2’s and 3’s groups at ECDC-ND include two co-lead teachers and an associate and/or assistant teacher. Co-lead teachers have a B.A. in either Early Childhood Education or a related field and experience with young children. Associate Teachers have either a B.A. or A.S. in early childhood or a related field. Assistant Teachers possess a high school degree and a Child Development Associate Certificate (CDA) that involves 120 clock hours in early childhood education. ECDC implements a team approach to staffing the ECDC groups. Teaching teams plan and implement the curriculum/learning experiences and maintain the prepared learning environment. This team approach is supportive to children, families and to the team as relationships are developed and to provide strategic interactions with children to promote learning and development. All ECDC teachers and program staff participate in at least twenty hours of annual professional development including workshops, conferences, and/or participating in early childhood coursework. All staff are current with Pediatric First Aid and CPR certification; this exceeds both licensing and accreditation standards. Several teachers and program staff have received state and national awards, including in 2014 two ECDC teachers received noteworthy early childhood state teaching awards for excellence and one teacher a national award as an emerging leader.

College Student Involvement in the ECDC Program  During the school year, students from area colleges and universities (e.g., Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Holy Cross, Indiana University South Bend, Bethel and Ivy Tech) are involved in the ECDC program on a weekly basis as practicum students, volunteers or part time employees. Practicum students are typically enrolled in Education, Psychology, Sociology, or Nursing college courses that include a “real life” experiential component with children. ECDC also hires college students to work on a part time basis assisting the teaching staff during transitional times of the day and meals, including early morning breakfast, lunchtime, rest time and end of the day. All college students involved with ECDC receive an orientation to ECDC’s philosophy, goals, curriculum/learning activities, licensing, accreditation and child guidance/discipline to support consistency for the children. Each activity room typically has at least one college student involved during each day. College students, who are not ECDC employees, always work with ECDC professional teachers while at ECDC; they are not given responsibility for a group of children or for individual children.

ECDC Program Leadership  Both ECDC programs are led by an program staff team that includes program directors, assistant program directors and program assistants in addition to an enrollment specialist and special projects consultant. ECDC’s leadership team also includes an executive director and director of finance who support both programs. The Executive Director works with the ECDC Board of Directors with governance and leadership issues including compliance with regulatory organizations, financial issues, the hiring of teachers and strategic planning. The Program Directors and the Executive Director all possess advanced degrees in education (master’s degrees and Ph.D.) and are available to teachers and families as a resource regarding child development, learning and early childhood education.

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Notre Dame and Saint Mary’s faculty and college students conduct research at ECDC occasionally. All research projects carried out at ECDC will be cleared first through ND or SMC’s Human Subjects Review Committee and the ECDC Research Committee, an ECDC board committee. If your child is a potential subject to be included in a research project you will be fully informed in advance of the purpose and procedures involved in the planned study, and your written consent will be obtained before the study begins. You may choose to keep your child from participating in any study without consequences to you or your child’s participation at ECDC. Children also have the right of refusal. From time to time you will encounter students observing at the Center as well as participating at the Center. Field experience students and practicum students in the classroom are always under the visual supervision of one of our staff members. All visitors to the Center, including observers, must check in with the
office/front desk before being allowed access to the classrooms.

**ECDC’S APPROACH TO CHILD GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE**

ECDC’s approach to child guidance is based on the work of Rudolf Dreikurs. His work was based on Alfred Adler, the founder of Individual Psychology. Dreikur’s teachings emphasize the importance of the preparation of the child for future citizenship in a participatory, democratic society. He believed the child, at the earliest age, should experience his/her own strength and a feeling of belonging, so the opportunity for achieving the fullest feeling of responsibility is possible. More recent books based on this approach are the Positive Discipline series by Jane Nelson. This series of books focuses on raising children who are responsible, respectful, responsive, and resourceful.

The ECDC curriculum and teacher/child interactions support each child’s development of the 4 R’s, which are respect, responsibility, responsiveness, and resourcefulness. The 4 R’s are the foundation of community building. The 4 R’s are supported and strengthened as teachers recognize children’s rights to their feelings, ideas, and opinions and as teachers model the 4 R’s through their interactions with the children, team members, learning environment, and curriculum. Discipline is viewed as a process of guiding and teaching rather than as a control mechanism. The activity room is a positive, accepting, and encouraging environment promoting independence in all aspects of the child’s daily school involvement.

- **Respect** includes respect for self, others, materials, environment, and community
- **Responsibility** is reflected through choices, actions, daily care of environment, and initiation of ideas
- **Resourcefulness** includes learning to be creative and inventive; to be problem solvers and to use skills effectively
- **Responsiveness** embraces children as contributors, thinkers, participators, and caring friends

All ECDC teachers and college students are trained in this approach. Family Enrichment Presentations and Seminars, based on this approach, are offered each year.

**Teachers communicate with children using positive statements.** Teachers support and encourage children to use their own words to express their feelings and resolve their own conflicts whenever possible. Teachers communicate with children at eye level, speaking to them in a calm manner about the situation. Physical punishment of any kind, humiliation, shaming or belittlement is never used at ECDC. When the teacher sees a conflict situation arising, he/she tries to identify causes, and then responds by stating an alternative for the child. For example, "You can put the block here," instead of "Don't throw the block on the floor." If the inappropriate behavior continues, the teacher tells the child the rule, and the consequences of the behavior if it continues. For example, "Throwing blocks may hurt someone, so we don't throw blocks at ECDC. If you throw blocks, you will need to make another choice." The teacher is careful to emphasize that it is the behavior that is unacceptable, not the child. Recurring disciplinary problems are discussed with families and documented in the child’s record. (Please see Addendum 1 – Biting Procedures)

**Anti-Violence Approach** We believe that all children and families have the right to enjoy a safe and protected environment. We prohibit the bringing of certain items to ECDC such as weapon facsimiles, or other toys that suggest or promote these activities. A primary focus of all curriculum activities across all ages is to model and teach positive, non-hurtful conflict resolution skills. Such curriculum planning includes teacher class meetings, play activities to demonstrate problem-solving scenarios, and encouraging children to “use their words” and “use gentle touches.” Because young children are fascinated with power and power materials, thematic play does occur. Pretend behavior that suggests hurting or frightening is handled with the use of situation- and age-specific strategies. Because we interpret many of these activities as children’s attempts to experience being powerful, we actively seek out alternate ways for children to experience being influential and powerful. Being the teacher’s helper, having special jobs (carrying the clipboard to the next activity, showing younger children how to do things, etc.), or redirecting a potentially fear-producing activity (such as gunplay) to stimulate a powerful helping activity, such as being a firefighter, offer alternate opportunities.
Communication Regarding Discipline  According to state regulations, disciplinary action taken will be communicated to the parents and noted in the child’s record. Examples of disciplinary action that would be shared with the family include a child removed from the classroom due to behavior issues, incidents of biting, aggressive behavior that hurts others or attempts to hurt others, or a child excluded from a field trip due to behavior concerns. ECDC will notify families of all significant occurrences or problems that could affect your child. This includes, but is not limited to, notices regarding behavior concerns, accidents, injuries, first aid, possible exposure to communicable diseases and prior notification regarding field trips.

ENCOURAGEMENT
Encouragement is key to our approach to child guidance and discipline; it implies faith in the child and communicates belief in his/her strength and ability. Praise may or may not be encouraging. Lavish praise usually seems insincere. The child may feel s/he is not worthy of it. Praise may actually discourage a child if s/he fears that next time s/he may not be able to live up to it. One praises when a job is well done. However, when a child does poorly, s/he needs encouragement much more than when s/he does well.

HOW TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PRAISE AND ENCOURAGEMENT
1. Praise is given to the doer: “You are a good drawing such a nice picture for me.”
2. Praise is given for work well done: “What good grades you have brought home!”
3. Praise implies a demand for continued high performance.
4. Praise often seems phony.
5. Praise may not increase self-esteem.
1. Encouragement is given for the deed: girl/boy for “I’m sure you enjoyed drawing your picture.”
2. Encouragement is also given when work is done poorly: “We all make mistakes I’m sure you’ll do better next time.”
3. Encouragement makes no demands.
4. Encouragement is sincere.
5. Encouragement fosters self-esteem.

NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES
(Rudolf Dreikurs)
Natural and logical consequences coupled with encouragement are the tools utilized in this approach to support the 4 R’s. Punishment is replaced by a sense of mutual respect and cooperation. If we allow children to experience the consequences of their actions, we provide an honest and real learning situation. We should not assume the responsibilities of our children, nor do we have the right to take the consequences of their acts. These belong to them.

I. Natural Consequences
A. Denote the natural results of ill-advised acts.
B. Example: “If a man is walking along the street and he trips on a raised edge in the sidewalk, the next time he passes that same spot he will usually be more cautious and step over.” (Taken from the book Logical Consequences, Dreikurs and Grey)

II. Logical Consequences
A. Logical consequences express the reality of the social order, not of the person. Punishment expresses the power of a personal authority.
B. The logical consequence is logically related to the misbehavior; punishment is rarely related.
C. Logical consequences involve no element of moral judgment; punishment inevitably does.
D. Logical consequences are concerned only with what will happen now; punishments are concerned with the past.
E. The voice is friendly when consequences are invoked; there is anger in punishment, either open or concealed.
F. Choice is inherent in the nature of every logical consequence. The child should be asked to choose between behaving in the correct manner or continuing the misbehavior. If the child decides to continue the misbehavior, the consequence should immediately follow, without being given another choice.
III. Practical Examples of Choices and Logical Consequences

A. “Henry was a finicky eater. At breakfast he picked at his food and complained because the cereal was not to his liking. At lunch he ate only a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and at dinner potatoes and dessert. Trying everything else, I finally hit upon the idea of merely putting the food provided on the table and taking it off whether he had finished or not. Though he complained bitterly the first two days, it was not long until he was eating most of the regular foods that were presented to him.”

B. “Joseph, age two, stepped in the mud puddle and got his shoes wet; he came in the house for dry clothes. When he asked to go out again his shoes were not dry yet, and therefore he was unable to go outside. In a matter-of-fact way he was told by his mother, “I’m sorry, but your shoes are wet.” If more parents would talk as little and act as much as this one did, parent-child relationships would be infinitely better.

The above examples were taken from the book: Logical Consequences, Dreikurs and Grey

Recommended Readings for Parents

Positive Discipline for Preschoolers, Jane Nelson, Cheryl Erwin, Roslyn Duffy
Positive Discipline The First Three Years, Jane Nelson, Cheryl Erwin, Rosalyn Duffy
Raising Respectful Children in a Rude World, Gary McKay, Joyce McKay, Daniel Eckstein,
Children the Challenge, Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D.
Raising Kids Who Can by Betty Lou Bettner and Amy Lew
Breaking the Good Mom Myth: Every Modern Mom’s Guide to Getting Past Perfection,
Regaining Sanity and Raising Great Kids by Alyson Schafer
Your Two Year Old, Ames & Ilg
Your Three Year Old, Ames & Ilg
Your Four Year Old, Ames & Ilg
Your Five Year Old, Ames & Ilg

Recommended Readings for Stepfamilies

Stepfamilies: A Cooperative Responsibility. Capaldi, F. and MacRae B., New York:
Stepparenting by Jeannette Lofas,

ECDC HOURS OF OPERATION
ECDC-SMC: 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. ECDC-ND: 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

ECDC-SMC ARRIVAL TIMES
MORNINGS: 7:00-8:45 is arrival time. It is helpful if all children arrive by 8:45 a.m.
AFTERNOONS: 11:45-12:00 is arrival time if your child is enrolled for lunch.
12:45-1:00 is arrival time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.

ECDC-SMC DEPARTURE TIMES
MORNINGS: 11:30-11:45 is departure time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.
12:30-12:45 is departure time if your child is enrolled for lunch.
AFTERNOONS: 4:30-5:30 is departure time for children enrolled for the afternoon only. Children enrolled all day may leave at any time in the afternoon. All children must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. sharp. A $15.00 service charge, per each 15-minute increment, is assessed for each child who is picked up after the program closes.

