



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA

**VUCUREVICH CHILDREN'S CENTER**

**Center Handbook**

**414 East Clark Street**

**Vermillion, SD 57069**

**Mathida Geppert Infant/Toddler Program**

**Bill and Bob Matousek Preschool Program**

**(605) 677-6880**

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## **Welcome**

The staff members at USD Vucurevich Children's Center on the campus of the University of South Dakota, would like to welcome you to our child care facility. The Center's staff members are dedicated professionals who provide a quality early childhood learning environment where each child can develop at an individual rate to his or her fullest potential.

The purpose of this hand book is to inform you of our philosophy, policies, and procedures. If you have any questions, please speak with any of the staff members.

If possible, please visit the Center with your child before he or she begins. Feel free to stay with your child for a few extra minutes during the first few days to assure your child is familiar with the Center, teachers, and other children. Parents are welcome at the Center at any time as visitors or participants.

The staff members are pleased your child will be attending the Center. We look forward to sharing your child's early education years.

# **USD Children's Center Mission Statement**

The USD Vucurevich Children's Center strives to promote the continuous well-being of the children it serves by providing a quality learning experience in a child-centered environment.

## **Goals**

### **Children:**

- Provide an educational program meeting the needs of each child with concern for their specific interests and talents
- Create an environment promoting discovery, divergent thinking, continual growth in abilities, and positive self image
- Offer opportunities for children to grow and develop through exploration and experimentation with various learning materials and activities
- Provide a nurturing environment where social competencies can be learned
- Celebrate diversity among children, student staff and full-time staff members fostering cultural awareness

### **Parents:**

- Promote open communication between families and caregivers
- Cooperate with and assist parents in understanding the development of young children
- Welcome parent involvement and interaction with children throughout the day
- Provide written and verbal communication with parents regarding the social and academic

## **Goals Continued**

### **Students:**

- Support the personal and professional growth of USD students
- Promote USD student involvement in the Center
- Help USD students gain knowledge of children, of themselves in relation to children, and to gain a higher level of competency working with young children

## **Requirements of Staff Members**

The Department of Social Services requires staff members and volunteers of licensed facilities to have specific qualifications as well as disclosure of criminal background checks. Staff members must be 18 years of age to be employed by the University of South Dakota and under direct supervision of Director. Staff members and long term volunteers must undergo a Criminal Background Check and a Sex Offender Registry screen. A staff member or volunteer is exempt from employment if background screenings show evidence of substantiated report of child abuse or neglect, a conviction of a felony in the past five years, or if person has committed a sex offense, a crime of violence or a crime against a child.

The Center Program Planner and Director must be at least 18 years of age, may not have on record a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect, and must meet degree requirements to fulfill the position responsibilities.

Staff members and volunteers undergo training from the Director on the Center's policies and procedures. State required orientation is also completed with-in the 90 days of employment. Staff member training is also supported by the teaching staff members in the individual classrooms. All staff members are required to complete a minimum amount of training hours per year. All staff members are CPR and First Aid Certified.

## Curriculum

The USD Vucurevich Children's Center follows the guidelines presented in the publications: The Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers, The Second Step Social/Emotional Curriculum for Preschoolers, The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, and The SD Early Learning Guidelines. Examples of the curriculum focused in these references are available to you at any time.

- Young children learn through active play. Play is the most complete of all educational processes and is the work of childhood. Play is the means by which children learn, explore, and understand the world all while experiencing great pleasure.
- Concepts are developed, along with a background of information, as teachers plan activities, which capitalize on children's innate curiosity and interest.
- In an environment of play, children begin to take their first steps in the mental operation of symbolic thought. Children will test new ideas and practice new skills.
- Concrete, hands-on, manipulation of objects is the best way for children to learn about their environment and their relationship with the everyday world.
- Young children learn through their senses; through opportunities to touch, taste, hear and see, children can explore and understand their world.
- Young children learn through talking with other children; through language, children attend to aspects of the experience, reflect on them, and express them in some way.
- Children depend on routine for comfort and predictability in the passage of their day. When young children feel secure, they can then gain independence and self-confidence within their environment.

## **Programs**

The USD Vucurevich Children's Center houses the following programs:

**THE MATHILDA GEPPERT INFANT PROGRAM  
THE MATHILDA GEPPERT TODDLER PROGRAM  
THE BILL AND BOB MATOUSEK PRESCHOOL**

The USD Vucurevich Children's Center strives to provide the highest quality early childhood programs building a strong foundation for lifelong learning. The Center serves children at least six weeks of age through five years. The programs are taught by qualified teaching staff members who are supported by University student childcare assistants. Children learn mostly through their senses. There are a variety of developmentally appropriate materials and activities in each program for children to look at, experience, experiment with, and discover to enhance this learning through the senses. The teaching staff members in each classroom also promote the language development of children by interacting with them through conversations, books, music, and activities.

