

## **WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTER**

Welcome! We look forward to getting to know you and your children, and are delighted that you have chosen to become part of our caring community. We know how important your children are to you. As they explore and grow in a safe and nurturing environment with caring, responsive adults they learn about their world and begin friendships. We hope this provides you with the peace of mind you need. We strive to be a model of quality care and are committed to providing the best resources available to children.

Our **mission** is to promote access to higher education through provision of affordable, accessible, quality developmental childcare for university parents and grandparents. The **philosophy** of the program is to provide educational experiences for the children that are in a safe, positive, accepting atmosphere where he/she can explore the limits of his/her environment at their own learning pace.

The program is designed for the children to learn through play. The classrooms are set up to allow the children to choose freely from a wide range of play and learning experiences. The children are introduced to a balanced program of interactions with friends in both teacher-directed and child-directed experiences. Teachers act as facilitators in the classroom as they encourage the development of self-discovery, experimental learning, freedom of choice and cooperation among children.

The program is fortunate to have bachelor level professional staff in each of the classrooms. Each staff member must also receive training throughout the year to stay current on the trends in the Early Childhood Education Field.

### **GOALS**

We realize each child develops in his/her own way. However, every child needs certain skills to successfully function in the world. The goals of our program are:

1. To provide children with an environment in which they learn to express their ideas and feelings.
2. To provide children with opportunities to become self-directed and self-confident.
3. To provide children with appropriate social skills through interactions with peers and adults.
4. To provide children with a love of learning through exploration and discovery.
5. To promote respect for self and others.
6. To build strong bodies and promote habits of a healthy lifestyle.

## **ELIGIBILITY/ REGISTRATION**

The Center is open to all families without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, political beliefs or marital/family status.

The University Child Enrichment Center provides year round care for children birth to five-year-olds. In order to be eligible for the program at least one parent or grandparent must be a student, faculty or staff at Southeast Missouri State University. Parents who terminate their affiliation with the university may maintain their child's enrollment until the last day of the last month of the current semester.

We will work on an individual basis to meet your needs when your child is age-qualified for kindergarten enrollment or you graduate from the university.

Registration procedure:

Initial Application- Complete "Childcare Application Form" for your child to be placed on the wait list

Initial Meet 'n Greet- Upon availability of space, you will be contacted for a time in which you will meet with the Director and learn more about the Center. This time will allow for us to best meet the needs of you and your family. To ease your child's anxiety and help them feel comfortable with their new friends and teachers, we require that you and your child visit in the classroom for a short time prior to the child's scheduled start date. The visit allows the child to feel comfortable and for the trust to be built between the child, parent and caregiver.

Upon acceptance into the program your child must have a signed authorization form from a physician within 30 days of your child's start date. All immunizations and screening required by the Missouri Department of Health must be completed before your child may attend the Center. If these forms are not completed your child will not be admitted into the program.

**Under no circumstance can your child begin our program until a completed enrollment form, emergency contact form, authorization form, a signed contract, copies of the child's immunization and your class schedule are submitted.**

## **FEE POLICY**

Registration fee- Upon notification of your child's acceptance into the program, you will be required to pay a non-refundable \$25 registration fee at the Cashier's Office.

Payment Procedure- All payments will be handled through Student Financial Services in Academic Hall. Fees will be paid on a monthly basis. Families will receive a bill from the Cashier's Office each month. The tuition will be based on the status of the parent/ grandparent (student or faculty/staff) and your child's schedule. **Please note that you will be charged according to your stated schedule even if your child is not in attendance.**

Fee schedule- fees will be determined based on the age of your child, your affiliation with the university and the classroom in which your child is enrolled. If your child has a

birthday, but there is no room to advance in the Center than you will continue to pay the rate of the initial classroom until the transition into the new classroom is complete.

The fees for the program are determined each semester. Fees cover the period from the first day of each semester through the last day of the semester.

- Spring semester begins the first day of January that the offices open and continues until the last day of finals.
- Summer semester begins the Monday after spring finals until the Friday before the fall semester begins.
- Fall semester is the first day of fall semester through the last day prior to Christmas break.

If you withdraw your child from the Center (including summer semester) your child will be removed from the class roster and put back on the wait list. Their spot will be replaced by the next child on the waitlist.

Our program operates on the mind set that your child will be here five days a week. Therefore you will be responsible for the entire week's tuition. If your schedule does not allow for a five-day schedule, please make arrangements with the Operations Supervisor.

