



**Marie Shaw Dunn
Child Development Center**

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center

1 Caldwell Drive Rm #116

Natchitoches, LA 71497

Family Handbook

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Welcome to the CDC!

This handbook will be used to introduce the CDC, our school mission, and expectations. Clear policies and communication are necessary for the road to success. The handbook will be used for clarity and understanding. This can also be used as a troubleshoot for all CDC questions.

Motto: We are Children Developing Curiosities

History

The center began as a nursery school in 1935, the first laboratory nursery school for a child development program in Louisiana. As needs changed, the program became the Child Development Center in 1971, coinciding with a new master's degree program in early childhood education. About the same time, it became the first in the state to offer a full-day program for children. Then in 1992, it was renamed the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center in honor of a revered faculty member and head of the Department of Home Economics, now the Department of Child and Family Studies. Dr. Dunn, the center's namesake, had initiated the child development program at NSU and established the first nursery school laboratory in Louisiana to involve college students.

A major emphasis of the program is the need to balance the needs of the children, the families, and the staff. Respecting those needs informs the decisions made daily. The current director, Faith Stanfield, continues the many traditions of the program, leading it during the many changes occurring in the early care and education field today. By using the Creative Curriculum, teachers can teach through a child-driven, emergent curriculum aligned with NAEYC standards as well as the Louisiana Early Learning and Developmental Standards. The staff also leads the center through changes in the state to upgrade and expand the availability of quality early care and education programs. By observing, conducting case studies, and participating in the child development center, students can bridge theory and practical implementation to be better prepared to work in the field of early care and education.

The center has always had a strong developmental approach, emphasizing objective and accurate observation as a key to understanding child development. Child development students kept journals of their observations as a key component of their work in the center. The many benefits of the journals were highlighted when the unfortunate death of a college student led her family to establish a fund for playground improvement after reading her journal and seeing how much the experiences at the center had meant to her and influenced her planned career.

Reggio Emilia-Inspired Philosophy

NSU Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center (NSU CDC) follows the Reggio-Emilia approach to learning and teaching. The Reggio approach is based on several characteristics, including the collaboration and engagement of the child himself; the participation of families and community in the child's learning; the role of the educator as documentaries, advocates, and co-constructors; the environment as the third educator; an emergent curriculum; the

availability of rich, open-ended materials in ateliers; and the hundred languages of children. The Reggio approach allows children to explore and discover in natural, unaltered forms. We plan hands-on learning and encourage expression and creativity in the children.

The NSU CDC offers a play-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum for children that support the learning and development of each individual child. The program at NSU CDC is highly influenced by both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines for developmentally appropriate teaching practices and the philosophy of Reggio Emilia. The following principles make up the philosophical framework of the program:

- Child-directed learning, centered on development
- Respect for everyone
- Children speak in Hundred Languages
- Curiosity of children create the curriculum
- Observation is our documentation

Educators at NSU CDC combine their understanding of how children develop socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically with what they know about each child's interests, abilities, needs, and backgrounds to plan a developmentally appropriate learning environment. The activities and interactions provided in this learning environment give children a foundation for the cognitive and social skills essential for later academic success.

Vision and Mission

Mission

The NSU CDC believes in the importance of community, an enriching learning environment, and the significance of family involvement. This is accomplished through an enriching community with partnerships within the university, community participation and delivery of high-quality early childhood programming, teacher engagement, and cutting-edge research.

Vision

To create lifelong learners and leaders who welcome all people of diverse backgrounds through the foundational social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills cultivated at the NSU CDC by a team of certified educational professionals.

School Operations

License and Certification

NSU CDC is licensed by the Louisiana Department of Education as a Type III center. For more information, you may contact the licensing division for early learning centers.

Louisiana Department of Education - Licensing

P.O. Box 4249

Baton Rouge, LA 708213

Phone: (225) 342-9905

FAX: (225) 342-2498

LDELicensing@la.gov

NSU CDC is recognized at both the state and national levels as a high-quality early learning center and meets the most robust and rigorous national standards on education, health, and safety. NSU CDC is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC accreditation means that our program demonstrates high standards in 10 program areas including relationships with children and their families, curriculum, program management, and physical environment. For more information you may view their website at www.naeyc.org.

Child : Staff Ratio

The NSU CDC attempts to maintain the following child to adult ratios.

	Department of Education	NSU CDC
<i>Ages of Children</i>	<i>Child:Staff Ratio</i>	<i>Child:Staff Ratio</i>
3 years old	13 : 1	8 : 1
4 years old	15 : 1	8 : 1

Emergency Numbers

Natchitoches Parish School Board:	(318) 352-8389
Child Development Center:	(318) 357-6860
The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline:	(800) 422-4453
National Domestic Violence Hotline:	(800)799-7233
American Family Housing:	1 (888) 600-4357
Boys and Girls Club:	(318) 352-6268
NSU Police:	(318)-357-5431
Natchitoches City Police Department:	(318) 352- 8101
Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office:	(318) 357-7840
Natchitoches Fire Department:	(318) 357-3860
Natchitoches Regional Medical Center:	(318) 238-5300
Natchitoches Parish Library:	(318) 357-3280
Natchitoches Parish Health Unit:	(318) 357- 3132
Office of Children's Service:	1 (888) 524- 3578
Poison Control:	(800) 222-1222

Hours of Operation

The CDC is open Monday-Friday from 7:15 AM to 5:30 PM.

NSU's CDC closes for the following in accordance with Natchitoches Parish School Board PreK schedule:

- Labor Day
- Parent Teacher Conference
- Fall Break
- Thanksgiving Break
- Professional Development
- Christmas/Winter Break
- Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
- Mardi Gras Holiday
- Spring Break
- Easter Break

Admission & Enrollment

Admission to the NSU CDC is open to all children, ages 3 and 4 years by September 30, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, or a disability. Enrollment at the NSU CDC shall be offered to children of NSU students, staff, faculty, LSMSA full-time faculty, alumni, and for those not affiliated with NSU.

Eligibility

Children ages 3 and 4 prior to September 30th are eligible to enroll. Children who are 5 years of age prior to September 30th are considered kindergarten eligible and may not apply for the four-year-old program.

Application

An application form must be completed online for enrollment consideration at nsula.edu/cdc. Completion of the application does not guarantee enrollment at the NSU CDC.

The CDC reserves the right to deny acceptance to a child who poses a threat to others, if the child's accommodations would pose undue hardship on the provider, or if the child's accommodations would fundamentally alter the nature of the program. Each child will be considered on an individual basis, children with exceptionalities included.

Waiting List

Due to limited availability (41 children total), a waiting list for each age group is established as outlined below:

Applications are listed in the order in which they fell in the draw, with a separate list for the priority status.

Enrollment Priority

Enrollment at the CDC is on an annual basis. *Applicants with the priority status are selected for enrollment first. Priority status is considered in the following order:*

1. A child of a CDC or NSU Laboratory School faculty member will be the first priority.
2. A child with at least one parent employed full-time at Northwestern State University (NSU) or the Louisiana School for the Math, Science, and Arts (LSMSA)
3. A child with at least one parent employed full-time at a partner of Northwestern State University (NSU) (i.e. Sodexo, NSU Bookstore, etc.)
4. A child with a sibling who currently attends the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center

**The CDC no longer holds priority status in the NSU Laboratory School yearly draw.*

Notification of an Opening

When space becomes available, a member of the NSU CDC administrative team will contact the family via phone or email to offer the opening to the family. The family will be given 24 hours to accept or decline the space.

If the offer is declined, the child will be removed from the waiting list and the opening will be offered to the next family. The family of the removed child will be notified by email that they are no longer on the waiting list.