## **The Mathilda Geppert Infant Program**

The Center's Infant Program serves 10 – 12 infants 6 weeks to 14 months of age. The infants attending the Center are cared for by a well-trained staff members at ratios well within the state guidelines.

The Center's Infant program has been carefully designed to foster the development of basic trust in an atmosphere of unconditional love. Caregivers identify each infant's needs, creating flexible routines to reinforce the natural rhythmic patterns of the child's day. We honor parent's choices and work hard to mirror preferences already established at home. Every day when you bring your infant, you will be asked to fill out a "Daily Information Sheet". This sheet will be returned to you at the end of the day with a record of the day's activities. This is completed to ensure the continuity of care between home and the Center.

Learning, leading to independence, will occur when infants participate in daily routines. This learning is affected by the quality of communication between caregiver and infant. Toys, activities, and books are chosen to meet the developmental needs of infants through the different stages of infancy.

## **The Mathilda Geppert Toddler Program**

The Center's Toddler Program is designed to accommodate 30 children between the ages of 14 months and 40 months. The Toddler Program is housed in three classrooms, has approximately 10 children enrolled in each room.

The Center's Toddler Program is designed around the growing child; child directed and child centered. Children are presented with a free choice of activities in an environment in which options are presented at the child's developmental level. The choices offered in each classroom encourage children to discover, master skills, and promote use of language. This approach encourages the development of self-confidence and independence. Rooms include areas for housekeeping, dramatic and social play, as well as a variety of table and floor activities. These activities include sensory play, books, blocks, toys, puzzles, music, outside play, and a variety of art media for experimentation.

Special care is placed on modeling social awareness and to acknowledge and respect emotions. At the Center, toddler-aged children learn to make new friends and begin to recognize themselves as an individual person.

## **Bill And Bob Matousek Preschool**

The Center's Preschool Program is designed to meet the needs of 20 children between the ages of 3 years and 5 years of age. Based on weekly themes, each day's schedule includes self-selected activities, large and small group activities, learning centers, and outdoor time. Children participate in small and gross motor activities, explore sensory activities, discover the world of books and dramatic play, create with blocks, and manipulatives. The curriculum includes art, music and movement, basic science, social studies and mathematics. Specific attention is given to the development of basic reading and language skills.

## **Bill And Bob Matousek Preschool Continued**

The Center's Preschool Program aims to meet each child at their particular developmental level and to challenge children to move forward with support, encouragement and praise. By employing teaching strategies and methods, the Preschool teaching staff members empower the development of the whole child in a safe and caring environment. The teaching staff members also promote character building through kindness, teamwork, the careful building of individual self-esteem and confidence, along with tolerance and understanding.

The Center's Preschool Program encourages community within each child, developing critical thinking and dialog in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of the world and each other in the world. The preschool teaching staff cultivates the child's ability to stand up for oneself and others in the face of bias and to act as change makers in society.

The Center's Preschool Program partners with the USD Head Start Program. Through this partnership, some services available include teaching staff members with degree requirements, CLASS assessments to enhance a positive teacher child relationship, mental health services, kindergarten readiness standards, ongoing training for teaching staff members, health and safety activities, Second Step Social Emotional Curriculum, and individual learning goals for each child.

## **Preparing the Way**

Preparing your child for their first experience in an early childhood setting can be an enjoyable experience for both you and your child. Here are a few suggestions:

- Visit the Center before you plan to have your child begin the program so they can get acquainted with the teacher and physical surroundings
- Discuss with your child the types of activities in which they will be participating
- Show enthusiasm and interest for the school in a casual way as to not cause any anxiety
- Share the activities of marking clothing and selecting a blanket with your child
- Discuss with your child the time you will return (i.e. before nap, after lunch, etc.)

### **Leaving for the First Time**

- Do not make promises to your child you may not be able to keep
- Do not let your child see that you are upset or concerned. Your child will quickly pick up on your feelings and this may influence their day
- Project confidence in your child and trust in your choice of center
- Do not promise a reward at the end of the day for a good report. This puts entirely too much pressure on your child
- Do not tell your child you are going to stay and then sneak out when they are busy and not looking. Your child will notice this and feelings of abandonment may surface
- At the end of the day, talk with your child about how happy you are to see them and that you missed them

## **Drop Off and Pick Up**

- Please do not block the exit or entrance of another vehicle in the parking lot
- Do not leave your vehicle running when you run inside to pick up your child
- No children should be left in cars outside the Center while you run to pick up a sibling
- An adult must accompany children as they enter and exit the building
- If another adult will be picking up your child, you must notify the Center. The name of the person picking up the child must be on the “Pick up Release Form” and staff members will ask for a picture identification card when they arrive. You will be called by Center staff if you have not informed of another individual picking up your child.
- We will not accept “messages” from a child
- Sign your child in or out and make certain the teacher knows your child is there or that your child is leaving

## **Licensure**

The Center is licensed through the State of South Dakota, Department of Social Services (DSS). All requirements mandated by DSS must be met in order to maintain the licensing status. If changes to existing services which may affect the ability to comply with licensing rules, these changes must be reported to DSS. These items are but not limited to the following: change of program location, change to the building through renovations or remodeling, change in Director, suspected in house child abuse or neglect, change of ownership, and employee felony convictions while employed with the Center.