**Late Pick Up Charge-** \$25 for the first 10 minutes and an additional \$50 for 11-60 minutes after 5:30 p.m. (4:30 p.m. in the summer and spring break) per family. Additional charges will apply as necessary. (For instance, a parent arriving at 5:36 will pay \$25; a parent arriving at 5:43 will pay \$75). This fee doubles after the third late pickup.

**In addition to the monetary stipulations:**

- The late pick-up charge policy will be thoroughly explained at enrollment and parents will sign a late policy agreement included with enrollment paperwork indicating that they understand the late policy.
- The UCEC clock (which will reflect time and temperature time) will serve as the "official clock." Please synchronize your watch with the UCEC clock.
- Please arrive early (5:15 p.m.) so that you and your child have enough time to depart and don't feel rushed or pressured to leave. Arriving early will also give you ample time to chat with your child's teacher.
- If you do arrive later, please make sure that you depart by 5:30 p.m. Arriving before the closing time, but lingering after the closing time still interferes with teachers' plans.
- There will be no exceptions or warnings. If you are late for whatever reason (flat tire, miscommunication regarding who was picking up the child, etc.) a late charge will be issued. A "no exceptions" policy makes it easier for us to apply the late policy to everyone consistently and fairly. We do not want any parent to receive special treatment or favors whereas other parents may not.

**Attendance-** Our staff plans according to the schedule that you sign your child up for. The state mandates the staff maintains child ratios in the classrooms. If your child attends at a time they are not scheduled to attend there may not be enough staff to supervise, materials to provide for them or a meal count may be short. If your child's schedule fluctuates from your original hours submitted to the Operations Supervisor, a charge will apply.

The program is open year round Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (The program closes at 4:30 during the summer and Spring Break). The UCEC will be closed on University holidays and days when the University is closed due to inclement weather. Please follow the University calendar of dates in which the Center will be closed:

Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)  
Christmas Eve through New Years Day  
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday  
Easter Break  
Memorial Day

**Arrival-** Arrival time is 7:30-9:00 am. Children will benefit most from the educational aspects of the program if they arrive by 9:00 a.m. Lunch is served between 11:00 and 12:00. Rest time takes place between noon and 3:00. Please be courteous to your child and do not bring your child to the center between 11:00 and 3:00, because this will make separation from you more difficult and is disruptive to the rest of the class. We ask that you escort your child to their room and allow for the teacher to greet you before leaving, and not bring them during nap time.

*Parents are asked not to bring children after 9:00 a.m. except in the event of a doctor's appointment, an emergency or a special family occasion. When this occurs, please call before bringing your child after 9:00 to allow center staff to plan for your child's attendance.*

**Departure-** Children must be picked-up at their contracted time and signed out. Please make the staff aware that you are picking-up your child. If someone other than yourself is picking up your child, please be sure the staff is aware of the situation and the person has identification on them. We ID all new faces!

**Class Promotion-** When a child is ready to move to the next age group, the teaching staff of her or his current age group recommends new class placement. The center's administration determines the child's placement based on this recommendation and other factors affecting the well-being of the child and the class. If a parent disagrees with the recommendation, the director makes the final decision.

Children are promoted when the following conditions occur:

1. The child is developmentally ready (emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically)

2. There is an opening in the age-appropriate class

**Withdrawal-** If you choose to leave our program we ask you to give us a two week notice prior to departure. This allows us adequate time to fill the position. If you leave the program without a two week notice you will still be charged until the last day of the 2nd week of departure.

**Dismissal-** The University Child Enrichment Center reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non payment
- Not observing the rules of the Center as outlined in Parent Handbook
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child

**Parking-** Please be aware of where and how you park in the parking lot as to not block anyone. Also be sure to use the alley way to the east of the building as an “EXIT ONLY”. This will help to avoid congestion on Broadway and in the parking lot.

**Inclement Weather-** We operate on the University’s schedule for inclement weather. Please stay tuned to KFVS-12 for closing updates. If the weather gets bad during the day we will assess the situation and act accordingly.

**Grievance-** Should difficulties or problems arise that cannot be resolved through normal channels (e.g. parent-teacher conferences, three-way conferences with parents, teacher, and director) an ad hoc committee will be convened to assist in negotiating the differences. This committee will consist of the UCEC Director, Lead Teacher, Faculty Advisor, and family. A plan of action or determination will be provided and a timeline for re-evaluation will be made at that time.