ECDC-ND ARRIVAL TIMES
MORNINGS: 6:30-8:45 is arrival time. Kindergarten children should arrive prior to 8:30

AFTERNOONS: 11:45-12:00 is arrival time if your child is enrolled for lunch. 12:45-1:00 is arrival time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.

ECDC-ND DEPARTURE TIMES
MORNINGS: 11:30-11:45 is departure time if your child is not enrolled for lunch. 12:30-12:45 is departure time if your child is enrolled for lunch.

AFTERNOONS: 4:30-5:30 is departure time for children enrolled for the afternoon only. Children enrolled all day may leave at any time in the afternoon. All children must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. sharp. A $15.00 service charge, per each 15-minute increment, is assessed for each child who is picked up after the program closes.

ECDC requires that every child be escorted into and out of the building every day. For the safety of your child and to follow state licensing requirements, children must be signed in and out each day and a teacher should be made aware that your child has arrived or is leaving for the day. The sign-in sheets are used to account for all children present in the event of an emergency (e.g., fire, storm).

LICENSING: INDIANA DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN: BUREAU OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

The Indiana Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL) licenses early care and education programs/child care centers in Indiana and requires that ECDC inform families of the following information. Families and community members can contact the OECOSL at 317-232-4521 or 877-511-1144, please ask for the northwest region. Also, the website: www.childcarefinder.in.gov contains information regarding the current status of ECDC’s license, any complaints filed with the division concerning the ECDC program and violations of the licensing status. A copy of the Indiana Licensing Regulations for Child Care Centers is available at both ECDC programs in the offices and also in the ECDC activity rooms. The Saint Joseph County’s Child Care Resource and Referral program (Early Childhood Alliance) can be reached at (800) 423-1498.

NAEYC ACCREDITATION

ECDC is accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC accreditation is a national, voluntary system to measure the quality of early childhood programs, preschools and kindergartens, and to help these programs improve. There are more than 11,000 NAEYC accredited programs serving approximately one million children. NAEYC accreditation includes 10 standards of excellence in early childhood education with 200+ criteria to prove a program meets NAEYC standards. Programs must achieve 80% of the criteria to meet NAEYC standards. The accreditation term is 5 years and requires annual reports submitted yearly. The 10 standards of excellence include: positive relationships with all children, curriculum, effective teaching approaches, on-going assessment, nutrition and health, teaching staff qualifications, collaborative relationships with families, community involvement and support, healthy and safe learning environments and supportive and high-quality experiences for staff. NAEYC accreditation has become the mark of quality, helping families find the best quality early childhood experience. For more information regarding accreditation please visit www.naeyc.org/accreditation.
ECDC SCHOOL YEAR, SUMMER, AND EXTENDED PROGRAMS

School Year Program  ECDC offers preschool, kindergarten and childcare with both part-time and full-time schedules for all age groups (priority given only in Kindergarten to those families needing full time schedules). During the school year, we offer a variety of preschool schedules (M - F A.M. or P.M., MWF A.M. or P.M., MWF All Day, TTH A.M. or P.M., TTH All Day). If children are enrolled all day during the school year, they receive two preschool programs each day - an A.M. and a P.M. Activities are varied to ensure that there is no repetition for children enrolled full day as well as to ensure that all children experience the different learning activities and experiences.

Summer Day Camp Program  ECDC offers a recreational eight week summer day camp program during the months of June, July and early August for children ages two and one-half through ten at ECDC-ND and ages three through ten at ECDC-SMC. The summer activities are many and varied, depending on the age group of the children. Many activities take place outside, including creating, discovering, running, jumping, building, painting, digging, exploring, singing, listening, pretending, and learning about ourselves and the world we live in. The Summer Day Camp program is based upon children learning through moving, experiencing, and doing.  Arts and crafts emphasizing creativity, exploration, and expression are daily activities. Many field trips are planned for children enrolled in the 4/5’s, 5/6’s, 6/7’s, and 8/9/10’s age groups, including swim lessons for children attending in the morning and free swims for children attending in the afternoon. In-house activities and presentations are scheduled for children in the 2/3’s, 3’s and 3/4’s. The children in the 4/5’s 5/6’s, 6/7’s and 8/9/10’s also enjoy soccer, tennis (excluding 4/5’s), recreational games and yoga.

Extended School Year and Extended Summer Programs  ECDC offers two optional programs at the ECDC-ND site for families at ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND who need year round programs. The Extended School Year Program (ESY) is during the month of May/June and typically lasts 3 weeks. The Extended Summer Program (ESU) is typically one week and occurs during the month of August after the summer program concludes. All families, regardless of affiliation, are eligible to register for these two programs.

ECDC-ND Program Closings  ECDC-ND is closed the following days: Thanksgiving Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 weeks in December (around Christmas and New Year’s Day), Good Friday, and Easter Monday, Memorial Day, the Friday before the first day of the summer program, 4th of July, and one week in mid-August/week before the SY begins for required teacher/program staff professional development.

ECDC-SMC Program Closings  ECDC-SMC is closed the following days: Thanksgiving Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 2 weeks in December (around Christmas and New Year’s Day), Good Friday and Easter Monday, 4th of July, 3 weeks in May/June and 2 weeks in August. When ECDC-SMC is closed for 3 weeks May/June and 2 weeks in August, families may enroll their children with ECDC-ND for all but 1 week in August when both programs are closed.

Early Registration for Currently Enrolled ECDC Families  In early January, currently enrolled ECDC families are provided with the opportunity to enroll in upcoming programs: Optional Extended School Year Program, Summer Program, Optional Extended Summer Program and the next School Year. Current families receive a “current priority in enrollment” if the required early registration form is completed and submitted by the due date of February 1.

Registration for Non-Current Families  Summer registration materials are distributed in January with a March 1 due date. School Year registration materials are distributed in January with an April 1 due date. Parents are informed of summer registration by April 1 and of school year registration by May 1.

Family Open Houses and Family Information Sessions for Families interested in Future ECDC Enrollment  During January and February, ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND host Sunday afternoon Family Open Houses - 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. Family Open Houses provide new to ECDC families an opportunity to get acquainted with the ECDC program, teachers and learning environments.
Orientation of New to ECDC Families  
ECDC provides orientation to new to ECDC families in several ways for both the school year and summer camp programs. Parents are invited to attend orientation meetings prior to the start of programs, these occur at the ECDC program sites. ECDC also sends new to ECDC families a power point presentation as well as provides handouts with helpful information about the program.

AUTHORIZATION FOR CHILD’S RELEASE
If someone other than the parent is to pick up a child from ECDC, written parental consent must be provided prior to the pickup. This may be done by including the name of the person on the Authorized Pick Up portion of the Emergency Information Form during the enrollment process or by completing a temporary Authorization for Pick Up Form which can be obtained at the ECDC office/front desk. Anyone picking up a child must be 18 years of age and will be required to show identification. No child will be released without written authorization from the parent. Parents may revise their permanent Authorized Pick Up information/form at the ECDC office. Parents are required to sign children in and out by name including the time of arrival and departure.

If an authorized person, who the ECDC staff suspects is intoxicated or impaired, insists on removing a child from the center, the staff will immediately report the incident to the local police agency.

If a parent or legal guardian is denied permission to pick up a child, the parent’s name must be included on the emergency form and a copy of the court order is required to be on file at ECDC.

BUILDING SECURITY & ACCESS PROCEDURES
ECDC operates with locked doors that provide building security. Parents either use a special code to access the building or they press the door buzzer that alerts the receptionist who makes a visual identification before unlocking the door remotely to provide access. Building access is only provided to individuals who are known to the program staff.

FIELD TRIPS
Field trips have been a vital part of the ECDC program for age groups four and older during the past thirty years. We believe field trips are important because children learn by doing and experiencing. In June of 2006, ECDC purchased a new Bluebird School Bus for field trip transportation. Our special activities bus is equipped with seat belts for school age children and harness child restraints for preschool age children. Kindergarten and school age children also use a 66 passenger yellow regular school bus for some field trips. ECDC hires professional bus drivers, who drive for local school districts and/or Saint Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame. To ensure safety, teachers and staff obtain group counts 1) before leaving ECDC, 2) frequently during the field trip, 3) before leaving the field trip site, and 4) upon return to ECDC following the field trip. An ECDC teacher is always the last person to get off the bus and visually checks all seats to ensure that all children have departed the bus. ECDC teachers are trained in pediatric first aid and CPR and take equipped first aid kits, water and cell phones on all field trips. Field trips include Stover’s Pumpkin Patch and Apple Orchard, HealthWorks Kids Museum, South Bend Regional Art Museum, Clay Park, Love Creek, Potawatomi Zoo, Compton Family Ice Arena for ice skating lessons, Fernwood Botanical Gardens, and local libraries, etc. Parents are invited to accompany class groups on trips. We respectfully request that siblings not attend the field trip due to safety, supervision and insurance issues. Parents sign a field trip permission form for each field trip that occurs in both the summer and school year. Field trip permission forms are located in the classroom.

IN-HOUSE PRESENTATIONS AT ECDC
ECDC children have several in-house presentations each semester during the school year. Some of the in-house presentations include storytellers, naturalists, zookeeper, dental hygienist, South Bend Symphony, Sweet Adeline Singers, fire fighters, artists and musicians.

CLOTHES TO WEAR TO ECDC
Please dress children in clothing that is child manageable and will not be a hindrance in play activities. We encourage exploration, discovery and sensory play (such as paints, clays, and other messy items), and ask that you dress your child in easily washed items that they don’t need to worry about staining. Children do wear paint
smocks during art/sensory activities, however sometimes clothing still gets dirty. Children should wear tennis shoes, please no sandals, clogs, or flip-flops, so they are not hindered when climbing or running outside.

WEATHER, OUTSIDE PLAYTIME & WARM OUTSIDE CLOTHING

Children’s outside playtime should not be seasonal; young children need to run, jump, hop, swing, slide and yell all year long. ECDC children have daily opportunities for outdoor play when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk.

Cold Weather/Wind Chill   The children will play outside daily unless the temperature falls below 25 degrees (including wind chill factor) or unless it is raining or muddy outside. When remaining inside due to weather, the children are provided with similar large motor activities inside. Indoor equipment for large-motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

Warm Outside Clothing   It is important for children to play outside all year long, even during the colder weather if the weather permits. We find that the children enjoy playing outside in the colder weather as long as they are dressed warmly and remain dry. If the temperature is 25 degrees or warmer, the children will go outside to play. We request that parents dress children in warm, waterproof outer clothing to avoid injury from the cold. Attaching mittens to coat sleeves and an extra pair of mittens kept on the top shelf of the locker is helpful during winter. Please label all outside clothing so it can be easily found if it is lost.

Heat Index   Living in Indiana, we all know that our summer weather can be hot and humid. On days when the temperature or the heat index is 90 degrees or higher we will have inside days and will cancel active outdoor activities and field trips. When outdoor opportunities for large-motor activities are not possible because of conditions, ECDC provides similar activities inside. Indoor equipment for large-motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

Ozone Action Days   Over the past few summers, we have been experiencing Ozone Action Days. These are days when young children, children and adults with breathing difficulties, and elderly people should not spend prolonged time outside, particularly when engaged in physical activity. It is at its peak intensity during the hours of 11:00 – 3:00. On Ozone Action Days, we will have limited outside playtime before 11:00 and after 3:00. Children may go outside for quiet group time activities such as reading books or other “quiet” activities on these days.

Large Motor Development on Inclement Days   On days that children are unable to go outside due to weather conditions, the program provides activities that foster large-motor development, such as group games, parachute activities, ribbon dancing and movement activities, and obstacle course activities. During indoor large-motor activities, the equipment used (e.g., parachutes, scooter boards, tumbling mats) meets national safety standards and is supervised and supported by the teachers at the same level as outdoor equipment and activities.