## **General Information**

### **Center Hours**

- Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM.
- The Center is open 12 months a year with the exception of the week from Christmas Day to New Year’s Day.

## **General Information Continued**

### **Closing of Center**

- In case of severe weather conditions, please check your email. Any Center late openings or early closings will be announced via email notification.
- The Center will be closed for cleaning from Christmas Day through New Year's day. The Center will also be closed and parents will not be charged for all University Holidays: Labor Day, Native American Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day and other Administrative Holidays granted by the Governor.

### **Notification of Absence**

- Please notify the Center before 9 AM when your child will be absent.

### **Waiting List**

- Children on the Center's waiting list are accepted as openings occur. Children of University of South Dakota Students have priority over non-student parents. A sibling of a child currently enrolled in services will be offered a placement when one becomes available. The opening will only be held until the child is three months old. If a family chooses to not enroll the child at three months, the Reservation Fee goes into effect to hold the spot for three months or the child will be placed back on the Center wait list. Reservation Fees are non-refundable.

### **Smoking**

- There is a no smoking ban on the University of South Dakota Campus. No smoking on the Center property is allowed.

### **Conferences—Parent Teacher**

- The Preschool will have conferences in the Fall and in the Spring. In all classrooms, we will be pleased to have conferences about your child upon your request. We are always interested in your comments and suggestions to improve the Center.

## **General Information Continued**

### **Items available daily at Center**

- Each classroom has specific lists for items that you will need to have available to Center staff members while they are caring for your children. These items will be specifically listed with your contract when enrolling your child in the Center or listed in a letter when your child is transitioning into the next classroom. It is the parent's responsibility to replace these items on a regular basis. It is also your responsibility to launder your child's nap blanket the last day of the week they attend the Center and to return the first day of the week they attend the Center.
- Items your child should NOT bring to the Center include but are not limited to: toys (except if it is share day), weapons or violent toys, food, candy, gum, or money.
- All items that are your child's should be marked with your child's name.

### **Communication**

- Daily communication sheets are completed by the infant and toddler classrooms to ensure the connection between home and the Center.
- A monthly newsletter from the Director is emailed to all families.
- Notices are placed in your child's cubby as well as in the front office and in the classrooms on a regular basis to inform you of special events, notes about services, changes to services, parent meetings, trainings, etc. You are responsible for assuring that you check daily for this type of communication.
- Communication from the Director and the Secretary is primarily sent through email and/or posted in the front office. If you are unable to access email, please inform the Center of the best method of communication for your family.

## **General Information Continued**

### **Physical Activity and Play**

- Every classroom does some type of outdoor play. Weather appropriate clothing should be brought for your child daily. In the Winter: coats, hats, gloves, snow pants and snow boots for most classrooms and in the Summer: hats and sun-screen. All children will participate in outdoor play. A doctor's note will be needed if your child is unable to participate in outdoor play due to a medical condition. Weather Guidelines for outdoor play are followed when determining safe outdoor conditions.
- The Center will provide children with safe indoor and outdoor free play and structured physical activities. The activities will be age specific and include both fine and gross motor skills. We provide regular education and training opportunities to staff and parents to maintain the culture of a healthy lifestyle.

### **Parent Partnership Program**

- The Parent Partnership Program (P3) is designed to encourage collaboration between parents/guardians and the Center through constant communication of goal setting and program enhancement by creating a family-school partnership atmosphere. The basis for this effort is fostered from the understanding that the more involved parents become in their children's education, the higher academic and developmental success as they grow and learn. A semi-monthly P3 meeting is structured to allow a venue for parents/guardians, teachers, and the Center Director to discuss upcoming programs, events, and areas for improvement in regards to the children's well-being and education. Meetings will be parent directed with the assistance of the Director and will be held at a time determined best by parents. Childcare will be provided at this time at no cost. Agendas and meeting minutes will be distributed to all families at the Center to encourage involvement. Attendance at the meetings is voluntary, but encouraged by parents, guardians, community members, or any interested parties.

## Registration

The following are forms, records, and releases that must be placed on file before a child can be left in the care of the Center in accordance with licensing regulations.