### **Emergency Procedure**

**Security Cameras-** Our program offers security cameras in the classrooms, parking lot and playground for the security of the children, families and staff. If a parent has a concern about an issue that has occurred they should bring their concerns to the director who in turn will privately view the documentation and then consult with the parents.

**Emergency Drills-** The children will participate in monthly emergency drills. Fire, tornado and earthquake drills will rotate each month.

**Emergency’s-** Please keep your emergency contacts up to date. Also, ask that you arrive at the Center as soon as possible after a disaster. Inform anyone who may come to get your child after a disaster that identification will be required for the child to be dismissed.

**Medical exams and Immunizations-** Health regulations are determined by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Verification of your child's current immunizations must be on file for your child to attend. Please update the office when changes are made.

**Illness-** To protect the health of all the children in our care we ask that you watch for any signs of illness that your child may exhibit. If any signs of illness listed below are seen at school we will call you (or an emergency contact) and have you pick up your child. There are no exceptions to this rule. This is for the safety of all of the children!

Fever of 100` or more  
Pain  
Frequent Cough  
Signs of Conjunctivitis

Vomiting  
Diarrhea  
Excessive Nasal Discharge  
Communicable Disease

After an illness, your child may return to school without written permission from your physician if the following guidelines are adhered to:

Mood, appetite, behavior and activity are back to normal  
No fever for at least 24 hours  
Antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full 24 hours (48 hours in the case of strep throat)  
Vomiting, diarrhea, excessive nasal discharge  
Pain (earache, cramps, headache, etc) resolved

On occasion, if a health concern persists, the childcare director may request that a child be seen by a physician **prior to returning to school.**

**Medications-** For the safety of your child and the protection of our staff, we ask that you take care of administering medication at home. We will make an exception in the event that you are unable to come to the Center to give the medication. A form must be completed to give the staff permission to administer the medication and instruction with the dosage. We ask that you **do not** put medicine in school backpacks or cubbies! Medication must be in its **original container.**

**First Aid-** Minor injuries will be treated with soap, water, ice and band-aids. An accident report is filled out for all injuries occurring at the Center. You will be informed of the incident and your signature will be required before a copy is placed in your child's file. In the event of a more serious accident, parents (or other person listed on emergency form) will be notified immediately. If no one can be reached, we will contact the physician you have listed and call 911. If necessary, the child will be taken by ambulance (unless you have been reached and wish to provide transportation) to the hospital of your choice to receive emergency medical care treatment. Parents are required to sign an "Authorization for Emergency Medical Care Form" should such an event occur.

**Child Abuse and Neglect-** Missouri state law requires childcare professionals to report suspicions of child abuse and neglect to the Division of Family Services. Please note that childcare restraints (car seats) are required by the Missouri state law. Refer to Missouri Department of Transportation for the weight/age restrictions for your child and their car seat to meet the requirement.

### **NUTRITION**

**Breakfast, lunch and snack-** Children will be served a breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. All meals will follow dietary guidelines for the appropriate age group according to the Missouri Department of Health. Family style meals will be emphasized to allow staff to sit with the children during mealtimes to serve as role models and to encourage healthy eating habits.

**Diet Restrictions/ Allergies-** You are responsible for informing your child's teacher and providing appropriate documentation for your child's diet restrictions or allergies.

**Food as Curriculum-** The staff routinely incorporates cooking into the class activities. This experience provides an opportunity to develop pre-reading skills, science and math skills as well as allowing opportunities for language development.

### **PARENT/ TEACHER CONFERENCES**

The teachers spend their days assessing children in the process and context of their everyday play and routines. These observations make for great conversation between teachers and parents. Communication is the keystone of a productive partnership between parents and teachers. Therefore, we encourage parents to talk with their child's teacher frequently, also teachers will arrange for parent/teacher conferences to occur once a year. Parents may request a conference at any time. We also offer parent bulletin boards, newsletters and opportunities for classroom involvement.

### **GUIDANCE**

The University Child Enrichment Center uses the term guidance openly. It is a positive term and implies working with the child to develop internal control of his/her behavior. Our goal is to encourage children to become creative, independent, responsible and socially mature human beings. This involves learning to make responsible choices and accepting the consequences of such choices. Our guidance models "developmentally appropriate practices". Therefore, each age group has different expectations and goals. Any on-going situations will be discussed with parents to ensure a cooperative approach.