During the fall, the ECDC playgrounds can be dry, dusty and dirty. We do realize that many children may go home dirty after a day at school. The children wash their hands regularly throughout their day, always after coming inside after outside play, always before eating snacks and lunch and always after using the bathroom. Even though they are washing up regularly, by the end of the day we often have soiled, but happy children. We appreciate your understanding the importance of outside play to young children’s growth and development.

Safety and Fall Zones   Both ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND have climbing structures on their playgrounds as well as shade to support outside play on sunny days. The climbing structures provide opportunities for gross motor development. To ensure safety, at least 12” of pea gravel is underneath the climbing structures at ECDC-SMC and a combination of mulch and rubber resilient surfaces are under the structures at ECDC-ND. These non-compactable ground surfaces are recommended to cushion falls and jumping to the ground. The ECDC climbing structures are designed for young children. Children ages ten and older and adults are asked to refrain from playing on the structures.
SNACKS AND MEALS

ECDC is concerned about the quality of the food children eat and its healthiness. ECDC adheres to a food program that consists of snacks and lunches that are low in sugar, contain whole grains, and contain limited preservatives and additives in addition to serving organic fruits and vegetables for many snacks. The Licensing Consultant from the Indiana Licensing Department reviews and approves the ECDC food program, including all menus. The ECDC food program and menus are consistent with the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA CACFP) and were developed in consultation with a licensed nutritionist. Breakfast, snacks and lunch are scheduled so that they are no more than three hours apart or closer than two hours apart.

Breakfast  ECDC provides an optional healthy breakfast consisting of a variety of breakfast items, including oatmeal, waffles, yogurt, cold cereal, fruit, and toast. ECDC-ND serves breakfast between 6:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. ECDC-SMC serves breakfast between 7:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m.

Snacks  ECDC provides a healthy morning snack at approximately 10:00am and in the afternoon snack is served at approximately 3:00pm. Water is served for snack along with a wide variety of crackers, bread, fresh fruit and vegetables (many organic), and cheese. Milk is served occasionally for afternoon snack. Children are welcome to bring a commercially prepared, sealed, nutritious snack to share with their entire class. Please choose an item from our snack list - see addendum two for the list of approved snacks that parents may send to ECDC. Due to an increasing number of children with serious peanut and nut allergies, we require that food items containing peanuts or tree nuts not be brought to ECDC. We also request that candy and gum not be brought to ECDC.

Lunch  The ECDC food program is licensed by the State of Indiana and is catered by the Saint Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame Food Service Programs. Each lunch consists of a main dish, salad, vegetable, bread and butter, and a piece of fresh fruit (apple, oranges, bananas, or pears). Multicultural lunch entrees, such as Chicken Stir Fry, Beef Tacos, Sweet and Sour Chicken, and Chicken Fajitas, are served at least once per week. Menus are distributed at the beginning of each semester and are available on the ECDC website.

Vegetarian Entrée at ECDC-ND  Due to the number of children eating vegetarian lunches, ECDC-ND offers a vegetarian entrée each day (e.g., garden chicken grill patty, homemade baked vegetarian manicotti, vegetarian sloppy joe, etc.). If you would like your child to eat the vegetarian entree, please indicate such on your child’s General Information form. A child will receive the vegetarian entrée until a parent informs ECDC otherwise.

Vegetarian Entrée at ECDC-SMC  If your child needs a vegetarian entrée at ECDC-SMC, please speak with the ECDC-SMC Program Director to make arrangements.

Food Substitutions Provided by Families for Meals or Snacks  The Indiana state licensing regulations require a doctor’s note for any food substitutions. All food substitutions must be commercially prepared and sealed. Homemade food items are not allowed per Indiana State Licensing Regulations and NAEYC Accreditation Standards. Parents providing food substitutions are required to sign a Safe Food Transportation Form that is available at the front desk/office. ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND have food service rooms, however, do not have kitchens, therefore, ECDC is unable to prepare or cook foods to serve children. ECDC staff take steps to ensure the safety of food brought from home by working with families to ensure that foods brought from home meet the USDA’s CACFP food guidelines. More information about the USDA CACFP program can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/CACFP/aboutacfp.htm. All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child’s name and date. Staff make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served. Food from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods contained in a factory-sealed container (please see addendum two for the approved list). If your child requires food substitutions for meals or snacks due to medical or religious reasons, please speak with the ECDC Program Director.

Food Supplements Provided by Families for Meals or Snacks  Occasionally, families request to supplement meals and/or snacks with additional foods. Food supplements are food items served to the child in addition to the scheduled snack or meal food items served. All food supplements must be healthy and commercially prepared and
sealed. Homemade food items are not allowed per Indiana State Licensing Regulations and NAEYC Accreditation Standards. Examples of acceptable and healthy food supplements include yogurt, hummus, fruit, fruit cup, and string cheese. Supplements that are not acceptable include Twinkies, cakes, donuts, and candy. Parents providing food supplements are required to sign a Safe Food Transportation Form that is available at the front desk/office. ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND have food service rooms, however, do not have kitchens. Therefore, ECDC is unable to prepare or cook foods to serve children. ECDC staff work with families to ensure the safety of food brought from home to ensure that food items brought from home meet the USDA’s CACFP food guidelines.

More information about the USDA CACFP program can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/CACFP/aboutcacfp.htm. All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child’s name and date. Staff make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served. If your child requires food supplements for meals or snacks due to medical or religious reasons, please speak with the ECDC Program Director.

**Food Considered Choking Hazards Are Not Served at ECDC** To prevent possible choking, ECDC does not offer children the following foods: hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Popcorn is only served to children four and older and is served infrequently. As needed, ECDC teachers and staff cut meat entrees and other solid foods for children younger than four years old to prevent choking.

**Encouragement of Eating Various Foods Items** Through spontaneous conversation at the lunch tables, children are encouraged to taste all the food on their plates. The teachers encourage food exploration and remind the children of the Dr. Seuss book GREEN EGGS AND HAM. Often the children discover they do indeed like something that they had thought they would not like. We do not force the children to clean their plates or count how many bites children eat; rather, through a positive approach, we encourage children to taste foods that are unfamiliar to them. Teachers also use snack and meal times to talk about good nutrition and why we need to eat certain foods. At least once per year, each activity room has a project/study focused on food and nutrition.

**Parents Visiting for Lunch** Parents of children who eat lunch at ECDC are welcome to come and join their children for lunch any day throughout the year. Lunch is served promptly at noon; all a parent needs to do is bring his or her own sack lunch. For those children enrolled all day, parents should also feel free to take their children out to lunch any time during the hours of 11:30 - 1:00. In the past, parents have found this to be extremely pleasant and successful after their child has adjusted to school and the daily routine and is not upset by separations.

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

Arrival and departure times at ECDC are very important times of the day for children and families as they separate and come back together over the course of the day. Arrival and departure times also provide the opportunity for parents and teachers to share information about the child and the child’s day. You and your child will be warmly greeted and welcomed upon arrival each day and will be given a warm good-bye at departure time.

> **Arrival**: Parents are required to sign-in their child each day upon arrival in order to transfer responsibility of care from parent to authorized ECDC staff member. Signing your child in and out is extremely important. Teachers use the sign-in sheets to keep track of the children who are present. ECDC staff members will assist with your child’s involvement in the group and facilitate the parent’s departure.

> **Departure**: Upon departure, parents are required to sign-out their child and let the teacher know he or she is departing. Once the child is signed out, he or she is no longer the responsibility of ECDC staff. Children are not permitted to run in the hallways due to safety concerns; parents are expected to enforce this rule when bringing or picking up children. All children must be picked up at ECDC by 5:30 p.m. If you will be late picking up your child, it is helpful if you call before 5:30 p.m. to let teachers and your child know. A late
fee of $15 per every 15 minute increment will be charged to families who arrive after 5:30 p.m. Chronic lateness is defined as arriving after 5:30 p.m. more than four times during a semester and is cause for termination of ECDC enrollment.

**Important Information for you to share with ECDC Office Staff**  If you will be away from your office or regular work location/work schedule, please be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached in case you are needed for a medical emergency.

**ADJUSTING TO ECDC**

It is very typical for children to have some hesitations about school/summer day camp during the first few days, even if it isn't their first group experience. A close analogy to these feelings might be an adult beginning and adjusting to a new job. One way parents can help their child during this time is by being very positive and reassuring about the day, activities, friends and teachers. Also, establishing a daily routine when arriving at school/day camp is extremely helpful. This routine might include the following:

1. Hanging up any coat or jacket in the locker.
2. Child washes hands (at ECDC-SMC in the bathroom at ECDC-ND in the classroom child sink)
4. A positive comment for a good day: “I am sure you’ll have a good morning/afternoon. I will be excited to hear all about it when I pick you up.”
5. A reminder of when you will be back to pick up the child and a hug and kiss goodbye.

This type of a predictable daily routine is helpful and reassuring, but will not always alleviate tears at separation time. The teacher will be very helpful at this time by comforting and reassuring your child that you will be back and that they will have a good time with all of the planned activities. The teacher will also give you feedback as to the involvement of your child during the morning/afternoon/day. If there were tears at separation time, do not hesitate to call the office to find out how your child is doing. If ever a child would not calm down, we would call the parent. This is best not shared with your child. Another helpful hint is to kiss your child’s palm and tell her/him that if during the day s/he needs a kiss from mom or dad s/he has it in her/his hand. It is also helpful if parents of English Language Learners provide the teachers with a list of basic vocabulary words in their child's primary language to support engagement throughout the day and with routines.

As the newness of the school environment wears off, children will feel more and more comfortable with their teachers, classrooms, and friends. Friendships are being formed every day and in most cases children will enjoy sharing their school experiences with you. Some children, however, will keep the new experiences to themselves and that, too, must be respected. Other children will answer your inquiring questions with a simple “nothing” or “played”. Feel free to talk with your child’s teacher specifically about friends and those activities your child finds most enjoyable. Most parents discover that as the school year/summer develops, their children initiate more and more conversation about the day’s activities and their playmates. (Please see Addendum 3)

The following children’s books might be helpful in preparing your child for their school experience. These books are available at local libraries. Your community children’s librarian will also have helpful suggestions.

Bourgeois, Paulette. **Franklin Goes to School**  
Cole, Joanna. **When Mommy and Daddy Go to Work**  
Day, Alexandra. **Carl Goes to Day Care**  
Cohen, Miriam. **Will I Have a Friend?**  
Hill, Eric. **Spot Goes to School**  
Steiner, C. **I’d Rather Stay With You.**

**REST TIME**

Each preschool child enrolled in the afternoon is provided with his or her own labeled cot and sheet for a quiet rest time during the early part of the afternoon. Families are asked to provide a small crib size pillow and small crib size blanket labeled with their child’s name. Resting items are sent home for laundering once per month. Toddler and preschool children are helped to remain quietly on their cots for a minimum 30-minute rest period during the required daily group rest times. Kindergarten children rest for 30 minutes on their resting rug. Some kindergarten age children still benefit from afternoon sleep and will be provided with a cot and sheet. After 30
minutes, if the child does not fall asleep, he or she will be provided with quiet activities and books at tables or on the rug for another 30 minutes. If a child has rested quietly for 30 minutes and is almost asleep, he or she will be allowed to continue to lie on their cot and sleep. If the child does fall asleep, he or she will be allowed to sleep without adult interruption until the end of the group’s rest time. When a child falls asleep during our quiet rest period it is because his or her body is tired and needs to sleep. If the child’s parent(s) are concerned their child is sleeping too much at ECDC, we will help the child wake up gently after 30 minutes of sleep and only if the child awakens to a gentle approach of awakening by the teacher. Staff will not forcibly awaken a sleeping child.

Between 2:30 and 2:45 p.m., sleeping children are awakened gently by the sound of the voices of teachers and other children, by lights being turned on, by music, and by the gentle rubbing of backs by the teachers. Children remain on their cots until they are awake enough to get up on their own.