- **Registration Form:** This form contains family information, the child's medical history, permission forms (Field Trips-in town only, Permission to Observe, Use of Image, Medical Treatment, and Parents or Guardians Agreement of Waiver of Liability, Indemnification, and Medical Release), Medical Management Plan for children with diagnosed allergies, and Parent Responsibility List
- **Emergency Contact Card:** This card contains Emergency Contacts, Authorized Pick Up, Unauthorized Pick Up/Release, and Emergency Information (known allergies, choice of doctor and dentist, medications taken regularly). A copy of this card is kept in the office as well as the child's classroom. It is your responsibility to inform the Center of changes that need to be made to my address, phone numbers, emergency information, income, or family situation.
- **Immunization Records:** Current immunizations must be kept on file before a child begins in the Center's care. It is then the responsibility of the Parent to assure current immunization records are given to the center when immunizations are administered to the child.
- **Fees:** Registration Fee (one time), Insurance Fee (at time of registration and then yearly in July), and Supply Fee (once per semester) - Registration Fees are due before your child starts at the Center and are non-refundable
- **Contract:** Signed contract of times your child will be at the Center for care which also includes the supplies you will need for the individual classroom (diapers, wipes, blanket, extra clothing including socks, etc.)
- **CACFP Form:** The Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program to provide healthy meals.

## Contracts

- **New Contracts:** Contracts will be updated for the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.
- **Minimum:** There is a minimum of a four-hour block each day that services are needed. All contracts have the current minimum tuition listed on the Rates section of the contract. The hours of this minimum vary by classroom and family situation.
- **Contract Changes:** Contracts may be changed once during a semester without a fee. A two week notice may be needed for scheduling purposes or if less than a two week notice, effective date of change will be up to the discretion of the Director. After first change of contract, there is a **\$10.00** fee for each additional change to a contract.
- **Cancellation of Contract:** A two week written notice must be placed on file in the office in order to prematurely end this contract. Full tuition will be charged through the two week notice and the contracted hours may not be reduced during this period. The Center reserves the right to change or cancel any contract with a two week written notice.
- **Delinquent Accounts:** All childcare accounts must be paid in full at the end of each semester. A new contract will not take effect until the past due balance is paid. It will be at the discretion of the Director if a payment plan will be developed. The University of South Dakota Business Office will be notified of any unpaid student-parent accounts, and a hold will be placed on your account. If you are not a registered student, your paycheck may be garnished or the account may be sent to an outside collection agency.
- **Unscheduled Hours:** The Director or the Director's designee must approve any additional hours above the scheduled hours listed on the contract. These hours are not guaranteed and depend on availability of space. Regular rates will be charged for any additional unpredicted child care you may need for your child. Parents are required to contact the Center to make arrangements ahead of time.

## Contracts Continued

- **Hours beyond contracted time:** Time over five minutes that your child is in the Center's care beyond contracted time will be billed in 15 minute increments. If consistent late pick up or early drop off occurs, the Director will speak to the family about changing the contract to the actual time the child is in the Center's care. The time will be measured by the Time Manager system.
- **Center Closings:** Permanent staff members are paid when child is sick or on vacation. There will be a full charge for these days. When there are emergency closing or inclement weather, there may be a full or partial charge. The Center will be closed and parents will **not** be charged for all the University Holidays. These include: Labor Day, Native American Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and other administrative holidays granted by the Governor. The Center will also be closed and parents will **not** be charged for periodic maintenance on the days between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, then again a day in the spring semester for a staff member in-service. In most circumstances, parent will be notified of these closings at least two weeks before the closing.
- **Child Care Assistance:** The state Child Care Assistance rates may not cover all child care expenses in full. Eligible parents are required to pay the difference at the end of each month.

## Fees

- **Child Care Bills:** Child care bills can be paid on a weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly basis. All overpayments will be credited to your account. Child care bills are printed on or around the third Friday of the month and are placed in your child's cubby.
- **When a child is picked up late at the end of the day:** An automatic **\$25.00** late pick up fee will be charged if your child is picked up past 5:30 PM and will be added to your next bill. The Center staff members will call you when you are five minutes late. If the Center is unable to reach you, your emergency contacts will be called. If by 6:00 PM none of your emergency contacts are available, The University Public Safety or Child Protective Services will be notified to take custody of your child.
- **Supply Fees:** A supply fee will be charged to your account Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. The rate of this fee will be stated on each contract.
- **Insurance Fee:** An Accidental Insurance Fee is charged to your account every September. The rate of this fee will be stated on each contract.
- **Tax Summary Statement:** There will be no fee for the Center to print the first copy of the Tax Summary Statement in January. There will be a \$5.00 charge for each additional copy requested. The Tax Summary will be placed in your child's cubby on or around the last Friday of January each year. If you cancel services with the Center before the end of the tax year, it is your responsibility to contact the Center to receive your tax statement.
- **Reservation Fee:** If your child is absent from the Center for an extended period such as May to August or over 30 days, a reservation fee is required to hold your child's spot. A Leave of Absence and Reservation Form must be complete as well as Reservation Fees collected. A reservation time period can be in place for 90 days and then your child will go back on the waitlist if they do not return for services. Rates will be prorated for partial months of service. Please refer to the Leave of Absence and Reservation Form for current rates. Reservation fees are non-refundable.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Confidentiality**