Appendix A

Registration

Upon acceptance of an opening, the family will receive an acceptance letter including the start date of enrollment. The letter will indicate that the \$175 non-refundable registration/supply fee must be turned in to reserve the space for the child. **A non-refundable registration/supply fee will be due prior to enrollment each year of attendance during drive through enrollment.**

Required prior to enrollment each year of attendance:

- \$175 Nonrefundable Registration/Supply Fee
- Signed Handbook Agreement
- Physician's report
- Immunization record
- Enrollment packet
- Additional forms given with the packet

***If full payment of the nonrefundable registration/supply fee is not received by the due date indicated on the offer letter, a member of the NSU CDC administrative team will attempt to contact the family by phone and email. If the family is unable to be reached within 48 hours after the payment due date has passed, the space will be offered to the next family on the list, and the child's name will be removed from the waiting list. ***

Tuition

1. Tuition will be due MONTHLY in 10 installments (August -May).
2. Tuition can be paid as a one-time payment in full.
3. Accounts can be paid in the Cashier's office on campus to allow families who wish to spread out tuition payments and pay before online accounts are finalized. Northwestern will send confirmation emails to addresses listed on the PARENT/STUDENT INFORMATION FORM for online payment portals.
4. Parents can pay more than the monthly installment in advance.
5. \$1100 (20% of the total tuition) must be paid in full to the student's account by October 10th. Should this not occur, a meeting will be set to develop a payment plan with the director of the NSU Child Development Center.
6. Tuition must be current by December 1st (50% of total tuition paid) or a \$200 fee will be assessed.
7. \$3300 (60% of the total tuition) must be paid in full to the student's account by February 10th. Should this not occur, a meeting will be set to develop a payment plan with the director of the NSU Child Development Center.
8. All tuition is due in full by May 10th to maintain the student's spot for the next academic year and avoid collection proceedings.
9. No adjustments will be made for absences due to illness, holidays, extended periods of family travel, weather closures, or emergencies due to circumstances beyond control (i.e. lengthy loss of utilities. Act of God. Etc.)

Fee Payment

Annual tuition is \$5,500.00 plus a \$175.00 registration/supply fee made out to the Friends of the CDC. The NSU Student Accounts section will bill parents each month for the full amount due for the school year. The NSU CDC is a self-funded account; therefore, for a child to remain enrolled in the program, tuition payment is due by the first of each month regardless of attendance. You will receive a monthly statement in the mail, can pay online, or you may go directly to the Cashiers Office located in the Student Services Center (715 University Pkwy). Annual tuition must be paid in full by May 10. No tuition payment may be paid at the CDC. Registration/Supply fees must be made out to Friends of the CDC and given to the administrative team. If you have questions regarding tuition or the billing procedure, please contact Faith Stanfield Birdwell at (318) 357-6860 or stanfieldf@nsula.edu during the school year. NSU will **NOT** send you a “summary of account” at the end of the year. However, for tax purposes the NSU tax ID # is 72-6000783.

Age-Level Class	Standard Tuition	Tuition with late fee	Registration Fee	Monthly installments(over ten months)
Prek 3	\$5500	\$5700	\$175	\$550
PreK 4	\$5500	\$5700	\$175	\$550

Financial Assistance

The Louisiana Department of Education offers the [Child Care Assistance Program](#) to families as a means of financial assistance for child care. Families that qualify are responsible for paying tuition and/or other charges that are not covered by financial assistance. This includes any tuition and/or charges that accrued prior to receiving the financial assistance.

Monthly payments are based on the following:

- Hours parent is working
- Hours parent is looking for work
- Hours parent is attending school or training
- Amount charged by the child care provider
- Family size
- Household income

Non-Discrimination Policy

NSU prohibits discrimination on the basis of without race, color, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, age, veteran status, and national or ethnic origin. The Center does not discriminate against children who are breastfed.

Any concerns of discrimination may be reported to:

Dr. Neeru Deep – Dean

Phone: (318) 357-6288

Teacher Education Center – 119 C Pod

deepn@nsula.edu

Withdrawal from CDC

If a parent/guardian wishes to withdraw a child from the CDC, advance notice must be made in writing and delivered to the Director at least one month before the child is withdrawn. If one-month advance notice is not made, the parent/guardian agrees to pay one additional month following the withdrawal date.

Dismissal from CDC

The school (CDC) reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program if:

- The child demands so much supervision that the entire group is unfavorably affected and/or child to staff ratio cannot be maintained.
- The child threatens the safety, health and/or well-being of himself/herself or others.
- The child is **NOT** toilet trained.
- Failure by a parent/guardian to attend a formal conference requested by the Director.
- Nonpayment of any assessed tuition fees.
- Failure to notify the CDC change in NSU/LSMSA affiliated status.
- The parent/guardian refuses to have their child examined by a licensed health care professional to determine if continued enrollment is in the best interest of the child.
- It is advised by a licensed physician or child psychologist to discontinue enrollment.
- A misrepresentation was made in the application and/or enrollment process.
- Failure by a parent/guardian to adhere to the policies and procedures of the CDC staff or operations.
- Continuous absence of a period of two weeks, without written notification.
- Repeated lateness (excess of **3** times) to pick up their child by 5:30. A fee of \$5 will be assessed for every five-minute period for each occurrence.
- Parent/guardian threatens the safety of the child which are not being addressed by the parent/guardian.

Hours of Operation

The program runs from 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. Staff will not be available to receive children before the center opens or to stay with children after the center closes. The center releases a new academic calendar each year that closely mirrors the Natchitoches Parish Public Pre-k calendar.

School Dress Code

Children need to wear clothing that they can manage independently and with success to avoid toilet accidents. We are very active (and sometimes messy!) at school, so children should be dressed in easily washable clothing. All outer garments such as jackets or hats should be labeled with the child's name for quick identification. Please dress children in clothing appropriate for the season! Outdoor play is a daily activity and is needed to develop gross motor skills. Children need to be prepared to go outside when the weather is cold or damp. If the weather is too wet, activities are moved to the gym or the gross motor center.

Safety Concerns:

1. Children may only wear closed toe shoes with tennis shoe like bottoms while at school.
2. No belts or necklaces can be worn at school. Other jewelry is allowed as a privilege.

The center does reserve the right to revoke the privilege if it becomes a health risk or disruption.

School Supplies

1. Children need a complete seasonal change of clothes that is clearly labeled and placed in a gallon Ziploc bag. The bags will stay stored in the bottom of your child's cubby and be available if they need to change during the day.
2. Children need a rest mat (free of holes or tearing) and a small blanket or towel to use as a blanket for rest time. Mats should not exceed 4" in thickness when folded. Space is limited and this will allow all mats to fit on shelf for storage. Should you choose a happy napper, only the happy napper will be allowed. Mat covers can be used to help extend the life of your child's mat. No pillows are allowed. Towels and washable mats will be sent home to be laundered at least weekly (more often if needed due to illness). Plastic covered mats will be disinfected weekly at school and inspected for tears or holes. Any mat that is exposing inside foam must be replaced. *Standard red and blue Kindergarten Mats are perfect!*
3. During cool months children will need a jacket or coat. Please make sure they are labeled with your child's name. We will go outside on short walks if it is too wet to play.

Parental Access Policy (Open Door Policy)

Parents/Guardians of children enrolled at the NSU CDC are encouraged to participate with their children in center activities and are welcome to visit the center at any time during operational hours. However, if a parent/guardian would like to bring/serve special snacks or eat lunch at the center please notify the teacher by 8:00 a.m. We eat between 11:30 and 12:30 each day.