**HANDWASHING TO STAY HEALTHY**

All ECDC staff members, volunteers, visitors and children, who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene, are taught important and effective hand washing procedures to promote cleanliness and reduce the transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and others. Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully accomplish the task. *Children wash their hands* upon arrival at ECDC every day, as well as, after playing outside, after using the bathroom, after cleaning their nose, before and after water play in the sensory table, before snacks and meals, after feeding the classroom pet (e.g., fish, guinea pig, hamster) and when moving from one group to another that involves two year olds.

*All ECDC staff wash their hands* upon arrival at ECDC every day, as well as, after using the bathroom, after cleaning their nose, before snacks and meals, before and after feeding a child, before and after administration of medicine, after assisting a child with toileting or diapering, after handling trash/garbage, after feeding or cleaning the classroom pet (e.g., fish, guinea pig, hamster), after handling body fluids, after any type of cleaning (e.g. the water table) and when moving from one group to another that involves two year olds.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults (staff members, volunteers, visitors) and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water,
- Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, a single-use towel, or a dryer, and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands. Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any required hand-washing situation listed above.
- Staff wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material.
- In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

**Cleaning and Sanitizing Toys helps keep children healthy.** A toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion is washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, and sanitized before another child can use it.

**WATER PLAY**

Water play for young children is an enjoyable activity that promotes learning and development. Children practice pouring, learn concepts such as quantity, full, empty, overflowing, and enjoy the calming element water exploration and play provides. ECDC complies with licensing regulations and accreditation standards for water play that includes the following procedures. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. No child drinks the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh potable water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity. A 3 parts per million bleach solution is used in the water table to prevent the spread of germs. When the activity period is completed with each group of children, the water
DAILY HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND SICK CHILD POLICIES

Every day, an ECDC staff member will conduct a health check of each child upon arrival. This visual health check shall be conducted as soon as possible after the child enters and whenever a change occurs while that child is in attendance. The health assessment shall address: 1) changes in behavior or appearance from behaviors observed during the previous day’s attendance; 2) skin rashes, itchy skin, itchy scalp; 3) elevated body temperature, if behavior indicates; 4) complaints of pain or of not feeling well. ECDC shall keep a written record of health concerns it identifies for each child.

Sick Child Policies  If a child’s health is in doubt, he or she will not be admitted. Any of the following symptoms will result in the child being isolated and the parent notified to pick up the child promptly within one hour:

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher using an ear thermometer (parents or ECDC staff may not administer fever reducer to lower a child’s temperature with the purpose of keeping the child at ECDC).
- Vomiting illness
- Diarrhea (two or more episodes in a day), children whose stools remain loose but otherwise, seem well and whose stool cultures are negative, need not be excluded.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye).
- Unexplained rash
- Other communicable disease systems as defined by The National Health and Safety Performance Standards.
- Behavior changes that result in the inability to participate in regular activities or that requires one-on-one attention from adults.

Illness at ECDC  Parents are notified immediately if a child becomes sick while at ECDC. When children are ill, they must be picked up within one hour. If you cannot be reached, someone from your emergency contact list will be contacted. If you are a student at Notre Dame or Saint Mary’s, please provide a schedule of your classes and where you usually study between classes.

If a child is too sick to participate in outside play activities while at school the child is too sick to attend school that day. ECDC does not have the means to supervise children inside and outside at the same time. Programs offering care for sick children are available in the community for those occasions when parents are unable to stay home with a sick child. Please contact the office for referrals. Parents are asked to notify ECDC when their child is absent from school due to illness.

Returning after Illness  The child may return to ECDC after he or she has been free of fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication), vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours or until he or she has been on medication for 24 hours. A certificate of health signed by a doctor may be required before a child may re-enter after any communicable disease or illness. Such a certificate should address the child’s inability to infect other children as well as his or her capacity to tolerate the day’s activities.

Exposure to Disease  If a child is exposed to or contracts a communicable disease; it is essential that this information be reported to the ECDC staff. If a child will be absent from ECDC because of illness, the staff should be notified. Staff will provide information to families by email about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at ECDC and that families should implement at home. ECDC has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.
If children have special considerations, health concerns or recognizable patterns of symptoms for teething, nosebleeds, predisposition to retch, above-average body temperature, etc. parents should notify teachers and provide documentation from their physician.

Cleaning and Sanitization  One of the most important steps in reducing the spread of infectious diseases among children and center staff is cleaning and sanitizing surfaces that could possibly pose a risk to children or staff. We use a quaternary solution for cleaning tables and an End-Back aerosol spray when blood or body fluids are present. Bleach is used in water tables for water play at a 3 parts per million and to wash dishes in the kitchen.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION
Parents are urged to give as many doses of medication at home as possible. If it is necessary for medication to be given at ECDC, we will follow the procedure for medication administration as required by the Indiana Licensing Regulations. Prescription medications will be given only with written parent consent and written approval from the child’s physician, which is the prescription label. Please complete the MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM located at the front desk/office if your child needs a medication while in our care. It is our goal to administer medication at the time requested by the family. If medication needs to be administered more than 30 minutes before or after the requested time, the parent will be notified by administration staff to confirm that the medicine should be given. Medications must be in their original container and may be given only to the child for whom they are prescribed and in the prescribed dose. Outdated/expired medications will not be given. Over-the-counter medications require written parent consent and written approval from the child’s health care provider with the exception of diaper rash products, moisturizing lotion, A&D ointment, insect repellents, and sunscreens that only require written parent consent. Written physician approval for over the counter medications must include the following: reason for the medication, specific name of the medication, child’s name, dosage amount, frequency/interval to be given, the doctor’s name with signature and date the order was written. If a physician gives you sample medication for your child, we cannot administer it without the written authorization from your health care provider that includes the child’s name, the dosage amount and the times it is to be administered. Any staff who administers medication has a) specified training and b) a written performance evaluation updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the six right practices of medication administration: 1) verifying that the right child receives the 2) right medication 3) the right dose 4) at the right time and 5) by the right method and 6) with the right documentation of each time the medication is given. Medication not requiring refrigeration shall be kept locked in a cabinet or container that is in a well-lit area, and shall not be stored in the kitchen or in a bathroom. Medication labeled “refrigerated” shall be stored in tightly lidded, washable containers marked “medication” in a refrigerator.

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING
Accidents or incidents resulting in injury to a child shall be reported on the day of the incident, in writing, to the parent or person authorized to pick up the child. The written report shall be prepared by the staff member who observed the incident or accident, and will include a general description of the incident and of the action taken, if any, including first aid, by the ECDC staff. The family receives a copy of the accident or incident report. A copy of the report will be kept in the child’s file.

DIAPERS, PULL-UPS AND DIAPERING
Older toddlers and preschool children may still be wearing diapers or pull-ups. ECDC staff follow a diapering policy provided by the state which is posted in each classroom's diaper changing area. Due to licensing and accreditation, ECDC staff can only use commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medically documented reason that does not permit the use of disposable diapers or pull-ups. Parents provide diapers in unopened, sealed packages for their child’s use at ECDC. Children wearing diapers or pull-ups are changed every two hours or when wet or dirty, including when they wake up from rest time. Children are changed in their own classroom either standing up in the bathroom or on a changing table that is used exclusively by their class. Diaper rash products require written parent consent for ECDC staff application. More information regarding diapering procedures is provided to families in classroom welcome letters from the teachers.
CARPOOLS AND BIRTHDAY PARTIES
At the beginning of each school year, ECDC distributes a Directory of Children enrolled in the ECDC program. This directory should be helpful in organizing carpools, play dates and birthday parties. When planning a birthday party, please do not hang invitations on children’s lockers or distribute invitations at school. In most cases birthday parties do not include every child in the class. Mailing invitations will alleviate hurt feelings at school.

REQUIRED ENROLLMENT FORMS (Medical and Emergency Info)
To meet licensing requirements and accreditation standards, it is necessary that the following forms be completed by the first day of school: a) Registration Form, b) Physical Examination (new to ECDC children and K children, required no later than 30 days after 1st day of enrollment), c) Emergency Contact Information and Medical Release Form, d) General Information Form, including permission for photography and permission for the application of sunscreen and insect repellent, e) Consent to Report Form, f) Waiver and Release, g) Health Action Plan, and h) a copy of the Birth Certificate. Parents receive a list of all required enrollment forms upon enrollment. The completed enrollment forms are due on August 1st for the school year program and on May 15th for the summer program. Enrollment forms are required by the child’s first day of school. The physical form with immunizations is required no later than 30 days after the child’s first day in the program; this is an Indiana licensing requirement. Note: Termination of enrollment may result if failure to submit the required forms or information continues beyond the third request.

Important Information about Immunizations and Children who are Under-Immunized due to medical or religious beliefs. Indiana licensing requires that children must be current for all routine screenings and immunizations according to the schedule recommended by the State of Indiana, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). If a child is under-immunized and a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs, or if the under-immunized child shows symptoms of a vaccine-preventable disease that puts the other children in the program at risk, the child will be excluded promptly. ECDC tuition continues during the exclusion period. The length of exclusion is determined by the IN licensing regulators based upon the CDC guidelines. If a child is currently under-immunized due to medical reasons, a doctor’s signature is required on the child’s health physical form indicating the medical exemption. If a child is currently under-immunized due to family religious beliefs, a parent’s signature is required on the child’s health physical form. There are only medical and religious exemptions accepted by the State of Indiana in licensed early childhood programs. Parents are also required to complete and submit a form that states their understanding of 1) prompt exclusion should a vaccine-preventable disease occur, and 2) that ECDC tuition continues during the exclusion period.

ITEMS TO BRING ON THE FIRST DAY
Please send the following items in a grocery-size bag on the first day of school. PRINT YOUR CHILD’S NAME clearly on each article and on the sack.

1 Close-up snapshot of your child to be put on his/her locker.
1 Adult-size old shirt to serve as paint smock. If shirt has long sleeves, please cut them to allow for movement during painting and other messy art activities. A plastic smock also can be provided. (Providing an art smock is optional.)
1 Complete change of clothing, including underwear, socks, shirt and pants. Most children are more comfortable changing into their own clothing when paint, mud, water or bathroom accidents occur. If your child occasionally experiences bathroom accidents, more than one pair of underwear, socks, and pants should be included. Please keep your child’s extra clothing seasonal.
1 Small crib size pillow and blanket for children enrolled in the afternoon program. All children (except 6-10 year olds during the summer) enrolled in the afternoon have a short rest time before an active afternoon.

Art Supplies: 1 Pkg. of 8 color Washable Markers (Crayola or Rose Art)
1 8 oz. bottle of School Glue (not all purpose glue)
1 Box of 8 color Jumbo Crayons; 5-10 year olds may bring crayons of their choice
Children should bring art supplies at the beginning of each summer and school year.
Lovies  What is a lovie? It might be a blanket, a stuffed animal or something else a child likes to have close by. These lovies help children to feel comfortable during the time they spend apart from their families, and can be a healthy and typical part of growing up. We encourage children to bring their lovies to school. When a child drops his/her lovie on the floor and forgets it while playing, we ask that child to put it away in his/her art cubbie or locker until they want it again. Please remember to check your child’s art cubbie/locker before you leave each day so your child can take his/her lovie home. If you have any questions, please speak with your child’s teachers.

Family Photos can be very supportive to children while they are at ECDC. All ECDC classrooms have an area where family photos can be displayed in reach so children can easily access as needed or wanted throughout the day.

Winter Clothing  During the cold weather and to protect against cold injury, all children should be dressed daily in or bring waterproof boots, snow pants, hat, coat for outside winter/cold play and waterproof mittens. An extra pair of waterproof mittens in the locker is helpful. One way to keep track of mittens during the winter is to sew them to a long strand of elastic and put them through the sleeves of the winter coat or to use clips. During the summer, all children enrolled should have a bathing suit and towel in their locker for popular “sprinkler days” and swimming lessons and free swims.