- Confidentiality implies trust. All information about children and families is confidential. Please keep the staff members informed of the events in your child's life, special fears, or other information which may affect your child's day at the Center.

### **Non-Discrimination**

- The Center welcomes families from all ethnic, racial, religious, and national backgrounds. The Center does not discriminate based on background, race, creed, or gender. Children that may need accommodations are welcome at the Center. The Center staff members are committed to doing their best to meet each child's individual needs. The Center meets ADA standards for accessibility. If your child needs accommodations, we will create a plan with you and your physician to best fit the needs of your child.

### **Discipline**

- Discipline at the Center shall be to provide positive guidance, redirection, and setting of clear limits while helping children to develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others. No physical, harsh, humiliating, or frightening form of punishment is ever acceptable. Discipline is appropriate for the age of the child and the situation. Discipline is the responsibility of the staff member and not of children. If a child has consistent disruptive or damaging behavior, the Center staff members and the parents will work together to develop a behavior plan to assist the child in the routines of the classroom. If the disruptive behavior continues despite efforts through the plan, the Center may dismiss the child from services. This decision is under the discretion of the Director. This policy is enforced without regard to race, sex, or creed and ensures all children attending the Center will have a safe and positive atmosphere in which to grow and develop.

## **Policies and Procedures Continued**

### **Child Abuse/Neglect**

- All staff members and volunteers of the Center are required to read and sign a statement which defines child abuse and neglect and outlines the staff member's responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according to state law. Each staff member is required to report any suspected incidents of abuse or neglect immediately to the Director or the Director's designee. The Director will then report or assist the staff member in reporting the allegation to the Department of Social Services. In the case of in-house allegations of abuse or neglect by a staff member of the Center, the Director will immediately investigate, report to the Department of Social Services, and maintain documentation of the incident. If needed, the incident may also be investigated by Human Resources and/or the University of South Dakota's Public Safety Department. If just cause is established, the person(s) suspected of abuse or neglect will be immediately suspended or terminated from their employment at the Center.

### **Field Trips**

- The Preschool Program engages in special activities and field trips in the Vermillion Community away from the Center. A Field Trip Permission Slip and Parent or Guardians Agreement of Waiver of Liability, Indemnification, and Medical Release Form must be signed by the parent or guardian in order for your preschooler to participate in these trips which is included in the Center Registration Form. Your child's car seat must be left at the Center the day of the field trip in order for your child to ride in the University vans. If field trips are taken outside of Vermillion city limits, a special permission form with all of the details of the trip must be signed by the parent or guardian in order for your child to participate.

## **Policies and Procedures Continued**

### **Cloth Diaper Policy**

- The Center allows for the use of cloth diapers that have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of urine and feces. Parents must provide a wet bag for used diapers to be disposed in. Staff members will not remove any waste or rinse cloth diapers due to sanitation issues. Parents will need to take soiled diapers home daily and be responsible for washing them.

### **Swimming Pool Policy**

- When the weather permits, the Center staff members will take the Preschool children to the Vermillion wading pool in the summer. No child will be taken to the pool until the Center has a signed permission slip on file. Parent's are responsible for supplying the necessary items such as a swimming suit, sunscreen, towel, swim diaper and plastic pants (if needed), and car seat. Children should not be given money to take to the pool.

### **Emergency Contacts/Authorized/Unauthorized Pick Up/Custody**

- The Center requests that you allow for names and contact numbers of at least three individuals to be provided to act as your emergency contacts, in the event that you are unable to be reached by the Center staff members.
- The Center requests the names of at least three people who may pick up your child if you are unexpectedly detained. You are responsible for notifying the Center if an individual other than yourself is picking up or dropping off your child. The Center requires the individuals to see an identity document if the person picking up your child is unknown to the staff members.
- The Center's policy is to share information and access to a child with respect to the rights of both parents. If there is legal documentation (i.e. legal custody papers, current restraining order of sole custody decree) limiting contact with a child, copies of these documents need to be provided to the Center. The Center requires the names and photographs of individuals that may not pick up your child at any time or under any circumstances.
- All of the above information will be included on your child's current Emergency Card and you will be responsible to notify the Center of updates that may be needed.