**Dismissal Policy-** A child that has difficulty controlling his/her behavior beyond what a teacher feels is age appropriate will have his actions documented by the teacher. A conference will be arranged with the parents. The director, teacher and parent will devise a behavior plan. The plan will be implemented for four weeks. If no change has occurred the director has the right to dismiss the child from the Center. If during that four weeks the child puts himself/herself in danger or threatens someone else, immediate dismissal may occur.

### **General Information**

**Birthdays and Holidays-**We invite you to celebrate with the children and staff at the Center. If you choose to provide a snack, we encourage a *healthy snack*.

Snack ideas (all of which the children could assist in preparing):

*Trail Mix*

*Fruit Salad*

*Vegetable Tray*

*Cereal Mix*

*Fruit muffin*

\*\*\*Please remember that all items brought into the classroom must be store bought and unopened until the celebration in the classroom. This is required by state licensing requirements.

Please talk to your child's teacher prior to bringing a snack to school. This allows for the teacher to prepare accordingly so that you can learn of any allergies that a child may have in your child's class.

The celebration of a child's birthday at school is different than a celebration at home. Many aspects of the school environment must be taken into consideration when planning for a classroom party. Numerous children come from different cultures have family traditions which involve celebrates holidays differently or children who have food allergies. Please be conscientious of your celebration. Presents are discouraged in the classroom.

**Special Needs-** The Center will accommodate special needs children as best as possible. Close communication between the family and therapist is essential for us all to work together and provide the best care possible to the child. If the parents do not agree to assist us with providing adequate care we will not be able to care for your child.

If there is a situation that we feel your child should be evaluated by a professional, we will make recommendations to the parent.

In the case that adequate care cannot be given to your child, assistance will be given to find appropriate care.

**Clothing-** Your child will enjoy a day of active play everyday as they discover, experiment and learn using such mediums as paint, dirt and sand. Children should dress comfortably, simply and suitably for the weather. Remember that children will be playing outdoors so be sure their clothing corresponds with the weather forecast. Dress in layers on cold days! An extra set of well labeled clothing (including underwear, socks, pants and shirt) should be kept at school permanently. Remember safe sturdy shoes!

**No Flip Flops are to be worn to school for the safety of the child.**

**Diapers and Toilet Training-** All children not completely toilet trained are required to arrive at the Center in disposable diapers. Your child's teacher will discuss toilet training with you to determine when your child is ready to come to the Center in training pants or underwear.

The Center **does not** provide disposable diapers and diapering supplies for you. It is your responsibility to ensure that an adequate supply is available at all times.

**Field Trips-** The children will participate in field trips as opportunities arrive. Parents will be asked to assist in driving or a school van will escort the children to the event. Permission slips must be completed prior to your child's departure from the center. Children also walk to the Public Library, Capaha Park and Pool.

**Lockers/ Cubbies-** Each child will have an assigned cubby to keep their belongings. Please label all items brought to the Center so that we can keep track of the owner. Please keep the collections in your child's cubby to a minimum. We use the space often during the day as we transition out of the building or take turns to the bathrooms.

**Outdoor Play-** Children will participate in daily outdoor activities. Please dress your child according to the weather outside! On days when the temperatures are extreme, extra precautions are taken such as shortening the amount of time your child spends outside. Please note that children do not catch cold by playing in the cold. The playground is probably the safest place to be in the winter. Staying inside in "close contact with others encourages the spread of germs."

We are not in the position to provide staff to stay inside with a mildly ill child, therefore parents will need to make alternative care arrangements if their child cannot play outside.

**Nap Time-** Each child is provided with an individual cot and sheet to rest/ sleep on. We ask that you provide a **small blanket and pillow**. We ask that you provide your child's security item so that they feel comfortable during nap time. Nap time occurs after lunch and is posted on the daily schedule. Each child is required to rest for at least 30 minutes each day. If you must drop off your child during nap time, please enter the room quietly.

**Sharing-** Any educational artifact that your child enjoys and wishes to share may be brought in to show to friends. For example, a leaf that has changed colors or a postcard with a photo of a waterfall. Items of this sort could spark a week long discovery process of falling leaves or water. We ask that toys be kept at home.

Unacceptable Items: Guns (tiny and water), Gum, Candy and Money.

**Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to educate your child. If you ever have questions or concerns please bring them to the attention of the Director, we are here to assist you!**