SUNSCREEN/SUNBLOCK AND INSECT REPELLANT
To protect the children from sun-injury, ECDC staff applies sunscreen/sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher with written parental permission to do such. Parents provide the sunscreen/sunblock. Please label the sunscreen/sunblock container with your child’s name. Due to safety concerns, all sunscreen/sunblock and insect repellent will be stored out of the reach of children.

When recommended by public health authorities due to high risk of insect borne diseases, ECDC applies insect repellent for outside activities and field trips (e.g., Bendix Woods, Love Creek, Spicer Lake, Potato Creek, Clay Park, etc.) to protect the children from insect-borne diseases. Parents complete a permission form to authorize ECDC to apply insect repellent. Only insect repellant containing deet is used, ECDC supplies the insect repellent, it is applied only once per day and only with parent permission for such.

CELEBRATIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS AT ECDC
The ECDC program embraces and celebrates the seasons, families and special events in life (e.g., birthdays, grandparents and extended family members, friendships, the arrival of a new baby in a family). Each year, October and November are such exciting months for children and families, including the changes in the weather, piles of leaves to jump in, apples and pumpkins galore and of course Halloween and Thanksgiving. During the months of October/November, ECDC will focus on the beautiful changing seasons and harvest (pumpkins, gourds, apples). Even though we will not be celebrating Halloween with parties at ECDC, we encourage children to share their Halloween plans and to bring photos of their costumes and/or any photos of their Halloween activities to show and share.

ECDC will celebrate Friends and Friendship around Valentine’s Day because friends are such an important part of our program and our lives. Families will be asked to provide paper products, special snacks, and juice for the class friendship parties. Individual activity rooms will also have celebrations associated with their studies/projects and special events, and emails and signs will notify you as they occur (e.g. Pumpkin Parties, Winter Wonderland, Week of the Young Child activities, Jim Gill Concert, Art Exhibit of Children's Work for Families, Garden Party, Family Picnics, Special Readers, and Tea Parties). Individual activity rooms may focus on “Families” during the month of December and share the many family traditions of the children in the group. Information about these events will be shared in November/December by email.

ECDC is a secular program, committed to serving children of many different religious and ethnic backgrounds (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh) respectfully. ECDC strives to be sensitive and respectful to all ethnic/religious groups. While teachers won’t teach the religious aspect of a holiday, we will discuss religious holidays, in developmentally appropriate ways, when children share their families’ holidays and
PARENT AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION
The ECDC program views itself as an extension of each child’s family. We feel it is vital to communicate regularly with parents and involve parents/families in our school and summer program. We communicate and involve families in the program through email communication, Parent Teacher Conferences two times per year, October Parent Visit Days, Parent Meetings such as Fall Curriculum Night for Parents, Family Picnic Lunches, an Open Door Policy, and four parents (two from each site) serve as parent representatives on the ECDC Board of Directors. Parents are also invited to help in the activity rooms as special guest readers, parent helpers on field trips, and to help wash toys. Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to spend time in their child’s room.

Please remember ~ Should your child or your family be experiencing changes at home, please let the teachers know so we can be sensitive and more fully meet the needs of your child and family.

ECDC Parent Representatives are a direct link for parents to the ECDC board. Two Parent Representatives from each ECDC program are elected annually by the families in the fall of each year to serve on the ECDC governance Board of Directors. Parent Representatives are available to answer questions, hear new ideas and concerns, or address unresolved issues families might have with ECDC. The Parent Representatives are voting members of the 15 member ECDC Board of Directors and participate on several board committees, including but not limited to the Parent Committee.

Parent Visit Days ECDC remains open during the Saint Mary’s and Notre Dame vacation weeks in October and March. During the fall week in October, we invite parents to visit their child’s classroom. This is a great time to be involved with your child at school, her/his friends, and the various learning activities. Parents who have a special hobby, interest or talent are encouraged to share their talent or interest with their child's class during their visit. Casual clothing is recommended, and we request that siblings do not accompany parents on these visit days.

Curriculum Night for Parents - Each fall semester, ECDC hosts a meeting for parents/adult family members, Curriculum Night for Parents, at the end of September/early October at each ECDC program site. Classroom teachers share the ECDC curriculum and learning goals for the school year. This evening event for parents provides the opportunity to get further acquainted with the teachers and to learn about the daily schedule, curriculum and program related topics as well as have questions answered. Refreshments and a get-acquainted time with other ECDC parents occurs after the classroom portion. Curriculum Night is for adult family members only.

“School Readiness and the Ways in Which ECDC Prepares Children for Kindergarten and Beyond” resource is located on the ECDC website at ECDC School Readiness Booklet. This resource shares with families the many ways that the ECDC routines, daily schedule, activities, curriculum, classroom materials and teacher child interactions develop a love of learning and readiness for school and life.

Family Feedback about the ECDC Programs and Special Events We value your opinions and thoughts about the ECDC program and ask that you provide feedback several times per year. Near the end of the school year and summer programs, families are asked to complete electronic evaluation surveys regarding the ECDC programs. Families are asked to provide confidential comments and feedback regarding what works well within the ECDC programs and to also share ideas for future program improvements. These evaluations are critically
important to ECDC’s strategic planning and overall quality. The summary results of the family surveys are shared with ECDC families, teachers and board of directors. Families are also asked to provide feedback about special events, such as fall semester Curriculum Night and School Readiness Meeting. This feedback is collected through an electronic survey process that is distributed through an email link to all families attending. Thank you for assisting with the improvement of the ECDC program by sharing your ideas and comments.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES
Teachers are available for on-going communication during arrival and departure times, and by telephone. Parents are welcome at any time and at all times to observe in our program. Unscheduled visits by a custodial parent or guardian shall be permitted at any time. As required by Indiana Rules and Regulations for licensed child care programs, parents are notified of all significant occurrences or problems that affect their child. This includes, but is not limited to, notices regarding field trips, changes in the daily routine, presence of substitute teachers in the activity rooms, accidents, injuries, first aid, disciplinary action taken and possible exposure to communicable diseases (e.g. chicken pox, strep throat). ECDC will forward to families information provided by the licensing division regarding inclusion, rules and other child care/early childhood information.

Written Communication to Families from Teachers Teachers provide families with daily email communication about the various learning experiences and activities that occur in the classroom. Daily email communication written by teachers and program staff are a primary form of communication about what is going on in the classroom with curriculum, special activities and include suggestions regarding supporting children’s learning at home.

Website The ECDC website http://ecdc.nd.edu/ contains registration materials, enrollment forms, monthly newsletters, menus, handbooks, links to community activities and events and links to support services and websites for families and young children. The website also contains a calendar of ECDC activities as well as classroom pages that contain specific curriculum information.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND COMMUNITY EVENTS
ECDC provides families with information regarding community events that are designed for families with young children. This includes activities with the library, area schools, park districts, community organizations and agencies. ECDC teachers often attend these activities sharing in the enrichment opportunity. ECDC is actively involved in the early childhood community.

Creative Movement and Dance Classes For the past few decades ECDC has offered an enrichment program of creative movement/dance classes for preschool and kindergarten age children. The classes are structured once a week for thirty minutes for three year olds and forty-five minutes for four year olds and older, at a cost substantially less than is available in the wider community. Our dance instructors are typically professional dance instructors from a local studio. Child ren register for dance classes each semester. Parents pay a separate fee for these classes.

Gymnasts in Motion During the school year, thirty-minute gymnasts programs are offered weekly. This program is available for all children ages 2 and older and alternates on two days per week each semester, allowing all children regardless of their schedule to take part in Gymnastics for at least one semester. The Gymnastics Bus comes to our site and features gymnastics, motor development, coordination, and language building skills. Registration, with weekly Gymnastics fee information, occurs at the beginning of each semester. As space permits, children may add anytime during the semester. Parents pay a separate fee for these classes.

Ice Skating Lessons at the ND Compton Family Ice Arena During the school year, the children enrolled in the 4’s, 4/5’s and Kindergarten classrooms have the opportunity to participate in ice skating lessons November-February. These lessons are paid for by ECDC there is no charge to the families of the children who participate except an enrollment fee of less than $20 for the Learn to Skate program.
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, ACCESS AND REFERRALS TO SPECIAL SERVICES

Speech, Language and Hearing Screenings  During the course of each school year during fall semester, ECDC provides Speech, Language and Hearing Screenings. This service is provided at a nominal fee by Saint Mary’s College (SMC) graduate students in the Speech and Language Pathology degree program. The screenings are supervised by SMC faculty and available during school hours to children whose parents enroll for the screenings. Parents are notified of these screenings by parent permission letters. A child will not be screened without written permission from the parent. The results of the screenings are shared with parents and in some cases there are recommendations for re-screening in 3 months, 6 months or one year. In addition, referrals for further screenings and/or evaluation with First Steps or the child's public school system or a local hospital or other agency are made based upon the child's individual results. All results are treated in confidential.

Special Services to Support Development and Learning  ECDC works in partnership with First Steps and the school systems to meet the needs of children with special learning or developmental needs. Preschool age children are referred to their local elementary school for screenings, evaluations and therapies when there are concerns. Children who are younger than age three and eligible for special services may receive such services through First Steps at ECDC and/or at home. If a child’s development suggests that a screening or evaluation would be helpful to determine if special services would be beneficial, teachers and/or a program administrator meet with the child’s family to discuss observations and concerns. After which, if parents are agreeable, a referral is made to First Steps or the School System in which the family resides.

Speech and Language Services Through Saint Mary's College  ECDC has a partnership with the Saint Mary’s College Communicative Disorders Graduate Department, which provides therapy for children with speech and language delays. Additionally, limited speech services are available at the Saint Mary’s College Judd Leighton Speech and Language Clinic.

Family Resource Consultant and Child and Family Support Specialist

ECDC partners with a licensed social worker who provides our families with topical parenting sessions entitled "Conversations about Everyday Life with Children.” These regular parenting enrichment meetings are offered during the school year on topics such as ECDC's approach to child guidance, sibling rivalry, bedtime routines, mealtime routines, and supporting very active children. Information about these small group conversations is provided to families monthly throughout the school year.

In addition, ECDC has a partnership with LOGAN Community Resources, Inc. Logan provides the services of a behavioral specialist to ECDC to support teachers in their work assisting children with social and emotional development struggles/delays and behavior challenges. Please contact an ECDC program director or the executive director for more information about the behavioral specialist's services at ECDC.

These professionals assist the teachers and program staff with making referrals to community screenings and evaluations to determine how best we can support the child's holistic growth, development and learning in addition to accessing therapies to provide individualized support.

Individual and Class Pictures  Each fall a photographer visits our program to take both group and individual pictures if parents request such. These pictures are usually taken during September or early October. The children especially enjoy having the class group picture that includes their friends and teachers.

Community Resources  The program staff maintains a list of community resources as an ongoing effort to provide families with information to better meet their needs and enhance the services provided by the ECDC program. Special language assistance is commonly available at most locations (e.g. Spanish speaking interpreter).

Health (Oral Health, Nutrition, Health)
Pediatrician-  Dr. John Rice, MD  (ECDC consulting physician)  574-234-9555
Dentist-Dr. Deanna O’Neil, R DDS  (ECDC consulting dentist)  574-288-4400
Children’s Dispensary (Resource Center for children with special needs)  574-234-1169
Ansari Regional Center for Autism  574-289-4831
Photon Copy at ECDC BY TEACHERS, COLLEGE STUDENTS AND VISITORS

On occasion, SMC and/or ND students request permission to photograph children involved in the ECDC program for various academic and/or photography projects. Occasionally, local newspapers (e.g., South Bend Tribune, Notre Dame/Saint Mary’s Observer, Elkhart Truth) and/or television stations (e.g., WNDU, WSBT, WSJV) seek permission to photograph children involved in the ECDC program in promotion of early childhood community initiatives and/or the ECDC program. ECDC teachers also photograph children involved in various ECDC program activities to share with parents and to document learning. The General Information Form that each family completes annually requests permission for the child(ren) to be photographed at ECDC. If a family does not provide permission, their child will not be photographed for college student projects or for local newspaper and/or television station use. Teachers will request to take photographs of children for their individual portfolios to document activities, learning growth, and development.