## Policies and Procedures Continued

### Use of Image

- The Center staff members periodically take photographs which are typically used for displaying in the Center, for news reports, advertising, publicity on brochures, and the University of South Dakota website. A Use of Image Permission Form will need to be on file in order for the Center to have permission to use these photos.

### Permission to Observe

- The Center is conducted under the auspices of the University of South Dakota and as such provides an opportunity for USD students to have supervised observation of and contact with young children. It is required by the Center that A Permission to Observe agreement concerning student observations be signed by the parents or the guardians. Volunteers of the Center sign in at the front desk and wear a badge to identify themselves as volunteers. Volunteers are not left alone with the children without parental consent. Individual testing, developmental testing, etc. will require parental consent.

### Emergency Policies

- **Emergency Evacuation** In the event of a threat to the Center or a long term evacuation of the Center due to a fire, gas leak, etc., the children and staff members of the Center will seek shelter at the USD Wellness Center. The Director or Director's designee will call for assistance with transportation from the USD Public Safety Department to relocate the children. Parents will be notified of the evacuation and instructions to pick up your child at the Wellness Center via radio at 106.3 FM. Parents will also be notified via phone after children and staff members have been taken to safety. For the safety of your child, the Center staff asks you to pick up your child as soon as you become aware of the situation. The Center's staff members and children are required to participate in practice emergency evacuation drills/fire drills four times per year. Posted visual emergency evacuation plans and written evacuation plans are located in each classroom. Staff members are trained annually on these plans.

## Policies and Procedures Continued

### Emergency Plans Continued

- **Tornado** In the event of severe weather or conditions that could result in a tornado, children and staff members follow a written plan to seek shelter in the bathrooms of the Center. Written emergency plans are located in each classroom and staff members are trained annually on these plans. The Center's children and staff members are required to complete a tornado drill once per year.

### Nutrition

- **Meals** In accordance with Federal law and the US Department of Agriculture policy, the Center is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. When you enroll your child at the Center and at the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete a Federal Food Program form. Parents are requested to complete a confidential income statement, civil rights data, and to sign the form. The Center is reimbursed from the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for each meal served. To be eligible for the program, the Center agrees to provide children with a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snack according to federal food guidelines.
- **Toddlers and Preschooler Meal** requirements are Breakfast - milk, fruit, and grain; Lunch - milk, protein, vegetable, fruit, and grain; and Afternoon Snack - milk/juice, fruit, and grain. All meals are served Family Style which means children are encouraged when developmentally appropriate to serve themselves. Children are encouraged to taste each food served, but they are not forced to eat items they do not like. Meal service times are stated on fall, spring, and summer contracts.

## Policies and Procedures Continued

### Nutrition Continued

- **Infant Meals** As part of the CACFP program, the Center is required to offer at least one type of iron-fortified infant formula for infants under 12 months enrolled at the Center. Parents may choose to use the formula provided by the Center or you can supply your own formula. Formula supplied by parents must have the child's name labeled on the formula. The Center is happy to accommodate mothers who are breastfeeding. Please feel free to come into the Center to breastfeed your baby. If your child is breast fed, you may also bring in pumped milk which should be stored in leak proof containers, labeled with your child's name, how many ounces, and date. Infants are held when bottles are feed to them by the Center staff members. Solid foods are also provided by the Center. The order in which these solid foods will be made available is listed on the Meal Pattern for Infants form which will be given to you by the infant teacher upon enrollment or when your infant is developmentally ready. Infants are at different stages of being introduced to new foods and tend to have very personal preferences. It is our policy to not serve new foods before they have been introduced at home. The decision to introduce new foods will always be left with the parents. Infants are feed in high chairs or at a small table when developmentally appropriate. No outside food is allowed in the Center due to allergies.
- **Special Dietary Needs** The Center accommodates special dietary needs your child may have. A Medical Management Plan for Children with Documented Allergies form must be completed and signed by a physician before the Center is able to accommodate special dietary needs. Outside food is not allowed for children 1 year of age and older at the Center to assure children with allergies remain safe. Accommodations to classroom activities are also made to include special dietary needs. Vegetarian meals can be arranged.