Custody and Legal Documentation

If there is a legal custody agreement, restraining order, or any court-issued documentation involving your child, we must have a current copy on file. Without legal documentation, both parents will be treated as having equal rights to access and pick up the child. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to keep this information updated.

Parental Involvement

We, at the CDC, welcome and support the connection between children and their families. Therefore, family members are always welcome to join us anytime. Parental involvement activities are offered throughout the year: family night, parent- teacher conferences, social gatherings, NAEYC Week of the Young Child events, Art Expo, and many others.

Disclosure of Information Policy

The Northwestern State University Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center is licensed under the authority of the State of Louisiana Licensing Division of the Louisiana Department of Education. You may visit www.louisianabelieves.com to view licensing regulations, CDC survey/inspections, and other information regarding our school.

Provisional Employment Policy

The NSU Child Development Center *WILL NOT* have *Provisionally-Employed* staff members. All employed staff members will not work with children until they have received the initial orientation and job description.

Grievances

If a parent has a concern or has questions regarding daily operations, they are encouraged to follow the processes below:

- Discuss the concern with the child's educator (primarily child or classroom-related concerns).
- Discuss the concern with the Director (primarily program/policy concerns or those unresolved from previous steps).
- If the concern remains, the Director will schedule a meeting with the Dean of the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development.
- If the parent wishes to appeal the policy, regulation, or rule, as it applies to their capacity, they may file a PS-48.
- Licensing concerns and complaints should be addressed to:

Department of Education Divisions of Programs Licensing Section

P.O. Box 3078 Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Office: 225-342-9905 Fax: 225-342-9690

Confidentiality- Maintenance of Children's Records

The NSU CDC will maintain confidential files on each child as required by and in keeping with LA Licensing regulations. Files are the property of the NSU CDC and will be kept secure against loss, tampering, or unauthorized use. Only parents or guardians responsible for enrolling the child at the center and authorized school personnel will have access to children's files.

Early Childhood Care and Education Program

Standards and Goals

The CDC uses the standards and goals from Teaching Strategies Gold and the [Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards](#) as measures of developmental and academic success. Curriculum standards are reviewed at every parent-educator conference.

Screenings

As part of the enrollment process each family is asked to complete a screening that will provide teachers with information regarding the child's development. Screening results may be used to provide parents with resources that can help support their child's growth and development. They may also be used to help teachers plan developmentally appropriate activities for your child. Screenings are done each program year. The screening tool that our program uses is *Ages & Stages Questionnaire* and *Ages & Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional*. Vision screenings are completed annually by the Lions Club.

Observing

The purpose of observation in the classroom is to document children's development, behaviors, and learning progress. Documentation of the children's words, actions, and interests help teachers plan developmentally appropriate experiences for children in alignment with the curriculum.

Documentation

We use various modes of documentation while observing, including running records, anecdotal notes, pictures, checklists, rating scales, or rubrics. Documentation allows the educators to review the evidence collected and plan for future learning. Documentation allows for individualization within our preschool and may not look the same for each child.

Child Assessment

Children in our program are assessed through observation. Observation allows for authentic assessment of the children's learning according to the Teaching Strategies GOLD Learning Objectives. The children's play is not interrupted for formal, standardized assessments. Instead, the educators document the children's learning and growth through play. Documentation is stored in a portfolio which is used to show children's progress over time.

Teaching Strategies Gold is the assessment tool used to track children's progress throughout their enrollment in our program. When children are not meeting developmental milestones, teachers and center administration conference with parents to develop a plan which may include additional resources and support in the classroom, a referral to Early Steps, or the school system's pupil appraisal services.

By teaching through the Creative Curriculum, assessment is ongoing and is primarily used for the purpose of planning and providing a developmentally appropriate education for all children enrolled.

The Teaching Strategies Gold progressions will be used to assess all areas of development during the first months of school. This will be used to help plan lessons and develop individual goals. Assessment will be primarily observations made by primary teachers during routine classroom activities. Assessments can be viewed by parents and are used when discussing pupil progress with the family.

Children and lessons will be evaluated weekly using work samples, anecdotal records, checklists, and rating scales. Observations will be discussed and used by staff to determine progress made toward goals set by teaching staff and parents. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year, or more is the parent or teacher feels necessary, to discuss student progress.

Diagnostic testing will only be used if parents and teachers are concerned about a child's progress. Any child needing diagnostic testing will be referred to the Natchitoches Parish School Child Search Program for further evaluation.

Family members can support the child assessment process by sharing regular observations of their child's behavior, interests, and developmental milestones at home through written notes or digital communication tools such as emails or Brightwheel. Additionally, they can contribute by participating in scheduled parent-teacher conferences or phone calls to discuss specific examples and insights about their child's progress in familiar settings.

Two sets of folders are kept on children to help protect their confidentiality. Required personal information filled out by parents will be kept for staff and licensing personnel to view. Observations, checklists, rating scales, and work samples are kept in a separate folder. These items are viewed by university students completing course work at the center. As stated in the permission forms, children's work may be used in documentation and discussed for learning purposes. Each university student has been educated on the importance of professionalism and confidentiality. At any time, if there are concerns about a child's privacy the director should be notified.

Daily Schedule and Routines

Mealtimes

Morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack are provided each day in a family-style structure. As eating is a sensory experience, the children are encouraged to try different foods, engage in conversation with their peers, and use appropriate table manners. The CDC makes every effort to provide your child with wholesome, low sugar foods and to introduce your child to a variety of food tastes and textures. Menus are posted on the parent information bulletin board.

Sleeping/Rest:

All children within the center will sleep/rest on nap mats. Parents of all children are requested to bring a small blanket/towel that will fit in the child's nap cubby.

***The above practices are required by the Department of Education licensing standards and is supported by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. ***

All children under the age of four will be provided with a minimum rest time of 75 minutes (Bulletin 137). Older children will be provided an opportunity to rest after lunch. Children will be required to rest on nap mats for the duration of the resting period. Quiet materials will be available to those children who are unable to fall asleep.

Outdoor Play

Weather permitting, all children will spend a minimum of 60 minutes in daily outdoor play either free choice or educator led, unless there is extreme weather or environmental safety conditions (i.e. temperature below 38 degrees, unhealthy air quality, or a heat advisory). It is necessary that children have freedom of movement, so it is requested that children are dressed accordingly. Shoes and socks are encouraged for safety reasons. As we encourage children to explore through touching, moving, listening, and observing, there may be times when his/her clothing becomes messy or rumpled. For this reason, we request that parents send one complete change of clothing to remain at the center in a Ziploc that will hang on the back of the cubby. Parents are to be sure to label **ALL** articles of belongings.

Daily Schedule:

Upon entering the classroom, the children will also wash their hands before playing with open-ended materials available on tables and greeting their peers. Each school day encompasses the following activities:

- *Morning Meeting:* The class uses this time to greet one another as a classroom community, discuss child friendly news / events, discuss the question of the day, dictate thoughts and ideas about the study topic and make plans for the day ahead.
- *Indoor investigations:* Indoor investigations give the children the opportunity to explore, observe, hypothesize, question, dictate, and discuss to clarify their understanding through an activity of their choice. The various areas within the classroom offer open-ended materials for the children to investigate. The areas include the art, writing, blocks, light table, science and discovery, dramatic play, math manipulatives, library and listening, and music. Throughout various projects and interests of the children, the materials may be changed to encourage exploration and the development of new ideas. The children may also participate in small group activities, including field experiences that extend their exploration and knowledge of a specific topic as well as encourage child-initiated learning.
- *Water Activities:* The CDC *does not* participate in water activities, in which children are in, on, near, accessible to, or immersed in a body of water including but not limited, to a swimming pool, wading pool, water park, river, lake, or beach. The CDC *does* participate in water *play* activities, in which there is no standing water including but not limited to water play tables, fountains, and sprinklers. These activities include the use of water tables in the classrooms and water in cooking activities in the classroom.
- *Music and Movement:* The children will engage in whole-group music and movement activities. The activities range from playing various instruments, dancing, dictating musical ideas and listening to diverse forms of music.
- *Outdoor Investigations:* Outdoor investigations provide the children the opportunity to explore and investigate the outdoor classroom in the same capacity as the indoor classroom. The children are offered activities that physically challenge their bodies in natural ways while enhancing their gross motor abilities. Activities include but are not limited to climbing,

balancing, and hanging as well as opportunities to work as a team through building activities. The children also have various opportunities to connect with nature through sand and water play, gardening, and natural materials found within the outdoor classroom. They also have access to tricycles, scooters, slides, and climbers and are offered many opportunities to work on projects like what is indoors. Outdoor observations can be made with clipboards to dictate observations that are made.