ANIMAL AND PET POLICY

All interactions between children and animals must be respectful and staff must instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. The staff make sure that classroom pets and visiting animals appear to be in good health. These animals have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. The teachers are aware of children’s allergies and ensure the children aren’t exposed to animals to which they are allergic. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk of salmonella infection.

ECDC TUITION POLICY

ECDC Tuition is billed for the full semester. Parents may pay for the full semester at the beginning of the semester (e.g., fall, spring and/or summer) or may elect to pay their tuition as follows:

Fall Tuition Payment Options:
Families will be invoiced in August for Fall Semester tuition.

- 1 payment – Remit the full Fall Semester tuition amount on the 1st day of the SY.
- 2 payments – Divide the total tuition amount in half remitting one half by the 1st day of the SY program and the second half by November 1.
- 5 payments – Divide the total tuition amount into 5 equal amounts remitting as follows: 1st day of the SY program, Sept 1, Oct 1 Nov 1, Dec 1.
- 9 payments – Divide the total tuition amount into 9 equal payments remitting as follows: 1st day of the SY program, Sept 1 & 15, Oct 1 & 15, Nov 1 & 15, Dec 1 & 15.
• Weekly payments – Divide the total tuition amount by the number of weeks in the semester, remitting equal amounts, in advance, on Monday of each week beginning the 1st day of the SY program through fall semester.

• Please note – parents are not invoiced for the W, TH and Fri of Thanksgiving week when ECDC is closed. ECDC is open on Labor Day due to ND/SMC holding classes and is also open during Fall Break due to staff members working. Parents are invoiced for these time periods.

• Fall Semester “Gymnastics in Motion” Fees - Please note that in September Fall Semester Gymnastic fees will be invoiced to your tuition account. At that time you may pay the full amount or add that to your regular payment plan, which will require you to recalculate your tuition payment amounts.

**Spring Semester Payment Options:**
Families will be invoiced in December for Spring Semester tuition.
• 1 payment – Remit the full Spring Semester tuition amount on the 1st day of Spring Semester.
• 2 payments – Divide the total tuition amount in half remitting one half on the 1st day of Spring Semester and the second half March 1st.
• 5 payments – Divide the total tuition amount into 5 equal amounts remitting as follows: 1st day of Spring Semester, Feb. 1, March 1, April 1, May 1.
• 9 equal payments – Divide the total tuition amount into 9 equal payments remitting as follows: 1st day of Spring Semester, Jan 15, Feb. 1 & 15, March 1 & 15, April 1 & 15, May 1.
• Weekly payments – Divide the total tuition amount by the number of weeks in the semester, remitting equal amounts, in advance, on Monday of each week beginning the 1st day of the Spring Semester through the end of the school year.
• Please note – parents are not invoiced for the Friday before Easter or the Monday after Easter when ECDC is closed for spring break.
• Spring Semester “Gymnastics in Motion” Fees - Please note that in January Spring Semester Gymnastic fees will be invoiced to your tuition account. At that time you may pay the full amount or add that to your regular payment plan, which will require you to recalculate your tuition payment amounts.

**Summer Program** – Divide the tuition into 2 equal amounts, remitting 2 equal payments on the first day of the summer program and July 5. Or, divide the summer tuition into 4 equal amounts remitting equal payments every other week beginning with the first day of the summer program. Please note – parents are not invoiced for July 4th when ECDC is closed.

**Student Activity Fees:** A $30 student activity fee is assessed each school year semester as follows - August/Sept and in January for children enrolled in the 2’s, 3’s, and 3-4’s. A $60 student activity fee is assessed each school year semester as follows – Aug/Sept and January for children enrolled in the 4’s, 4/5’s and Kindergarten. The summer program includes a student activity fee - $140 for all full time summer enrollment schedules and for all school-age schedules (Full Time/MWF All Day/TTH All Day); there is a $95 summer student activity fee for all part time summer preschool enrollment schedules.

Parents may, from time to time, have difficulty making monthly tuition payments due to unforeseen financial circumstances. If a parent(s) finds that he/she is unable to remit monthly tuition payments when due, the parent(s) must promptly notify ECDC’s Executive Director so that an agreement for the payment of past due tuition can be arranged. Failure to notify ECDC’s Executive Director or to comply with the payment agreement within one month of the date a tuition payment was due will jeopardize a child’s continued enrollment at ECDC. Please note: ECDC is an Indiana Nonprofit Corporation completely separate from the University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary’s College. ECDC is dependent upon tuition to meet financial obligations (e.g., payroll, food costs).

**ECDC TUITION ASSISTANCE**
The ECDC-ND program operates with a family income based tuition schedule; no additional fee assistance is available. At ECDC-SMC, families with documented financial need may apply for limited fee assistance through the ECDC Board of Directors. There are only a few opportunities for financial need based assistance available at ECDC-SMC each year. If you are interested in further information, please contact Terri Kosik, Executive Director, at 631-3344 or tkosik@saintmarys.edu.
ECDC-ND FAMILY INCOME BASED TUITION SCHEDULE
ECDC-ND operates with a tuition structure based upon combined family gross income. The ECDC website contains the current tuition program for ND and SMC staff, students, administration and faculty. The ND and SMC Alumni(ae) and Holy Cross Order employees are not eligible for the ECDC-ND family income based tuition schedule. Documentation is required.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All information regarding children or families of the Early Childhood Development Center is regarded as confidential and the property of ECDC and the family involved, including individual child assessment information. Requests for release of information to other agencies will be honored only if made in writing and with the permission from the parent.

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
ECDC is required by law to report any case of suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. All ECDC teachers and program staff receive annual training regarding the signs of child abuse and neglect, including the legal responsibility to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

ECDC Policies and Procedures Regarding Allegations of Child Abuse or Neglect by an ECDC Employee, Practicum Student or Volunteer -
How ECDC responds to an allegation will depend on the situation. A parent's call to the director (executive director and/or program director) to mention a concern about how a teacher handled a child's misbehavior will be handled differently from a parent's report of suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services (CPS) or to the state licensing agency alleging that a teacher, college student or volunteer abused a child. The initial ECDC response, in both situations, will be to attempt to gather the facts rather than defend the staff member or the program. All discussions with parents, children, and staff will be thoroughly documented. As in all cases of suspected child abuse, the child's well-being will be the most important consideration.

During the investigation of alleged child abuse by an ECDC employee, practicum student or volunteer:

- the individual will be placed on administrative leave or will be given a work assignment that does not involve contact with children.
- the ECDC Board President and member that serves as Personnel Committee Chair will be informed immediately.
- ECDC will collaborate with CPS with all aspects of the investigation.
- the privacy of the child and ECDC staff member will be protected, and only shared on a “need to know” basis (e.g. CPS, ECDC Personnel Committee).

Once the investigations conducted by ECDC and the authorities are completed, the results may clearly indicate that child abuse occurred, may vindicate the accused staff member, or may be inconclusive. If the investigation indicates that child abuse occurred, ECDC will terminate the staff member. If the results are inconclusive, ECDC Board of Director’s Personnel Committee in conjunction with the executive director will make a judgment based on the children's well-being, the staff member’s past job performance, the concerns of parents and staff, and the program's future liability if allegations are made in the future. If the staff member is cleared of any wrongdoing, ECDC will support the individual as he/she returns to work with ECDC children, families, program staff and college students.

SMOKING & OTHER PROHIBITIONS
Smoking is not allowed at ECDC. The ECDC program buildings and grounds are posted as smoke-free. Weapons, illegal drugs and alcohol are prohibited from the ECDC building and grounds.

NO IDLING POLICY
As a past member and supporter of the 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program, ECDC has committed to reduce vehicle idling at our facility. Please help us meet our commitments to this program. PLEASE TURN YOUR VEHICLES OFF when in our parking lot, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to
maintain interior or engine temperatures. This will help reduce exposure of our children to exhaust fumes that can enter our building and outdoor play spaces. Thank you for your commitment to reducing vehicle emissions around our children!

This commitment also includes ECDC’s own transportation vehicles. We are reducing vehicle idling at our facility by implementing the following School Bus Idling Policy per the 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program’s recommendations:

- At 32 degrees or above, vehicles will be allowed to idle for up to 5 minutes;
- From 20 degrees to 32 degrees, vehicles will be allowed to idle for up to 15 minutes;
- From 20 degrees and below, vehicles will be allowed to idle for up to 30 minutes or until the front windows are defrosted and all safety equipment is operable.

**FIRE DRILLS, STORM DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

ECDC practices monthly fire drills and monthly storm drills. We follow routine evacuation procedures as instructed by the University and College.

**CLOSURE DUE TO EMERGENCY - Weather or Facility Emergency**

ECDC strives to remain open during all regularly scheduled times (despite weather or facility emergencies). ECDC does close for severe weather when ND and/or SMC closes for weather and/or when there is a declared state of emergency and/or when ECDC staff is unable to drive to ECDC due to severe weather. There are times that ND/SMC is open and ECDC closes because teachers and staff are unable to drive to ECDC. When the Center is closed due to an emergency, tuition is not refunded or credited because of ongoing expenses. We appreciate parents' understanding and patience when emergencies occur.

In the event of an emergency closing or other urgent information, ECDC families are notified via email message, text message, announcements on WNDU radio and television, and postings on the ECDC Facebook page. The text message program ECDC uses is called REMIND.

- In order to sign up for ECDC-ND text messages, all you need to do is text the phone number 81010 and in the text portion type in @ecdc-nd
- In order to sign up for ECDC-SMC text messages, all you need to do is text the phone number 81010 and in the text portion type in @ecdcsmc.

After doing this, you will receive a message asking for your name. Please reply with your name. It may then ask if you are a teacher, parent, or student, if you haven't used REMIND before. Please respond P for parent. At that point you should be all set to start receiving text messages from ECDC-ND (Terri Kosik) using REMIND. If you have any questions/issues with this process, please contact the ECDC office. To unsubscribe from ECDC REMIND text messages, simply respond @LEAVE to the message.

**DONATIONS AND FUND RAISERS**

ECDC eagerly accepts and appreciates greatly any and all donations to the program (monetary or educational equipment/supplies). Please remember ECDC when you clean out closets. ECDC is always in particular need of quality children’s books and children’s clothing including children’s underwear, bathing suits, snow pants, hats, mittens, boots, and shoes. The extra clothing allows us to have back up for children who may not have extra clothes in their locker or who forget their outside clothing. All donations to ECDC are tax deductible.

**Holiday Wish Lists** During the December holiday season, we would like to suggest a gift for your child’s activity room in the form of an educational item (e.g. book, puzzle, game, CD, etc.). During November, a Wish List of items that the teachers would like to add to the activity room will be distributed to parents. All donations are tax deductible. We do not want any family to feel an obligation, but do want to suggest this as a way we can work together to further increase and enrich the educational environment your child enjoys.

**Book Fair** During November, ECDC sponsors a children’s book fair. A wide variety of quality children's books, including Blue Ribbon and Caldecott Award winning selections, are available for parents to purchase as holiday gifts. Proceeds from the Book Fair are used to enhance each activity room’s selection of educational materials. Information regarding the book fair will be distributed during the fall.
Annual Appeal  ECDC conducts an Annual Appeal each December to assist with capital improvements to the program that couldn’t be accomplished without fund development. An example of our Annual Appeal projects include the purchasing of a new 28 passenger Bluebird School Bus with child safety seats that is used for field trips in the community during both the school year with children in the 4’s, 4/5’s and kindergarten groups as well as during the summer day camp program for children in the 4/5’s through school age groups (8/9/10’s). Other Annual Appeals have addressed playground renovations for ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND. Donations of all sizes are of great assistance to the ECDC programs as we continually make improvements and renovations to enhance the children’s early childhood experiences.