## Policies and Procedures Continued

### Health Policies

- **Immunization Records** A copy of your child's immunization records or a signed statement written by a licensed physician, physician's assistant, certified nurse practitioner, or community health nurse showing that your child meets the minimum immunization requirements as recommended by the Department of Health must be on file for your child to start attending the Center. Once your child is enrolled in the Center, it is the parent's responsibility to release current immunization records to the Center to ensure child's immunization records are kept up to date. A child is exempt from meeting the age-specific immunization requirements if the parent has certification from a licensed physician that immunizations may endanger child's life or health. A child maybe also be exempt if a parent or guardian has signed an Immunization Affidavit Certification of Objection to Immunization due to cultural beliefs or religious teachings that are opposed to immunizations.
- **Medical Emergency** Parents or guardians are required to sign a Parents or Guardians Agreement of Waiver of Liability, Indemnification, and Medical Release and Medical Treatment permission at the time of your child's enrollment. The release and permission forms allow staff members of the Center to assist your child in case of an injury, accident, or illness while your child is in the care of the Center. In the case of an emergency, Center staff members will seek medical emergency services, transport your child to the hospital emergency room, etc. The Center staff members will notify parents or emergency contacts immediately of emergency actions. Parents are responsible for any financial costs incurred for services rendered by the hospital, health care professionals, or ambulance personal.

## **Health Policies and Procedures Continued**

- **Medical History Form** Parents are asked to complete a Medical History Form upon enrollment of your child to assist the Center staff members to provide the best possible care for your child. It will not be used to eliminate, screen, or classify children in the program. This form includes medical conditions, chronic medical conditions, allergies, medications your child is taking, the possible side effects of these medications, and important health information about your child. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to inform the Director of medical conditions that may arise for your child to assure an appropriate health management plan is in place while your child is in the Center staff member's care.
- **Allergies** A Medical Management Plan for Children with Documented Allergies must be completed and signed by a physician to assure Center staff members are trained on the Medical Management Plan in the event your child is exposed to an allergen. Parents are responsible for getting this form complete before enrollment of your child or if your child is diagnosed with a new allergy during attendance at the Center. Parents are responsible for providing medications, providing Epi-Pens, and for financial responsibility in the event emergency medical costs are incurred while your child is in attendance at the Center. The Center Director is responsible for informing and training staff members on the Medical Management Plan for Children with Documented Allergies. Accommodations to classroom activities are also made to assure the safety of your child. A list of children with allergies is kept in each classroom as well as the kitchen so all staff members are aware of individual allergies.

## **Health Policies and Procedures Continued**

- **MEDICATION** The Center staff members will administer medication for children for whom a plan has been made and approved by the Director. Because medication poses an extra burden on staff members and having medication in the facility is a safety hazard, parents and guardians should check with the child's healthcare provider to see if a dosing schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is in care by the Center. Parents or guardians may come to administer medication to their own child during the day. Staff members may only administer medication with written parental consent. In order for staff members to administer medications, parents or guardians must fill out and sign a Medication Administration Form which includes the name of the medication and the date(s) the medication is to be administered as well as provide the administration device with clearly marked measurements. Staff will record the date, the time, the dose, and sign the medication administration form, which will be kept in the child's permanent folder. The medication should be kept in its original container, clearly labeled with the child's name. The label for prescription medications must contain legible directions for use, the expiration date, the child's name, and the physician's name. The instructions from the parent or guardian shall not conflict with the label directions as prescribed by the child's health care provider. Medications for Toddlers and Preschoolers are stored in the Director's office. Infant medications are stored on top of the refrigerator in the Infant Room kitchen. No medications should be kept in a child's cubby. It is the responsibility of the parent to give your child's medication to the Director, the Secretary, or your child's teacher. When the medication is no longer needed or a child withdraws from the program, medication will be returned to the parents or guardians or disposed of after an attempt is made to reach the parents or guardians.

## Health Policies and Procedures Continued

- **Illnesses** The spread of communicable diseases has a big impact on the health and well being of children, families, and staff members. Staff members will complete an initial health check when your child is dropped off at the Center and continue to check throughout the day. The Center believes that the best place for your child when he or she is ill is to be at home in the care of the parents. The spread of communicable diseases can be reduced by keeping children home when they are ill. Parents are requested to report any illness to the Center so we can protect the health of the other children and follow our responsibilities for reporting communicable diseases to the State Health Department. A note will be posted in the classroom when your child has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- **Exclusion Policy** Your child maybe too sick to attend or maybe sent home if your child exhibits the following symptoms:
  - Fever of 99 degrees Fahrenheit axillary or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit orally accompanied by behavior changes and other signs or symptoms of illness. Child may return when he/she has gone 24 hours without a fever, without medication
  - Signs or symptoms of a possibly severe illness (e.g., persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, lethargy)
  - Diarrhea or stools that contain blood or mucus
  - Changes from the child's usual stool pattern (increased frequency or loose/watery stools) or two loose/watery stools within 2 hours. If loose stools are not able to be contained in diaper, your child will be sent home no matter the time frame of the two loose stools. Child may return when he/she has gone 24 hours without diarrhea
  - Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours. Child may return when he/she has gone 24 hours without vomiting
  - Mouth sores with drooling
  - Rash with fever or behavior change or other symptoms of illness
  - Illness that results in a greater need of care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children