- *Literacy Circle*: The children engage in whole group discussions regarding a presented storybook. The storybook is typically related to a project or activity occurring within the classroom. During this time, the children are encouraged to comment, ask questions, and discuss topics related to the book. Some children can dictate ideas after reading on an individual or group basis.
- *Enrichment*: Enrichment activities vary daily and may be completed within the classroom or incorporated within a field experience. Participating with the NSU community through enrichment activities presents enhanced opportunities for every child.

Supported Learning:

The children are supported within all domains of learning throughout daily routines and experiences. We strive to meet the needs of all children to assist in their growth and development by engaging in developmentally appropriate practice and reflective thought.

- *Social-Emotional*: We encourage the children to continuously compromise with their peers, find solutions to their problems, ask for help when needed, use appropriate language to express themselves, manage feelings, and form positive relationships.
- *Physical (gross and fine)*: We offer opportunities for the children to develop their gross and fine motor skills. They are encouraged to challenge their bodies physically through climbing, carrying, pushing, pulling, etc. They are also encouraged to challenge and enhance their small muscle development and fine motor skills. Activities include but are not limited to writing, manipulating clay/playdough, as well as buttoning and unbuttoning their own clothing.
- *Language*: The children are given various opportunities throughout the day to develop their language skills. Children will be challenged to learn to express their wants and needs as well as learn to use social and linguistic clues to understand language. This includes their ability to listen to their peers and respond appropriately, use, and understand complex words, express their own needs, and follow directions.
- *Cognitive*: We encourage the children to be critical thinkers and think of themselves as researchers. We allow them to find solutions to their problems through scaffolding, to think symbolically through creations or pretend play, and to connect personal life experiences to classroom discussions and activities.
- *Literacy*: In preparation for transitioning into rigorous kindergarten programs in the area, the children are given opportunities to develop their literacy skills in organic ways by demonstrating knowledge of the alphabetic principle, understand print and its meaning, appropriately respond to books, and demonstrate writing skills.
- *Mathematics*: In their play, the children use number concepts, show knowledge of patterns, and compare and measure objects with which they interact. Children learn quantitative vocabulary, comparison vocabulary, and concrete one to one correspondence through intentional mathematical means which is developmentally appropriate.
- *Science and Technology*: In our environment, the children are encouraged to use principles of scientific inquiry skills in various forms to solve problems. They are encouraged to use multiple

types of technology to express themselves and solve problems. We focus on looking at living things, the Earth, and properties of objects and materials.

- *Social Studies*: As a part of the NSU Community, children have a greater understanding of their world, the world around them, and connect their experiences to other people and places.
- *The Arts*: The children are creative in expressing themselves through visual aids, drama, music, and movement. The children are encouraged to be resourceful in the way they express themselves to their peers.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Guidelines

All persons coming to the school are expected to drive safely. This includes watching out for children, obeying the speed limit in the parking lot, and respecting the parking limits. Drop-off will be done through the front doors of the school.

Drop-off procedures are as follows:

- Adults must sign-in the child using the Brightwheel app.
- The adult is to walk the child all the way into the classroom.
- Adult and teacher communicate with one another about any updates concerning the child.

Pick-up procedures are as follows:

- Adult must **legibly*** sign-out the child using the Brightwheel app.
- Adult and teacher communicate with one another to properly acknowledge the child is leaving.

According to state licensing procedures, all signatures must be legible for all parties to know who has picked the child up that day.

Safety Precautions During Drop-off and Pick-Up

Drop-off and pick-up are very busy times of the day at the CDC. We ask that parents follow the following safety guidelines to help keep children safe.

- Please avoid blocking other cars during drop-off or pick up.
- Unnecessary vehicle idling is discouraged.
- Please do not leave any children (including siblings) in the car unsupervised by an adult.
- For safety purposes make sure children are walking in the hallways and on the ground.
- Children are not permitted outside the building without a supervising adult.
- Staff members are not permitted to buckle children into vehicles.
- Children under 16 are not allowed to check children out.

Late Arrival

We encourage families to bring children to the preschool before 8 AM. We understand that there will be days when a child has doctor's appointments or other commitments that result in late arrival. Arrival during transitions, lunch, or nap time often negatively affect the rest of the child's day. The educator

should be informed prior to the appointment if possible. Class schedules may differ, but please keep in mind these approximate time frames:

Breakfast	Lunch	Naptime
8:00 – 9:00 AM	11:30 – 12:30 PM	12:30 – 2:30 PM

*If arrival time is after breakfast or lunch has been served, the family is expected to provide the appropriate meals for his/her child prior to arrival.

Late Pick-Up

The CDC closes at 5:30 PM. A fee of \$5.00 (\$1 for every minute) will be charged for every five-minute period of tardiness. Repeated tardiness in picking up a child at closing time may result in dismissal from the program. NSU Police and the Department of Children and Family Services will be notified, and the child will be released into their custody if a child is not picked up by 6:30 PM, one hour past the center's closing time.

Third Party Release

Each child's safety is a primary concern of the CDC. Only CDC employees may release children to authorized individuals. All employees of the CDC are instructed to verify any individuals intending to pick up a child.

Individuals picking up children must be:

- At least 16 years or older.
- Authorized in writing by the enrolling parent, as stated on the master card and emergency/medical information forms.
- Authorized in writing with a dated note signed by an enrolled parent or guardian.
- Willing and able to present a state-issued picture ID.

Children will not be released to unauthorized individuals or to individuals that cannot be verified with photo identification. The program will also not release a child at any time to a parent or designated individual who is visibly impaired due to alcohol consumption or substance abuse (either prescribed or illegal). Copies of custody agreements must be provided to the school if there are specific instructions for which parent should pick up a child on a specific day.

Guidance and Discipline

Discipline: The NSU Child Development Center employs a positive method of discipline called Conscious Discipline and maintains a safe, nonthreatening environment that correlate with both theories of child development and the center's mission. All CDC Staff use positive guidance and best practices which include but are not limited to maintaining an age-appropriate, engaging environment and curriculum, active listening, redirecting inappropriate behavior, noticing and reinforcing appropriate behavior, setting limits, enforcing natural consequences, and facilitating problem solving.

Educators engage in the following disciplinary practices:

- Provide positive logical consequences or choices: (“You are having difficulty playing with the blocks without throwing. I need you to choose another place to play.”)
- Model effective ways to express feelings and emotions: (“I do not like it when you grab the book from my hands. Please tell me that you would like to see it.”)
- Always provide supervision to all children regardless of if the child has been removed from the group for disciplinary reasons.

There are times when the above techniques appropriate for the situation have been tried and the undesired behavior continues. If so, a child over the age of two may be instructed to move to a quiet area by himself/herself (in the presence of a caregiver) until he/she is able to appropriately return to the activity. The child’s age in years will determine the number of minutes away from the group. This quiet time is intended for the child to regroup and reflect on his/her actions.

The following disciplinary practices are strictly prohibited as these practices hinder the positive independent learning of the children:

- No child shall be subject to physical punishment, corporal punishment, verbal abuse, or threats by educators, staff, volunteers, or parents while on the center’s property.
- Cruel, severe, unusual, or unnecessary punishment shall not be inflicted upon any child.
- No child or group of children shall be allowed to discipline another child.
- No child shall be deprived of meals or snacks or any part thereof for disciplinary reasons.
- Written or verbal reports to parents regarding conflicts or disagreements between children **shall not** include the name of the child or children who were involved.
- No child will be subjected to spanking, yanking, shaking, pinching, extreme temperatures, or other measures producing physical pain.

Any form of punishment that violates the spirit of the standard of discipline above is prohibited by anyone on the premises of the CDC. Parents are also prohibited from using corporal punishment on the premises of CDC.

***Any use of the restricted practices shall be grounds for immediate termination of educators, staff, volunteers, student workers, or student trainees. ***

Addressing Problem Behaviors

Occasionally the above methods may not be effective with all children. When this occurs, the teachers will work together to determine if there is anything in the physical environment that may be adding to the child’s inability to behave appropriately. Teachers will consider the physical environment, the emotional environment, the cognitive environment, and the social environment. Any needed environmental changes that can be made without negatively affecting the whole group will be made.

An individualized Behavior Support Plan is developed for children with persistent, serious, challenging behaviors who are not responding to behavior support methods already in place. This plan will be created and implemented by teachers, families, and Director with the intent to support children’s

inclusion and success at the CDC. Steps to creating this plan are available if needed. Parents or teachers of children with persistent behaviors may request to initiate this process.

Supervision of Children

Children shall be always supervised while in the care of the CDC. Children shall not be left alone in any room, except restroom*, at any time.

*Only children who are developmentally able may be permitted to go to the restroom independently.

*Individuals who are not staff members may not enter the center restroom area while in use by any child other than their own child.

Child Nutrition

Nutrition Guidelines

The CDC abides by all applicable restrictions and guidelines regarding food safety set forth by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, the Louisiana Department of Education, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Spill Proof Cups

Cups from home are **NOT** permitted within the CDC and will not be stored in refrigerators.

Special Diets

All requests for special diets require documentation supporting the request and must be given to the Director and the child's educator. Special diets due to preference or religious reasons must be clearly documented by the parent and include a comprehensive list of all prohibited foods. Children with special diets due to food allergies and/or intolerance must have a written note from the child's doctor (primary doctor or allergist) regarding the special diet. The physician's statement is required to include a comprehensive list of ALL prohibited foods.

Requests for special diets and food substitutions are reviewed on an individual basis. The CDC will make every effort to accommodate special diets due to allergies and religious beliefs by providing alternate foods during regularly scheduled mealtimes. However, if the program cannot meet the dietary needs of a child, the parents may be required to provide meals and snacks for their child that align with the [Louisiana Department of Health](#) meal pattern guidelines.

Food Service and Nutrition

Lunch and two snacks are provided daily. *Children that have food allergies or special diets will be allowed nutritional modifications. All meals and snacks provided by the center meets USDA requirements.* *

A lunch shall consist of:

1 serving protein

2 servings of fruits or vegetables

1 serving dairy

1 serving grain

**Parents shall be allowed to provide breast milk.*

**Parents of all children shall be advised to avoid any known allergies in class treats or food brought into the center.*

In the event of a special day, birthday, or holiday a parent may send special refreshments to school. Please work out those arrangements with the teacher before purchasing any items. Weekly/Monthly menus are posted by the parent bulletin board.

Parents may bring breakfast for their children provided the arrival time is before 8:00 a.m. Food must be simple and self-serving (e.g., yogurt, breakfast bar, dry cereal, fruit). We ask that you set out your child's breakfast before leaving. The teachers are not responsible for preparing breakfast but will help with the clean-up process. Healthy Choices: While the occasional donut, chocolate milk, and fruit snacks make for a good treat they do not necessarily make a healthy meal. We ask that parents reserve these items for special occasions. Bringing in these items daily for their child does not encourage healthy eating patterns. We are happy to provide parents with a list of healthy, fun, alternatives upon request.

Child Health

Children's health and well-being are a priority in our program. Young children are growing and building up their immune systems. Policies are in place to help teach children healthy habits and minimize the spread of illness. These policies are developed with guidance from a Child Care Health Consultant to meet state and national health regulations. Parents and staff work together to keep children healthy and preventing the spread of contagious illnesses and disease.

Sanitation and Illness Prevention

The CDC takes precautions to prevent the spread of germs and illness. Teaching staff receive Health and Safety training each year. Program health and safety policies are reviewed with students and volunteers annually. Some of the policies include:

- Volunteers and children must wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the toilet, handling garbage, cleaning, before and after eating, and administering medication. Staff must wash hands with soap and running water **before and after** assisting a child with toileting, feeding a child or handling food, and caring for a child with symptoms of a communicable disease. Children wash their hands before & after eating and after they use the restroom.
- When putting children down for a nap, the nap mat must be spaced at least 18 inches apart and children should be arranged in a head to foot arrangement.
- All toys are sanitized at the end of each day.

- Children wash hands before and after water play. Water in the water table is replaced each day.
- Draining or oozing cuts or sores shall be covered.
- Blood-contaminated material and soiled clothing shall be put in a plastic bag and tied shut.

Immunization Records

We aim to keep your child safe and healthy while in our care. Therefore, certain policies and procedures are in place to maintain a clean, safe, and healthy environment. We ask that parents keep staff updated on their child's health status. The CDC requires a current record of each child's immunizations, which are to be updated as required.

According to the Louisiana State Board of Licensing, we are required to follow the state's immunization schedule according to EPSDT schedule as outlined below. Children may be excluded from the center if their immunizations are not up to date. Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals requires any child who is not immunized due to health reasons or family beliefs to be excluded if there is a report within the program of any vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible. The recommended immunization schedule is below.

AGE	IMMUNIZATION
Birth	HBV
2 Months	DTaP, HIB, IPV, HBV, PCV7, Rotavirus
4 Months	DTaP, HIB, IPV, PCV7, Rotavirus
6 Months	DTaP, HIB, PCV7, Rotavirus, IPV, HBV
12-15 Months	MMR, VAR, PCV7, HAV
15-18 Months	DTaP, HAV, HIB
4 Years or prior to school entry	DTaP, IPV, MMR, VAR

Child Physical/Health Statement

Each child is required to have a health statement signed by a physician which indicates the child is in good health to attend a group setting **and** a copy of up-to-date immunizations. Each child who has not had a physical examination within the last year must have one before entrance into the CDC. A statement of good health and an updated copy of each child's immunization record is to be updated at least annually. Documentation must be provided by a licensed health professional if a child is under-immunized due to a medical condition.

Emergency Information

Each child must have a statement signed by the parent or guardian to obtain or administer emergency care. Emergency numbers for reaching the parent or guardian and another authorized person must also be on file and updated each year during annual enrollment or as contact information changes.

Daily Health Inspections

Parents are expected to examine their child daily prior to arrival and report any illnesses, bruises, scratches, bumps, or rashes to the child's teacher. The educators perform daily health checks as the

children arrive through a visual examination of each child for bruises, scrapes, insect bites, rashes, and/or possible symptoms of contagious illness or disease (as required by licensing). The educator will request parents' explanations for any of the above visible irregularities or symptoms.

Biting Procedure

Biting is a sign of development and are often unavoidable occurrences within group childcare, especially with toddlers. When it occurs, it can be scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, educators, and staff.

Educators will abide by the following procedures if a child is bitten (Bulletin 137):

- Wash the wound with antibacterial soap and water and apply cold compress.
- If the bite breaks the skin, the parent and the Director, Assistant Director, or director designee will be notified.
- An accident report will be written, and the families of both children will be contacted if it breaks the skin.

When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence to a frequent and expected occurrence, educators will address the situation with additional precautions:

- Record each occurrence, including attempted bites, with the location, time, participants, and circumstances.
- "Shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite.

In extreme instances where the child is consistently to be shadowed by a staff person to prevent repeated aggression, the parent may be notified to remove the child from the school and remain home until the aggression subsides.

A consistent approach between home and school is always the most effective way to solve any behavior issues. If biting seems to have become a pattern for a particular child, appropriate staff will meet with the child's parents. In such cases, a behavior intervention plan will be discussed with the family which will include methods to provide positive reinforcement and promote positive behavior.

Existing Medical Conditions & Special Needs requiring Medication

Families are encouraged to notify the program of any diagnosed medical conditions pertaining to their child. This will enable the program to provide the best care for the child and help meet their needs. All medical information and conditions will be kept confidential within the administration and/or classroom teachers unless parent consent is obtained for further release.

Any child that has been diagnosed by a physician as having a severe allergy and/or special health needs (i.e. feeding tube, seizures, diabetes) are required to have an Emergency Medical Plan completed by a physician. Based on responses on the enrollment packet forms and emergency medical information, the program may require additional information regarding medication administration and/or medical needs. If an Epipen® is used during school hours, the school will notify EMS of the child's exposure to the allergen. EMS will be available to assist in the event of a severe reaction.

The following must be updated by a physician every 3 months:

- Emergency Medical Plan
- Authorization Forms
- Side effects sheet (from the Pharmacy)

Medication Administration

Medications that are prescribed for 3 times a day should be given at home (before coming to school, when returning home from school, at bedtime). Only essential medications that are required intermittently during the day, required more than 3 times a day, or needed for emergency medical conditions will be administered at school. Over-the-counter medicines will only be administered at school if ordered by a physician.

The Director, designated administrator, or designated teaching staff will administer medication when needed. Per licensing regulations, only staff who have received “Medication Administration Training” can give essential medications. CDC volunteers, student workers, or student trainees will NOT administer medication to children.

Storage of Medication

Emergency medication is the only medicine that may be stored long-term at the Center and must be done so through the office. This includes medicines such as an EpiPen and asthma pumps. All other medicine should be picked up from the office each day. All medications MUST be locked while at the center. Medication may not be stored in the child’s backpack and/or refrigerator at any time.

Procedures for Administration of Medication

The following requirements and procedures will be followed for a child to receive medication during school hours.

1. The first dose of any medication must be given at home so the parent can monitor the child for reactions.
2. All prescribed medicines must have the original prescription label which includes the following information:
 1. child’s first and last name
 2. date the prescription was filled
 3. expiration date
 4. name of medication and strength
 5. physician’s name
 6. instructions for administering, including dosage and route.
3. A sheet listing the possible side effects is also required for all medication. This is often provided by the pharmacy.
4. The appropriate medicine spoon, dropper, or cup must be included with the medicine. Parents must provide the medicine and a dispenser in a small Ziploc bag labeled with the child’s name.

5. Parents must complete the Permission to Administer Medication Form in order for a child to receive medicine at the center. No medications will be administered without this signed permission form with a side effects sheet attached.
6. Any over the counter medication must have a written statement from a physician with instructions for administering the medication.
7. Breathing treatments or inhalers must have very specific instructions in writing from the doctor that indicates when the treatment should be provided.
8. No medication shall be added to a bottle.
9. Parents should check each day to be sure the child received his/her medicine. This will be documented on the Permission to Administer Medication Form.

Epi Pen Policy

With the passage of Louisiana House Bill 417 (2022), NSU CDC is authorized to administer auto-injectable to a child who is believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction, whether or not such child has a prescription. NSU CDC may maintain a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine at the center in a secure and easily accessible location. Only a trained staff person will be able to administer the auto-injectable epinephrine.

Topical Ointments - Diaper Cream, Insect Repellent, & Sunscreen

Topical products, including diaper rash ointment, sunscreen, and insect repellent are considered topical medications and will only be applied when necessary and with proper parental consent. An authorization form for topical ointments shall be updated at the beginning of every school year. Parents are expected to apply these products before they drop-off their child at school. Staff may re-apply the products during the day if needed per the instructions. Insect repellent will not be applied to children more than one time per day. Parents are responsible for providing topical ointments that meet the following guidelines.

- Non-aerosol sunscreen
- Sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher
- Insect repellent that includes DEET or an acceptable alternative approved by the Louisiana Department of Health & Safety
- All topical ointments are labeled with child's name
- Products that combine sunscreen and insect repellent are not acceptable.

Illness Guidelines

Contagious illnesses spread in group care through touch and in the air, which makes it very important for ill children to not be around other children. Families are often the first to notice signs of illness. Early signs of illness may include:

- Change in appearance (pale, rash, flushed, etc.)

- Change in behavior
- Irritable, tired, or uninterested in usual activities
- Loss of appetite

Parents are encouraged to keep their child at home if he/she is ill and to notify the school of any illness that results in a child's absence. If a child becomes miserable at the center without the above symptoms and requires one adult to be with him/her, thereby leaving the other adults with the rest of the group, the parents will be contacted.

The CDC does not provide care for ill children. The school will notify parents if their child has an illness that prevents him or her from comfortably participating in activities or an illness that demands a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

When a child develops symptoms of any illness at the CDC the following will occur:

- The parent or guardian will be immediately notified.
- The child will be isolated from other children if a contagious illness is suspected
- A parent or authorized adult will pick up the ill child within an hour of notification
- Exclusion forms may be provided to the parent if the center suspects a possible spread of illness or disease.

Exclusion

The decision for keeping a child at home or to send a child home from the CDC is based on the comfort of the ill child, the protection of well children and staff, the resources available to the program to meet any special care that is required, and the needs of families (NAEYC guidelines). Potentially contagious individuals, staff, or children **are excluded** from the center until no longer contagious. The CDC reserves the right to request a physician's statement of eligibility to return to group care.

With contagious diseases or parasites, a child must be kept at home. Some of these are lice, impetigo, measles (red or German), chicken pox, mumps, and roseola. If a child is under immunized or the program has not received up-to-date immunizations, a child may be excluded if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program.

The waiting periods required after the onset of treatment vary with the illness. With many illnesses, children are not contagious one day after beginning treatment (e.g. strep throat, conjunctivitis, impetigo, ringworm, parasites, head lice, and scabies). For example, if the doctor places a child on an antibiotic for an ear or throat infection, the child should not be brought to the center until he/she has been on the medication for at least 24 hours and is fever-free without over-the-counter medication. Children who are chronic carriers of viral illnesses such as molluscum contagiosum, cytomegalovirus (CMV), and Herpes simplex can attend school. However, sores and rashes must be always covered to reduce the spread of illness.

The chart below provides the recommended exclusion periods for various illnesses. A doctor's excuse does not necessarily determine a child's date of return. Periods may be extended beyond those provided in the chart or provided by the doctor, depending upon the individual conditions.

Symptom	Should child/staff stay home?	Illness/Infection When can child/staff come back?
Chicken Pox	YES	When all the blisters/pox have scabbed over
Cold	NO (without fever) YES (with fever)	Refer to Fever
Hand, mouth, and foot disease (Coxsackie)	YES	Children can return when all of the following conditions apply: -The rash is no longer spreading -There are no open sores -The child is not drooling due to mouth sores -The child is not lethargic -The child has been fever free for 24 hours without medication
Diarrhea (two or more watery stools or one watery stool accompanied by one other sign of illness)	YES	Diarrhea is resolved.
Ear Infection	NO (with doctors' diagnosis)	
Fever of unknown origin (100 degrees F oral or	YES	Free of fever for 24 hours and fever reducing medications have not been given

101 rectal or higher) and some behavioral signs of illness	YES	in the past 8 hours or on prescribed medication for 24 hrs.
Fifth Disease	NO (without fever) YES (with fever)	Refer to Fever
Giardia	YES	When diarrhea subsides or Doctor approves readmission
Hib disease	YES	Well and proof of non-carriage or cleared by Physician.
Hepatitis A	YES	One week after illness started and fever is resolved
AIDS (or HIV infection)	YES	Until child's health, neurologic development, behavior, and immune status is deemed appropriate (on a case by case basis) by qualified persons, including the child's physician chosen by the child's parent or guardian and the Director.
Impetigo	YES	When treatment has begun
Lice	YES	When 1 treatment has been given
Meningococcal disease (Neisseria meningitidis)	YES	Well and proof of non-carriage
Pink Eye	YES	25 hours after treatment has begun
Undiagnosed generalized rash	YES	Well or cleared by child's physician as non- contagious

Ring Worm	No (keep area covered)	
Roseola	YES (with fever)	See fever
Rota virus	YES	24 hours after treatment has begun and fever free

Severe Cold (with fever, sneezing, and nose drainage)	YES	Refer to fever
Thrush	NO (should seek treatment)	
Any child with a sudden onset of vomiting, irritability or excessive sleepiness	YES	Evaluated and cleared by a physician

Abuse and/or Neglect

The CDC staff and volunteers are legally and ethically required to report child abuse to the local child protection agency, in accordance with LA R.S. 14:403. If you see a child being abused, observe suspicious marks on a child, or a child says something to you that causes you to be suspicious, please share this information with the director. For more information about the definition of what abuse and neglect are follow the link to [Department of Children and Family Services](#).

**** Nothing shall prohibit the court from ordering medical services for the child when there is substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare. ****

Child Safety

The CDC strives to create and maintain a safe environment for children. Monthly facility inspections are conducted, and any issues are reported to NSU's facility services. Daily safety checks are conducted in the classroom and outdoor environment. Classrooms are furnished with age-appropriate furniture from approved early childhood vendors. The environment is handicap accessible and provides safe play areas for children.

The CDC **prohibits the usage or possession of the following items by anyone on the premises:** alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances, unauthorized potentially toxic substances, firearms, fireworks, and pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded). All the previously listed items are not allowed on the premises, which includes inside the facility, on the playground, or on site of any school-sponsored event. NSU's campus is a smoke-free environment and smoking is NOT permitted on, near, or around NSU property.

Emergency and Evacuation Plans

The CDC Emergency Plan is developed in conjunction with NSU's Police Department. Children participate in emergency drills throughout the year. Fire drills are held monthly, in accordance with the policy set forth by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal and the Department of Children and Family Services. Tornado drills and lockdown drills are practiced on a regular basis.

Emergency and evacuation procedures and plans may be found in each classroom as well as in the Director's office. These plans are reviewed and updated annually. For a copy of the center's emergency plan please contact the Director.

If a teacher senses a fire, he/she is asked to immediately pull the alarm box. As the center is being evacuated, the teacher should tell the director or assistant director who pulled the alarm and describe what prompted the person to do so. When the alarm sounds, the police and fire departments will be automatically notified. If the alarm does not sound, police and fire departments are not automatically notified, then they must be notified by telephone immediately. Whether the alarm sounds, or individuals are otherwise notified to evacuate, staff members will follow the fire drill procedure.

The CDC's priority during an emergency is keeping children safe. Individuals (including children) are not allowed back onto center premises until the director or the on-site fire department official declares the building is safe. During a lock down, children and staff are evacuated once an all clear is provided by law enforcement.

Inclement Weather

If inclement weather occurs outside of Center hours, any closure notices will be posted using the following methods:

- Brightwheel and/or e-mail
- NSU's website at www.nsula.edu
- Phone line at 318-357-6860
- Local radio and television stations

If severe weather occurs during school hours and there is a need for early dismissal or closures, families will be notified as quickly as possible. A minimum of two employees must remain until the last child is picked up.

Transportation

The CDC does not transport children from home to the Center, or from the Center to home, or from any area school to the Center. In the event of an emergency that requires an evacuation outside of a safe walking distance, the CDC will coordinate with NSU's Campus Police for transportation.

Non-Vehicular Excursions

A non-vehicular excursion/walking field trip is defined as a period when the children are not in the school or play yard and are not in a vehicle. Each family is asked to provide consent for non-vehicular excursions during enrollment that will grant the school permission to include their child on the walk. Walking field trips are limited to the NSU Campus. Families are notified of the destination, date, time, and price (if any). All educators attending the field trip are CPR/First Aid certified and must always maintain the proper student to educator ratio. A backpack with a first aid kit, a communication device, and any other necessary supplies are provided for each field trip. Parents are encouraged to attend.

Photography, Videotaping, and Digital/Audio Recordings

Parents can photograph, digitally record, video tape, and/or take audio recordings during program events. Written parental permission for each child is required upon enrollment. Information regarding date and use will be provided for these situations.

Accidents and Injuries

Accidents and injuries are reported to the CDC administration and documented on an accident report immediately. The parents are given a copy of the report at the end of the day to sign and the original remains in the child's file.

Parents are contacted immediately in the following situations:

- Blood not contained in an adhesive strip.
- Head injury.
- Human bite that breaks the skin.
- Animal bite.
- An impaled object.
- Broken or dislodged teeth.
- Injury requiring professional medical attention.

Medical Attention

All full-time staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. First aid kits are in each classroom and the center provides Band-Aids® and/or ice as needed.

EMS is called immediately if:

- The center believes the child's life is at risk or there is a risk of permanent injury.
- The child has difficulty breathing, unable to speak, skin/lips look blue, purple, or gray, vomiting blood, significantly dehydrated, or becomes less and less responsive.
- The child has rhythmic jerking of arms and legs and a loss of consciousness (seizures).
- The child has any of the following after a head injury: Decrease in level of alertness, confusion, headache, vomiting, irritability, or difficulty walking.
- The child has increasing or severe pain anywhere, severe stiff neck, headache, and fever.
- The child has a cut or burn that is large, deep, and/or will not stop bleeding.

***After EMS is called, the child's parent/guardian is notified. ***

If the situation needs medical attention, but not necessarily in need of ambulance transport, the situation is handled by notifying the parent/guardian of the child's condition. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached within an hour of the incident, EMS is called, and the child is transported to the hospital.

The following situations require medical attention within a half hour:

- Fever in any age who looks more than mildly ill.
- A rapidly spreading purple or red rash.
- A large volume of blood in the stools.
- A cut that may require stitches.
- Any medical condition specifically outlined in a child's care plan requiring parental notification.

Communication

Effective communication with families strengthens the quality of the program. Staff-family communication should include opportunities for obtaining information about the child in care, and encouragement of family involvement within the program. Staff are encouraged to communicate with parents through a variety of means including orientation activities, telephone, face-to-face conversations, notes, or newsletters. Staff are not permitted to communicate with families via social media sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, etc.

If parents have a concern, they are encouraged to first talk to their child's teacher. If they do not reach resolution, they are encouraged to utilize the chain of command and contact the Associate Director, the Director, then the Executive Director, as needed until the issue is resolved. Contact information for all administration is available on the center's website and at the reception desk.

Classroom Communication

The CDC teaching staff use a variety of methods to communicate with families to strengthen the connection between the home and school. This includes the following:

- Brightwheel is used for daily or weekly communication between the families and parents.
- Teachers use an online portfolio system to collect documentation such as photos and anecdotal notes related to child's learning and development.
- Teachers provide information on classroom and school activities in which parents can get involved.
- Teachers may call parents to relay important information about their child's day
- Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year. Conferences are an effective way to update parents on their child's progress and to discuss any areas of child concern. Teachers and parents exchange information and set goals for the child.
- Parents are welcome to arrange additional meetings with their child's educators.

**** We encourage parents to share with the educator any events or information that may be pertinent to the family &/or child. ****

Family Involvement

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

PAC's mission is to enhance and support the educational experience at NSU's Child Development Center, to develop a closer connection between school and home by encouraging

parental involvement, to serve in an advisory role to improve the learning and caring environment at the CDC, and to provide volunteer and financial support. The council meets biannually. PAC organizes several program events such as Fall Fest, Holiday Parties, and Staff Appreciation Week. PAC is not a policy-making body and does not address or mediate individual concerns between parents and educators.

Family Events

There are several family events scheduled throughout the school year, i.e., Walking Field Trip, Center Parades, etc., which are coordinated through the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). Information will be posted prior to the event and parents & family members are encouraged to attend.

Newsletters

Each month the CDC provides families with an electronic newsletter that includes program updates, resources for families, and information about upcoming and past events. Families are encouraged to share personal accomplishments which are also featured in the newsletter/bulletin board (i.e. graduation, promotion, awards).

Volunteer/Visitor Policy

Keeping an open line of communication between the Center and families ensures that the best interests of the children are served, both at home and at the Center. All parents are encouraged to visit, telephone, and send notes whenever they deem necessary. An open-door policy for families, university faculty and staff, and the community to visit at any time shall be maintained. If a parent needs to discuss a problem or needs more detailed conversation, we ask that a conference time be setup with the child's teacher or Director. This will prevent staff from leaving children unattended.

All visitors, other than parents, must sign in and are not permitted in the classroom except by prior arrangement. Background checks are required for visitors and volunteers working with children. All other visitors must be always accompanied by a staff person.

Classroom Pets /Visiting Animals

Classroom pets must meet the guidelines set forth by the Department of Health and Hospital. Any visiting pets or resource visitors must be approved by the administration at the CDC. All pets visiting the Center are required to have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized.

Celebrations / Special Events / Birthdays

Any holidays and/or celebrations are respected as important events. Our program's curriculum is not holiday driven. Any holiday experience at the preschool must be developmentally appropriate and meaningful for the children, as well as it must foster understanding and respect for one another. The CDC strives to identify individual similarities and celebrate individual differences. Parents and teachers will work together to plan appropriate and inclusive holiday-related events.

Good nutrition is vital to children's learning and physical development. The CDC's Birthday Celebration Policy has been designed to encourage the development of good eating habits that will last a lifetime. All children with a birthday during a given month will celebrate on the day of their birthday or close to their birthday in each classroom with the teacher. Parents may also celebrate a child's birthday on their actual day by bringing in a birthday snack or choosing a non-food birthday option. All food items must be nut-free and store-bought. Home-made items are not allowed. Please let your child's teacher know in advance of your child's birthday and check for any allergies of children in your child's class.

****Latex balloons are NOT allowed for any celebrations at the CDC. ** **Any outside food must be store bought (not home-made).****

Fundraising

The Parent Advisory Council and the College of Education and Human Development coordinate fundraising activities to help support the CDC. Tuition does not cover the total cost of materials and personnel, so the preschool depends upon the parent community to spearhead fundraising efforts. Money raised through fundraising activities may be used for enhancing the inside/outside environment, contributing to educator's professional development, enrichment materials, or other program goals and initiatives.

Family Evaluation of the NSU CDC

Families are asked to complete an annual evaluation of the CDC. The evaluation evaluates the quality of services being provided and helps ensure that the CDC is meeting the needs of the NSU community.

Babysitting

The use of employees, student workers, or volunteers as private, personal babysitters is not a reflection of the CDC. The program is not held responsible or liable once a child is placed under the care of any employee, student worker, or student trainee as a babysitter.

General Policies

Tours

The CDC serves as a model childcare facility; therefore, tours are welcomed. If a potential client, university faculty or staff, or member of the community requests a tour, then it shall be arranged by the director or the facility coordinator.

Student Observers & Researchers

As a research model demonstration early childcare center, the CDC is available to students and faculty for class assignments and research. Permission to observe the children will be obtained by each family upon enrollment of the child into the program. Student observations usually occur between the hours of 7:15 - 11 a.m. and are scheduled through the director or facility coordinator. Confidential information about children is not released to student observers unless consent is obtained (i.e. full name, birthdate, development information).

NSU student observers, participants, and researchers are required to have an approved background check. They are expected to comply with all guidelines, seek staff assistance when appropriate, and identify themselves to staff members each time they come to the center. Most observations, student activities, and research activities will be integrated into the children's program; however, when activities are conducted outside of the regular program, the participant/researcher is expected to abide by those procedures established in consultation with the director and the teachers. Any changes in procedures require additional approval by the director. Commitments made for follow-up activities or reports must be honored. Persons who use the center are expected to refrain from publicly discussing any individual child, family, or staff member and to otherwise respect the rights and feelings of all involved.

Therapists

The CDC shall also be made available to any specialists (e.g. speech, physical, etc.) who are serving children at the center. Children with IEP's shall be allowed to receive therapeutic or other services within their regular classroom to maintain their sense of continuity and support their feeling of belonging to and acceptance by the group. Parents and therapist must sign a consent to allow therapy to occur inside the classroom. All therapists must have an approved background check.

Electronic Devices & Computer Practices

The CDC encourages learning through play and hands-on experiences. Computers are not provided for children to use in the classroom. Children over the age of 3 years of age, digital cameras and tablets for project-based documentation and research activities.

Computer Practices Policy

Children of the CDC do not have access to computers with internet.

Programs, Movies, and Video Games

The CDC does not use television programming, movies, or video games as a regular part of the curriculum. However, if short video clips are used to supplement a project the video clip must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. No violent or adult content
2. Suitable for the youngest child present
3. If rated, must be rated G; any programming with a rating more restrictive than "PG" is prohibited.

Soap operas, television news, and sports programs aimed at audiences other than children are prohibited in the presence of children.

Research has proven that technology is not the most appropriate teaching/learning method for young children. Therefore, the use of technological devices at the CDC is limited

Employee Background Checks

All CDC employees must receive a background check that demonstrates they are eligible to work with children. In compliance with NSU's hiring regulations, the CDC **will not** employ an individual if we have not received the results of their background check. In addition to a background check, all employees must receive an initial orientation to the program and job description before working in the center. If this ever occurs, the program will follow the policies outlined in the licensing regulations.

The CDC strives to provide a high-quality learning environment that embraces all families and meets the needs of each individual child. Our policies are developed to align with our program's mission, state licensing requirements, and best practices in the field of early childhood education. For questions about the information in this handbook, please see the Director.

Signature Page

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center's handbook. I also affirm the truth of the following statements:

A. I certify that the information I have provided on my child is true including their age, accommodations, exceptionalities

B. I acknowledge that if this information is revealed to be untruthful the Child Development Center reserves the right to rescind my child's enrollment: _____

C. I acknowledge that I have an affirmative duty to report all changes in status in my child's enrollment should a change occur in relation to accommodations, exceptionalities, and/or development.