Spring Flowers  During early spring, families have the opportunity to purchase flower baskets, flower bulbs and seeds through “Art in Nature.” Flowers arrive in plenty of time for Mother’s Day! A flower brochure and order form will be distributed to families in late February or early March. ECDC receives 40% of the “Art in Nature” flower sales. Thank you for your support!

Football Parking to Raise Funds for ECDC  An annual fall ECDC fundraiser is ND Football Parking in the ECDC-ND parking lot. Our 24 season parking patrons appreciate the reserved, close to the stadium parking our lot provides. The ECDC families help by volunteering to serve as hosts/hostesses in the parking lot each game day. This fundraiser provides the ECDC programs with approximately $12,000 per year, which helps fund educational materials. Please watch for game day parking lot host information distributed in August of each year.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
When absenteeism occurs, parents are charged for the day(s) due to the slot being reserved for their child. If a child is absent because of illness, documented by a physician, for a period of more than ten scheduled consecutive school days for which the child is enrolled, the parent may request that the obligation to pay for subsequent consecutive days of absence be suspended. This suspension period shall not exceed a maximum of 15 school days in any one school year. This suspension period shall terminate upon the child’s return to school, and shall not recommence unless the child is again absent for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days because of documented illness.

WITHDRAWING OR REDUCING A CHILD’S ENROLLMENT SCHEDULE
Parents withdrawing or reducing a child’s School Year enrollment schedule after July 1st (June 1st for Kindergarten) are responsible and liable for the payment of the full tuition of their original enrollment schedule through the month of December of that respective school year or until another child is enrolled to fill the vacated or reduced enrollment schedule. After January 1st of that respective school year, two weeks notice is required when withdrawing or reducing a child’s schedule. When two weeks notification is not received, two weeks tuition will be assessed. (May 1st is the withdrawal or schedule reduction date, after which parents are responsible for the entire 8-week summer tuition until another child fills the original enrollment schedule.

DISENROLLMENT (TERMINATION) OF A CHILD FROM ECDC
As a child development program, we value ongoing communication and building strong relationships with families. Parents are encouraged to initiate conversations with staff (teachers and/or administration) about their child’s experiences and to consult with staff about their child’s needs. Also, staff will communicate with families if the program is experiencing challenges meeting their child’s need. Some of the behaviors that might create concern about a child include:
1) the child repeatedly displays hurtful and/or unsafe behavior,
2) the child’s behavior is consistently disruptive, and/or
3) the child’s needs exceed the program’s resources.
If the program staff determines that the behavior is not developmentally appropriate for the child and/or that the child often behaves in such a manner, the following steps will be thoughtfully and considerately followed:
1. ECDC staff observes the child and observations are documented; observation focus includes the environment, curriculum, schedule, and teaching strategies.
2. ECDC staff will meet with the family to discuss and document observations and concerns. The observations are discussed with the family and further information is gathered.
3. An Individual Behavior Support Plan (IBSP) is developed, including the strategies that will be implemented in the program. The IBSP is shared with the family for their awareness and input.
4. The IBSP is implemented.
5. The IBSP is reviewed after a determined amount of time.
   a. If the IBSP is working, review and revise periodically as needed.
   b. If IBSP is not working, seek additional support or make a referral to other professional(s) with permission from the family.

6. If following an evaluation by the team of ECDC teachers, administrators and Family Resource Specialist, a more suitable environment is determined necessary; a transition plan will be developed and implemented. ECDC staff will communicate with the family to assist the family in finding a more suitable program or setting, if possible.

   Note: It is an unusual situation that would cause the program to choose to transition a child out of the ECDC program. This would not be done unless the program documents that the needs of the child exceeds the ability of the program to meet the child’s needs.

   **ADDITIONAL REASONS FOR TERMINATION OF SERVICES**
   The following are reasons for termination of services to a family.
   - Failure to submit required forms and/or information including the required physical with immunizations after three reminders.
   - Chronic lateness, which is defined as arriving after 5:30 p.m., more than four times during a semester.
   - Outstanding tuition of 4 weeks or more without the establishment of and adherence to a payment plan with ECDC.

   **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**
   A cornerstone of our philosophy is building relationships among families and teachers. There are times however when differing opinions or questions may arise. If this occurs families need to meet with the staff to discuss the issue and try to resolve difficulties together. If there is no resolution, parents and/or teachers should contact the Executive Director for additional assistance. If the Executive Director is unable to resolve the issue, then families may forward the grievance to the ECDC Board of Directors. The Parent Representatives who are elected to the ECDC Board of Directors serve as a liaison for families to the ECDC Board of Directors. Parents can also email board members directly using the website contact information for board members.

   **MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES**
   Although ECDC has never lost a child in all its years of operation, the following procedures will be followed in the unlikely circumstance that a child is discovered to be missing. The Program Director and/or Executive Director will be notified immediately upon the discovery that the child is missing.

   A staff person from each classroom, appointed by the Program Director or Executive Director will be assigned to search their classroom and other rooms throughout the building as an appointed second group of staff members cover the ECDC grounds. If the child is still missing after these immediate searches, the University Police or College Security and the child’s parents will be contacted. While waiting for the police/security, the Program Director or Executive Director will assign staff members to widen the search beyond the immediate ECDC building and grounds. The ECDC staff will spread out and will begin to systematically search the surrounding sidewalks/streets in the following manner.

   **ECDC-SMC:** Staff members will spread out in 4 directions as follows – to the west towards Angela Athletic Facility and Library, to the south towards the science building and the new SU class building, to the north towards Opus Dorm and volleyball court and to the east towards the parking lot and the Hilton Garden Hotel.

   **ECDC-ND:** Staff members will spread out in 4 directions as follows – to the north across Bulla to O’Hara Grace Residences, to the south on Leahy and another person to the south on Palmer Street (directly east of the ECDC-ND building), to the east down Bulla towards Twyckenham and to the west down Bulla towards campus.

   **SERVICE FEES**
   Additional charges ECDC will assess are as follows:
   - Late pick-up charge—$15 per each fifteen minutes
   - A check returned for insufficient funds—$20
ECDC is an equal opportunity educator and employer. The program offers a non-sexist, non-racist, multi-cultural, anti-bias curriculum and does not discriminate against staff, parents, or children on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, national origin, or physical or mental disabilities.

We hope this handbook provides you with helpful information. Please feel free to contact Terri Kosik, Executive Director (e-mail: tkosik@saintmarys.edu, phone: 631-3344 office or 574-298-3353 cell) should you have any questions or concerns not addressed in this handbook.

We look forward to growing together in a positive relationship with you and your child, and hope to provide a stimulating and enjoyable School Year/Summer Day Camp Program experience.

ECDC CONTACT INFORMATION
ECDC on Facebook: Early Childhood Development Center

Primary ECDC Telephone Numbers
   ECDC-SMC – Phone: 574-284-4693  Fax: 574-284-5344
   ECDC-ND –  Phone: 574-631-3344  Fax: 574-631-7808

ECDC Administrative Staff~
ECDC Executive Director:  Terri Kosik, 574-631-3344 / 574-298-3353 cell / tkosik@saintmarys.edu
ECDC-SMC:
   Program Director: Kari Alford – 574-284-4693 / kalford@saintmarys.edu
   Assistant Program Director: Lauren Graybill - 574-284-4693 / lbaker@saintmarys.edu
ECDC-ND:
   Program Director: Thayer Kramer, 574-631-3344 / thayerkramerecdc@yahoo.com
   Assistant Program Director: Jennifer Wray, 574-631-3344 / jenniferwrayecdc@gmail.com
**Program Philosophy**

Biting is a natural, developmental behavior in which many young children engage, especially during their second and third years of life. We recognize that biting is a distressing activity for parents, staff, and the child who has been bitten. Because biting is so distressing, everyone involved would like to eliminate it quickly. Unfortunately, a “quick fix” is not usually available. However, biting does require immediate action by staff to comfort the child, who has been bitten, express disapproval to the biter, and to attempt to find the cause of the biting. Sometimes the child who has bitten is unable to express the reason for the bite. The staff member supporting the biting situation should not persist with questioning of the child, if she/he is unable to articulate the reason for biting.

Children bite for a variety of reasons (e.g., conflict strategy, oral need/teething, communication attempt) so it’s important for adults to get to the cause of the behavior. Most of the reasons for biting are not related to behavior problems nor does biting make the biter a “bad child”. Since biting is developmentally related, it is more common for toddlers to bite than for older preschool age children.

**How Staff Respond:** Staff members respond to biting as they would to other aggressive behavior – by:

- calmly, yet firmly telling the biter that biting hurts our friends and is not allowed
- comforting the victim immediately and providing first aid if needed; the biter is involved in comforting the victim by assisting in getting ice for the victim
- washing the bite with soap and water
- applying ice to reduce swelling
- if the skin is broken, universal precautions are followed
- writing an injury report
- documenting the biting in an atypical incident behavior report

The teaching staff member supporting the biting situation informs an ECDC program director of the bite as soon as possible, after the child who has been bitten has received first aid.

When a particular child bites on a regular basis, the center staff will attempt to find the cause of the biting and take action to prevent future incidents. The staff consider:

- the precipitating factors such as time of day, area of the classroom, the activity, other children involved, language development, etc.
- changes in the child’s life such as health problems, teething, the absence of a family member, the birth of a sibling, transitions, etc.

The staff then develops strategies to help prevent further biting. These might include:

- ensuring that there are enough materials, including duplicates, for the children to use
- ensuring that there is enough space in the classroom and that there are quiet times in the schedule
- shadowing a biter in situations and times when the child has bitten before
- providing teething toys or opportunities (eating crunchy carrots for snack) for children who are getting new teeth
- showing disapproval of biting
- working collaboratively with parents to reduce or eliminate biting

**How Parents Are Informed:** The parents of a bitten child are notified of the incident the day the incident occurs. An injury report is also completed providing written documentation. Confidentiality prohibits the staff from divulging the name of the biter. The parents of the biter are informed personally and privately the same day. Typically a program director calls the parents to share the information shortly after the biting incident instead of waiting until the end of the day.

**How Biting is Documented:** All biting incidents are documented by the teacher(s) in an atypical incident report, which is reviewed and approved by the center director. Copies are placed in each child’s admin and teacher files. Another copy is kept in the center’s incident report file.
**ECDC Birthday Treat /Special Snack Options**

Birthdays are a special time in a child’s life and we know how much they look forward to celebrating this time with their friends. The children and teachers at ECDC enjoy being part of this celebration. If you want to bring in a birthday treat or snack to share with your child’s class, please use this list of options to select the food item. Please remember that ECDC is a nut free building and we ask that no nuts or nut products are brought into the building due to allergies. *All processed food items must be commercially prepared and sealed. This doesn’t apply to fruits and vegetables. The teachers will wash and cut the fresh produce.* If you have any questions please speak with one of the lead teachers or a Program Director (Please no candy, gum, nut products or balloons due to safety concerns). Thank you!

**Food Items:**

- Edy’s Fruit juice bars
- Frozen Yogurt or Yogurt Popsicles
- Mini Muffins (Walmart’s are made in a nut free facility)
- Yogurt cups
- Yogurt Parfaits (fruit and crushed graham crackers added)*
- Yogurt pretzels
- Yogurt smoothies (store bought)
- Mini pancakes and syrup
- Whole Fruit: kiwi, plums, blueberries, raspberries, cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, pineapple, nectarines, peaches, etc.
- Fresh Fruit with whipped cream
- Fruit kabobs (wood skewers and whole fruit, children cut and add to the skewers)*
- Apples with caramel dip or yogurt fruit dip
- Cheese
- Fresh Vegetables: (sugar snap peas, red and orange peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, grape tomatoes, cucumbers, etc.) and dip
- Nutrigrain bars
- Flavored applesauce
- Teddy Grahams
- Veggie Pizza (bagel flats, cream cheese, broccoli florets, shredded carrots)*
- Fruit Pizza (bagel flats, cream cheese, fresh fruit)*
  *Families provide the ingredients and teachers and children create the special treat

4’s, 4/5’s and Kindergarten only (potential choking concerns)

- Celery and soy butter or sunflower butter (no peanut butter) or cream cheese
- Pretzel Rods and veggie dip (optional)
- Yogurt covered raisins
- Popcorn

**Non- Food Items:**

- Pencils
- Mini Note Pads
- Small play dough containers
- Small bubble tubes

- Bracelets
- Hats/crowns
- Rings (4’s class and older)
- Erasers (4’s class and older)
Healthy Snacks

Serving healthy snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and helping to prevent costly and potentially-disabling diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity. Snacks play a major and growing role in children's diets. Between 1977 and 1996, the number of calories that children consumed from snacks increased by 120 calories per day.