## Health Policies and Procedures Continued

- **Exclusion Policy Continued** The child has any of the following diagnoses from a health care provider (until treated and/or no longer contagious)
  - Infectious conjunctivitis/pink-eye (with white or yellow eye discharge) until 24 hours after treatment has been started
  - Roseola until rash is gone and free of fever for 24 hours without medications
  - Scabies, head lice, pin worms, or other infestations until 24 hours after treatment
  - Impetigo or ringworm until 24 hours after treatment is started
  - Strep throat or other strep infection until 24 hours after treatment started
  - Pertussis (whooping cough) until 5 days after the appropriate antibiotic therapy has been complete
  - Tuberculosis (TB) until a health care provider, concurring with the South Dakota Department of Health, state the child is not contagious
  - Chicken Pox until 6 days after the start of a rash or all sores have crusted over
  - Mumps until 9 days after the start of symptoms (swelling of cheeks)
  - Hepatitis A until 7 days after the start of illness or jaundice (if symptoms are mild)
  - Measles until 6 days after the start of a rash
  - Rubella (German Measles) until 6 days after the start of a rash
  - Oral Herpes (if child is drooling or lesions cannot be covered), until lesions are dry
  - Shingles (if lesions cannot be covered) until lesions are dry
  - Hepatitis B until child is cleared to return by health care provider
  - Meningitis (Bacterial or Viral) until child is cleared by a health care provider
  - Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease until free of fever for 24 hours without medications, no new eruptions of lesions, and lesions are crusting over
  - Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) until free of fever for 24 hours without medications
  - Influenza A until you obtain a doctor's note stating that your child is not contagious and able to return to childcare
  - E. Coli (Enterohemorrhagic) or Shigella Infection until diarrhea resolves and two stool cultures are negative

## Health Policies and Procedures Continued

- **If your child becomes ill at the Center in accordance with the Exclusion Policy**, the Center staff members will notify you immediately. The Center requests that you come as soon as possible to pick up your child. Your child will be separated as much as possible from the rest of the children to assure the health and safety of the other children. If the Center staff members are not able to contact you and have not heard from you within 20 minutes of the first call, the Center staff members will try your contact number again. If unable to get a response within 30 minutes after the first attempt, the staff members will notify the people listed on the Emergency Contact Card to assist with care of your child. It will be up to the discretion of the Director or the Director's Designee when a child needs to be temporarily excluded from the Center or when a signed health care provider's statement is needed for the child to resume services.
- **Sleep/Rest Policy** "Rest. It is what everyone needs—especially children. Rest and sleep are necessary for healthy brain functioning. The right amount of rest and sleep is needed for children's overall good health. Rest and sleep have a direct influence on many of the body's functions and helps the body to heal, grow, and stay on track. **What is the difference between rest and sleep?** Rest is defined as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquility. Sleep is defined as a natural periodic state of rest for the mind and body, in which the eyes usually close and consciousness is completely or partially lost, so that there is a decrease in bodily movement and responsiveness to external stimuli." Excerpt taken from [fit-Care Best Practice Guide and Self-Assessment](#) A collaborative program provided by the South Dakota Department of Health, South Dakota Department of Social Services, Sanford Children's and Sanford fit Initiative.

## **Policies and Procedures Continued**

- **Sleep/Rest Policy**

- **Infants** All infants will be placed on their backs to sleep. If a parent or guardian requests an infant be placed in a position other than on their backs, a physician's signed statement must be provided to the Center and all staff members trained on the prescribed sleep position. Sleeping patterns for infants will be based on the infants individual needs. Sleep sacks will be used as well as individual cribs for each child.
- **Toddlers and Preschools** All children will have a nap/rest time at the same time each day. All children are encouraged to relax/rest or sleep for the duration of the rest time. All preschool children will rest on a cot for the first 20 minutes of rest/nap time. If a preschool child has not fallen asleep after 20 minutes of the rest time, the child will be offered quiet time which will consist of a calming activity such as reading, listening to a story, etc. Quiet areas are also accessible to children throughout the day to ensure there is a place a child can go for quiet time if needed.

### **Safety Policies**

- **Locked Entrance** The Center is a locked facility. Parents and staff members are allowed entrance by an assigned code. Only people with codes and certain University personnel are able to enter the Center. In order to keep our children and families safe, visitors are required to check in with Director, Secretary, or a full time staff member. If there is a visitor at the door, parents and student staff members must tell the visitor that they are not allowed entrance until approved by a full time staff member. Visitor must wait in the entry way until a full time staff member is located. Codes are active only when children are actively enrolled in the Center.
- **Closed Circuit Television System** The University Police Department utilizes this system at the Center to monitor and record to help ensure the safety and security of the campus community. Cameras are used for security only and are not accessible to the public.