Below are ideas for teachers, caregivers, program directors, and parents for serving healthy snacks and beverages to children in the classroom, in after-school programs, at soccer games, and elsewhere. Some ideas may be practical for large groups of children, while other ideas may only work for small groups, depending on the work and cost involved.

Fruits and Vegetables

Most of the snacks served to children should be fruits and vegetables, since most kids do not eat the recommended five to thirteen servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Eating fruits and vegetables lowers the risk of heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure. Fruits and vegetables also contain important nutrients like vitamins A and C and fiber. Serving fresh fruits and vegetables can seem challenging. However, good planning and the growing number of shelf-stable fruits and vegetable products on the market make it easier. Though some think fruits and vegetables are costly snacks, they are actually less costly than many other less-healthy snacks on a per-serving basis. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average cost of a serving of fruit or vegetable (all types – fresh, frozen, and canned) is 25 cents per serving. This is a good deal compared with a 69-cent single-serve bag of potato chips or an 80-cent candy bar. Try lots of different fruits and vegetables and prepare them in various ways to find out what your kids like best.

Healthy Eating Tip: serve snacks with fun plates, napkins, cups, or straws or have a tasting party where children can vote for their favorite healthy snacks.

Fruit is naturally sweet, so most kids love it. Fruit can be served whole, sliced, cut in half, cubed, or in wedges. Canned, frozen, and dried fruits often need little preparation.

> Apples (it can be helpful to use an apple corer)  > Apricots
  > Bananas  
  > Blueberries  
  > Cherries  
  > Grapes (red, green, or purple)  
  > Kiwis (cut in half & give each child a spoon)  
  > Mangoes  
  > Oranges  
  > Pears  
  > Plums  
  > Strawberries  
  > Watermelon

Applesauce (Unsweetened), Fruit Cups, and Canned Fruit – These have a long shelf life and are low-cost, easy, and healthy if canned in juice or light syrup. Examples of unsweetened applesauce include Mott’s Natural Style and Mott’s Healthy Harvest line. Dole and Del Monte offer a variety of single-serve fruit bowls.

Dried Fruit - Try raisins, apricots, apples, cranberries, pineapple, papaya, and others with little or no added sugars.

Frozen Fruit – Try freezing grapes or buy frozen blueberries, strawberries, peaches, mangoes, and melon.
**Fruit Leathers** – Some brands of fruit snacks are more like candy than fruit, and should be avoided due to their high content of added sugars and lack of fruit. Brands to *avoid* include Fruit Rollups, Farley’s Fruit Snacks, Sunkist Fruit Gems, Starburst Fruit Chews, Mamba Fruit Chews, Jolly Rancher Fruit Chews, Original Fruit Skittles, and Amazin’ Fruit Gummy Bears. Try Natural Value Fruit Leathers and Stretch Island Fruit Leathers, which come in a variety of flavors and don’t have added sugars.

**Fruit Salad** – Get kids to help make a fruit salad. Use a variety of colored fruits to add to the appeal.

**Popsicles** – Most so-called “fruit” popsicles have added sugars and should be reserved for an occasional treat. Look for popsicles made from 100% fruit juice with no added caloric sweeteners, such as Breyers or Dole “No Sugar Added” fruit bars.

**Smoothies** – Blend fruit with juice, yogurt or milk, and ice. Many store-made smoothies have added sugars and are not healthy choices.

**Deliveries** – Deliveries of fresh fruit or platters of cut-up fruit are a convenient option offered by some local grocery stores.

**Vegetables can be served raw with dip or salad dressing:**

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Cucumber
- Snap Peas
- String Beans
- Yellow Summer Squash slices
- Carrot sticks or Baby Carrots
- Celery Sticks
- Peppers (green, red, or yellow)
- Snow Peas
- Tomato slices or grape or cherry
- Zucchini slices

**Dips** – Try low-fat salad dressings, like fat-free Ranch or Thousand Island, store-bought light dips, bean dips, guacamole, hummus (which comes in dozens of flavors), salsa, or peanut butter.

**Salad** – Make a salad or set out veggies like a salad bar and let the kids build their own salads.

**Soy - Edamame** (pronounced “eh-dah-MAH-may”) are fun to eat and easy to serve. (Heat frozen edamame in the microwave for about 2-3 minutes).

**Veggie Pockets** – Cut whole wheat pitas in half and let kids add veggies with dressing or hummus.

**Ants on a Log** – Let kids spread peanut butter on celery (with a plastic knife) and add raisins.

**Healthy Grains (bread, crackers, cereals, etc.)** Though most kids eat plenty of grain products, too many of those grains are cookies, snack cakes, sugary cereals, Rice Krispy treats, and other refined grains that are high in sugars or fat. Try to serve mostly whole grains, which provide more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. In addition, try to keep the added sugars to less than 35% by weight1,2 and the saturated and trans fat low (i.e., less than 10% of calories, or about one gram or less per serving).

**Note:** Cookies, snack cakes, and chips should be saved for occasional treats, given their poor nutritional quality.

1) If a food manufacturer fails to provide the *added* sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from *total* sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from *added* sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.

2) To calculate % sugars by weight for a food item, look at the Nutrition Facts label and divide the grams of sugars by the gram weight of one serving of the product and multiply this number by 100.

**Whole Wheat English Muffins, Pita, or Tortillas** – Stuff them with veggies or dip them in hummus or bean dip.

**Breakfast Cereal** – Either dry or with low-fat milk, whole grain cereals like Cheerios, Grape-Nuts, Raisin Bran, Frosted Mini Wheats, and Wheaties make good snacks. Look for cereals with no more than 35% added sugars by weight1 (or roughly 8 grams of sugar per serving).

**Crackers** – Whole-grain crackers like Triscuits, which come in different flavors or thin crisps (or similar woven wheat crackers), Kalvi Rye crackers, or whole wheat Matzos can be served alone or with toppings, like low-fat cheese, peanut butter, or low-fat, reduced-sodium luncheon meat.

**Rice Cakes** - Look for rice cakes made from brown (whole grain) rice. They come in many flavors, and can be served with or without toppings.

**Popcorn** – Look for low-fat popcorn in a bag or microwave popcorn. Or you can air pop the popcorn and
season it, e.g., by spraying it with vegetable oil spray and adding parmesan cheese, garlic powder, or other non-salt spices.

**Baked Tortilla Chips** - Baked tortilla chips are usually low in fat, and taste great with salsa and/or bean dip. Look for brands with less sodium.

**Granola and Cereal Bars** - Look for whole grain granola bars that are low in fat and sugars, like Barbara’s Granola Bars (cinnamon raisin, oats and honey, and carob chip flavors), Nature Valley Crunchy Granola Bars (cinnamon, oats ‘n honey, maple brown sugar), Nature Valley Chewy Trail Mix Bars (fruit flavor), and Quaker Chewy Granola Bar (chocolate chunk flavor).

**Pretzels, Breadsticks, and Flatbreads** - These low-fat items can be offered as snacks now and then. However, most of these snacks are not whole grain and most pretzels are high in salt.

**WARNING**: A small but growing number of kids have severe peanut and/or tree nut allergies. Before bringing in peanuts, peanut butter, or other nuts as a snack, check to make sure none of the children has an allergy. **NOTE** - ECDC is a nut free school due to children’s allergies.

**Low-Fat Dairy Foods** - Dairy foods are a great source of calcium, which can help to build strong bones. However, dairy products also are the biggest sources of artery-clogging saturated fat in kids’ diets. To protect children’s bones and hearts, make sure all dairy foods served are low-fat or fat-free.

**Yogurt** – Look for brands that are low-fat or fat-free, moderate in sugars (no more than about 30 grams of sugars in a 6-oz. cup), and high in calcium (at least 25% of daily value [DV] for calcium in a 6-oz. cup). Examples include Danimals Drinkable Low-Fat Yogurt, Go-Gurt by Yoplait, or cups of low-fat or non-fat yogurt from Stonyfield Farm, Dannon, Horizon, and similar store brands. Low-fat or non-fat yogurt also can be served with fresh or frozen fruit or low-fat granola.

**Low-Fat Cheese** - Cheese provides calcium, but often its saturated fat price tag is too high. Cheese is the number two source of heart-damaging saturated fat in children’s diets. Even with low-fat and reduced-fat cheese, be sure to serve with other foods like fruit, vegetables, or whole grain crackers. Choose reduced-fat cheeses like Trader Joe’s Armenian Style Braided; Borden or Sargento Light Mozzarella string cheese; Frigo Light Cheese Heads; Kraft Twist-Ums; Polly-O Twisterellas; the Laughing Cow’s Light Original Mini Babybel; or Cabot 50% Light Vermont Cheddar.

**Low-Fat Pudding and Frozen Yogurt** - Low-fat or fat-free pudding and frozen yogurt should be served only as occasional treats, because they are high in added sugars.

For more information, contact Dr. Margo Wootan or Joy Johanson at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 300; Washington, DC 20009.
Phone: 202-777-8351, Fax: 202-265-4954, E-mail: jjohanson@cspinet.org
Please Don’t Go!
Separation Anxiety and Children

It is often hard for a parent or other loved one to leave a young child who cries and clings. The child is experiencing separation anxiety. Children may not understand when loved ones will be back. These situations can be upsetting to the loved ones who have to leave—as well as to the child. Here are some things to remember about separation anxiety.

A little separation anxiety is normal. The child’s behavior can be a positive sign. It shows that he recognizes and has formed important attachments with loved ones. (A child who never shows distress at a parent’s leaving or never shows a preference for one caregiver over another may be a greater cause for concern.)

Anxiety tends to follow a predictable pattern. Fear of less familiar people and places often begins when a child is about 8 months old, although it can begin as early as 5 months of age. Separation anxiety usually peaks between 10 and 18 months and fades by the age of 2 years. This anxiety may become greater at any age or may return in an older child when there is a change in environment or when other changes occur, such as the birth of a new baby in the family.

You can help make partings easier for your child.
• Stay with her/him until she becomes familiar with a new place or person.
• Tell her calmly you know she doesn’t want you to leave. Reassure her you will be back.
• Tell her Mommy or Daddy will be back after naptime or at dinnertime, even if she can’t tell time. Be sure to keep your word.
• Let her have her favorite blanket or other “lovie” for comfort. Some children like one of Mom’s sweaters or another familiar possession they can keep until you return.
• Avoid leaving your child when she is hungry, tired, or sick.
• Never tease or scold her for her upset feelings.
• Never sneak away without telling her at all.
• Don’t bribe her not to cry.

Your stress level can contribute to separation anxiety. Your anxiety about child care arrangements or guilt about leaving may add to your child’s distress. Be sure to make arrangements for child care that you feel confident about. And remember, some time spent apart can be good for you both. Sometimes, it may be more than separation anxiety. Consider other possible sources of stress in your child’s life or consider an alternative child care arrangement for
• a child who continues to be inconsolable in a new child care or other setting for more than 2 weeks; or
• a child who stops eating or sleeping well, refuses to interact with others, and has an ongoing change in behavior.
For related Web resources, see “Please Don’t Go! Separation Anxiety and Children” at http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm.