

**PARENT AND PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

**Fresno State Programs for Children**

**Campus Children's Infant Toddler Program  
Campus Children's Preschool Program  
Joyce M. Huggins Early Education Center  
D. Paul Fansler Preschool  
Marlene M. Fansler Infant Toddler Program**

**DRAFT  
MAY 2011**

**WELCOME** to Fresno State Programs for Children at California State University, Fresno (Fresno State). Fresno State Programs for Children (PFC) includes the Campus Children's Center-Infant/Toddler Program, the Campus Children's Center-Preschool, and the Joyce M. Huggins Early Education Center. The centers enroll more than 300 children per year.

Fresno State Programs for Children is a comprehensive early care and education program that strives to ensure the optimal development of each child enrolled through provision of licensed, safe, hygienic, physical facilities; appropriate educational programs; well qualified staff; varied opportunities for parent involvement; and information and support in obtaining social, health, psychological and nutritional services. We have a unique program where parents, teachers, children, university students, faculty, and others work together to provide a program rich in experiences, relationships and learning.

One of the most significant findings of educational research is the importance of early childhood education and its positive impact on children's later success in school. Through training teachers and others in human services professions, demonstration of innovative programs, curricula and resources, supporting programs and conducting research relevant to child development and early childhood education, Programs for Children contributes to educational reform efforts aimed at improving services to children and families.

More than 300 students in a variety of majors utilize the program each year for laboratory experiences, student teaching, observation, research and other course-required experiences. A large number of students, teachers and visitors from other schools, agencies and the community also visit the program annually.

Because Programs for Children centers are laboratories, training, demonstration and research centers in early childhood education, prior to enrollment, parent's consent is requested for participation in training, demonstration and research activities that occur on a routine, daily basis at the center.

Every effort is made to preserve child and family confidentiality. Parents have the right to information concerning the nature, purpose and use of any materials and activities that may involve their child. In the case of a specific research study, parents are asked for written permission for their child to participate in the study and be provided information on the study. There will be no negative consequences if permission is not granted.

Programs for Children centers are fully accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Accredited programs are committed to meeting national standards for program quality in early childhood education (ECE). We look forward to a positive and mutually rewarding association with those involved with the program.

#### **PROGRAM MISSION**

The mission of Fresno State Programs for Children, Inc., is to assist Fresno State students in attaining their educational goals by providing child care services in convenient and affordable settings that are high quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate, and are based on building

positive collaborative relationships with children, their families, and academic and community programs.

## PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Fresno State Programs for Children has a philosophy based on current early childhood education and child development theory and research. This philosophy of early education and care is based on the following principles:

- Understanding the importance of the family and community in the lives of children.
- Respect for children's ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Recognition that collaborative participatory relationships among children, parents, teachers, and others not only create powerful and successful education and care programs but improve the quality of life in the community.
- Commitment to the rights of all children to receive education and care services that maximize their developmental potential.
- Knowledge of the contribution of a stimulating, educationally-rich environment to children's constructive efforts to make sense of their world.
- The belief that proper guidance of children occurs in an atmosphere of respect for persons, positive human relationships, non-violent conflict resolution and cooperation to promote the welfare of the group.

## PROGRAM GOALS

Programs for Children will meet its mission by achieving the following goals related to access, quality, and academics:

- Assist student parents who are attending Fresno State and needing early education and child care services for their children.
- Provide a high quality, ECE environment for fostering children's physical, social, emotional, creative, linguistic and cognitive development.
- Support parents who are attempting to complete their education while facing the demands of parenting through programs and resources.
- Offer a range of interdisciplinary opportunities for observation, field work, student teaching and research in ECE for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and professionals in the field.

- Demonstrate innovative ECE programs, curricula and resources that can serve as a model for best practices.
- To be a respected and guiding force among professionals and leaders in the early care and education community in our region.

Program goals are achieved with funding from the California State Department of Education, California State University, student body fees, tuition and other sources

This document describes principles, practices, and procedures used by Fresno State Programs for Children. This information guides daily practices used for working with children, families, program staff, Fresno State, and the larger community that enable the program to run smoothly and achieve its goals. It is intended as a resource for program staff, parents, students, administrators and others who are involved with the program. Depending on your relationship with PFC, you may receive additional policy documents that provide specific information in regard to your relationship with Programs for Children.

#### NEW PARENT ORIENTATION

From the time that families are informed that there may be an opening in the program, staff begin to build relationships with parents as they welcome them and provide an orientation to the program. Information is provided both in writing and verbally, and if appropriate, in a language that is most comfortable for the parents.

When parents submit the initial enrollment documents they meet with an office manager who will provide information about eligibility for subsidized care, payment of child care fees, schedules, and other documentation required for their child to attend the program. The office manager will talk with the parent about their educational goals, program rules, and review all required documentation with the parent, and answer any questions they may have about enrolling their child.

After the parent has met with the office manger, he or she will be introduced to a center administrator. The administrator will provide additional information about the program including, program philosophy, goals and objectives, guidance and discipline, different formal and informal ways that the program communicates with parents, including ways the program interacts with parents when there are difficulties or differences, Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP's) and Individualized Education Plans (IEP's), and other individual plans are incorporated into the child's school day. The center administrator will also discuss health and safety precautions, security, medication and exclusions for ill children and program emergency plans, meals and snacks, nap and rest periods, field trip information and how the program insures confidentiality of children and family information supervision of children on field trips, the centers role as laboratory and research/demonstration programs. In addition the center administrator introduces the parent and child to the teacher.

#### OPERATING DAYS/HOURS

The centers are open five (5) days a week (Monday through Friday) from 7:30 am- 5:30 PM. An Extended Day Program is available to 6:00 PM for preschool children. Center hours may vary during the summer months.

The centers follow the California State University, Fresno days of operation schedule. The center is closed for the following holidays and times: Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday), December 25-January 1, Martin Luther King's Birthday, President's Day, Cesar Chavez's birthday, Memorial Day and Fourth of July. The center is open during the academic year from the first day of the Fall Semester to the last day of the Spring Semester. Summer programs are operated based on parent demand for education and child care services and the needs of the academic programs.

### **ADMISSION POLICIES**

The program accepts children between the ages of three (3) months and twelve (12) years for early education and care services. Priority for admission is accorded in the following order:

- Children who have been qualified as at-risk or receive services from Children's Protective Services
- Children of low income students.
- Children of other enrolled students.
- Children of university employees.
- Children of alumni and from the broader community.

Children with disabilities and other special needs are welcome in the program. Through an innovative arrangement with FUSD, children with special needs are enrolled in the Huggins Center to support their inclusion. PFC centers meet requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and is fully accessible.

Children from the community may enroll when space is available or to meet program or special project requirements.

The open enrollment period begins on March 1. When your completed new application is received, it is dated and placed in order of receipt for a position in the appropriate age category. The Program Manager maintains a waiting list for each category so that you can be notified immediately by telephone when an opening becomes available. We must have a valid phone number for you in order to do so. A determination is made at the time of the offer of services as to whether or not your child still qualifies for enrollment in the category indicated on the application. Applications must be renewed on an annual basis each March. The original application date is used to determine priority.

The center is able to provide subsidized services to children of qualified low income students as determined by Department of Education guidelines. Families with children enrolled on a contract must meet need requirements. PFC will verify need for services within 30 days of a change and at intervals that will not exceed 12 months. Hours awarded for child care services will correspond to

the need of the parent or caregiver. Income eligible staff may qualify for a services. Limited space is also available on a tuition basis for other students, faculty and staff.

For those wanting to receive subsidized services, you must complete an income declaration with your application. As noted in Section 89403 of the California Education Code, family income, composition and size are used as factors in ranking applications for admission. Returning families and siblings are given priority for enrollment, if you are still eligible. As part of the enrollment process, proof of your current student status is required each semester. A copy of your "Training Verification Form" with the computer print-out of your classes attached is kept in your child's file. After the fourth week of the semester, enrollment is checked by the office manager or another administrator.

Prior to your child's admission to the program, you are required to submit a completed California immunization record, medical report including negative TB test, emergency authorization card and other forms including admission agreement, research release and field trip permission.

The use or disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and his/her family is restricted to purposes directly connected with the administration of the program. Information regarding parent eligibility may be reviewed by representatives of the State of California, federal government, independent auditors or others as necessary for the administration of the program. Programs for Children shall permit review of the child's file by the enrolling child's parent(s) or parent's authorized representative upon request, at reasonable times in the center office.

Fresno State Programs for Children serves children and families without regard to their sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.

## **FEES**

Subsidized child care is provided to Fresno State students or participants in programs approved by Fresno State Programs for Children. Subsidized parent fees are determined by State Department of Education, Child Development Division. Recertification of ongoing need and current student status are required each semester in order to continue to receive subsidized child care.

You must notify the office manager or his/her designee of any change in your school status, class schedule, financial status, government assistance status, employment, address, phone number or other changes that may affect your child and attendance at the center. To the extent possible, you should inform the center of these changes in advance. Failure to provide such notification may jeopardize your child's status in the program. In the case of fee-based enrollment, changes in enrollment require one month's notice.

A tuition schedule for non-subsidized families is available from any PFC office.

All tuition fees are paid monthly and are due in advance by the tenth day of the month. In the event that tuition is late, parents are given one month to become current. A penalty for late tuition may be imposed. If after one month, payment has not been made, the child may be refused admission to the program and further action taken to secure back payment from the parent. A handling fee is imposed for the processing of checks returned for insufficient funds.

Because program and licensing regulations require staffing based on number of children enrolled, no refunds are given due to illness, vacations, withdrawal, etc.

### **SIGNING IN AND SIGNING OUT**

Your child is signed in and signed out each day on the classroom attendance sheet as a confirmation of the established attendance schedule and fees. You must sign your child in and out using your full signature with first and last name. The exact times each day that your child has attended the program should be noted. If there is any question regarding days and hours of attendance, attendance sheets and records can be checked. If a child is not properly signed in and signed out, they are counted as absent for that date.

A parent or authorized adult must accompany each child in and out of the center. The Programs for Children staff will not allow any child to leave the center with anyone other than his or her parents unless authorized by the parent (with written permission, telephone call or in person). If there is any question about the person coming for the child, the staff will ask the person for photo identification. If permission has not been received and the name is not on the emergency card or in the file, the staff will not allow the child to leave. Noncustodial parents cannot legally be denied access to their children unless relevant court papers are on file with the Programs for Children's Centers.

### **ABSENCES AND SERVICE LEAVES**

If your child is going to be absent, please call the center that your child attends by 8:30 AM so that the meal count can be adjusted. On the day your child returns to the center, you must complete a written absence explanation on the sign-in sheet, regardless of the reason, in order for your child to be readmitted to the program. If you receive subsidized care, each absence explanation must state the exact reason for the absence. To simply write "sick" or "ill" is unacceptable and will be considered unexcused. If you receive subsidy, you may be required to provide written verification from medical, legal or social service agency or divorce/separation agreement as additional documentation for absences.

Subsidized parents are limited as to the number of allowable absences. Absences are defined as follows:

Unexcused absence: any absence not listed below:

Excused absences include: illness of the child or parent, quarantine of the child, siblings or parent, family emergency or time spent with a parent or relative as ordered by a court.

"Best Interest" Days include: time the child is out of town with family members; time during which the classes of the parent have been canceled; time parent has not been scheduled to work or has taken the day off. A maximum of ten (10) best interest days is allowed per fiscal year.

Subsidized child care will be terminated if your child accumulates more than (3) unexcused absences during the year so that a family able to attend more regularly can receive the subsidy award.

A limited "Service Leave" is defined as any period of time between the last day of instruction in the Fall semester to the first day of instruction in the Spring semester (Winter Break) and the last day of instruction in the Spring semester to the first day of instruction in the Fall semester (Summer Vacation). If you wish to take a limited service leave, please notify the office in advance. A Service Leave without the loss of enrollment in the program can be granted as long as all other conditions for enrollment are met as specified in the Admission Agreement.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

In the event of an emergency, it is essential that the program staff have on file:

- Current class schedule, with classroom numbers and phone numbers
- Current address
- Home, work, and cell telephone numbers
- Physician's name and telephone number
- Authorized people who may pick up your child

Please notify the office immediately of any changes so we can keep our information up-to-date and reliable. It is your responsibility to keep the center informed at all times as to your whereabouts (course schedule, employment, etc.) so you can be located immediately. If someone other than those persons listed on the emergency card is picking up your child, please notify the center in advance by telephone or in writing with the name of the person. In order for the child to be released to any person not familiar to center staff, photo identification is required.

In the event of an emergency or if your child is injured or becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted first. If you cannot pick up your child within one hour of being called, you must make arrangements to have your child picked up within one hour. If you cannot be reached, other persons on the emergency card will be contacted in the order in which they are listed. Ill or injured children cannot be accommodated at the Centers beyond one hour.

### **NOTICE OF ACTION**

A Notice of Action is a standard form given or mailed to parents within 30 days of the date the parent signed the initial application for services (enrollment) or when a change in service level, family status, or fees occurred. The Notice of Action is mailed or delivered to the parent at least 14 days before the effective date of an adverse action.

### **TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

While two weeks notice is desirable, parents can terminate enrollment at any time. Every effort will be made to discuss with parents reasons for termination. (See "Fees" for refund policy).

Your child will be terminated from the program for the following reasons:

- Abusive behavior, sexual harassment or any kind of threats by parents toward staff or other parents.



- Extreme needs of a child that are not possible to accommodate in the program.
- Tuition fees are more than one month past due

In addition, subsidized care for your child may be terminated for the following reasons:

- One or more of the criteria required to receive subsidy no longer applies to the family. These criteria include changes in eligibility status such as changes in income, family size, work status, student status, the family has used the time allowed to receive subsidy, or any other factor that determines eligibility.
- Falsification of any information on official documents including but not limited to the application, income declaration, enrollment packet, sign-in and sign-out sheets and emergency card.
- Three violations of contracted hours.
- Your child accumulates more than (3) unexcused absences.
- An unexcused absence is any absence NOT included below:

Excused absences include: illness of the child or parent, quarantine of the child, siblings or parent, family emergency or time spent with a parent or relative as ordered by a court.

“Best Interest” Days include: time the child is out of town with family members; time the during which the classes of the parent has been canceled; time parent has not been scheduled to work or has taken the day off. A maximum of ten (10) best interest days per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) is allowed.

## **PARENT APPEAL PROCEDURES**

When subsidized families are terminated from the program, parents have the right to appeal this action. The process for appealing termination of services can be found on the back of the Notice of Action.

## **GRIEVANCES**

The grievance process for parents regarding any aspect of the program or performance of staff needs to proceed to resolution in the following order: consultation with the teacher or staff member involved followed by consultation with the Center Director or Program Director. If no resolution is achieved, the matter is taken to the dean or dean’s designee of the college or school associated with the center where the problem occurred. Grievances that originate in the Campus Children’s Infant Toddler Center or Preschool Program should be directed to the dean of the Jordan College of Agriculture Science and Technology. Grievances that originate in the Joyce M. Huggins Early Education Center should be directed to the dean of the Kremen School of Education and Human Development. If no resolution is reached, the Executive Director of Fresno State Programs for

Children should be contacted. Grievances to the Executive Director should be made in writing. The Executive Director makes the final decision on the best course of action to resolve the matter. This decision shall be made within 60 days of the complaint.

\*\* NOTE: This procedure DOES NOT apply to termination of subsidized child care and development services. To appeal the termination of subsidized services parents MUST follow procedures outlined on the back of the Notice of Action.

## **UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

It is the intent of Fresno State Programs for Children, Inc to fully comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Individuals, agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding Fresno State Programs for Children's alleged violation of federal and/or state laws. This includes allegations of unlawful discrimination (Ed Code section 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135) in any program or activity funded directly by the state or receiving federal or state financial assistance.

Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the State Department of Education.

Child Development Division  
Complaint Coordinator  
1430 N. Street, Suite 5408  
Sacramento, Ca 95814

If the complaint is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court. The complaint should seek the advice of an attorney of his/her choosing in this event.

A complaint filing a written complaint alleging violations of prohibited discrimination may also pursue civil aw remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedied or orders.

Legal Reference: 5CCR, Chapter 5.1. Uniform Complaint Procedures

## **II. PROGRAM PRACTICES, VALUES AND BELIEFS**

Fresno State Programs for Children recognizes each child as an individual with potentials and abilities. Careful consideration is given in designing a curriculum of multiple interests and possibilities that appeal to different ages and abilities. A warm, caring environment combined with a

well-trained, creative staff stimulates children's social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language and literacy development.

We believe that collaborative, participatory and caring relationships among parents, staff and children are essential to a successful early education and care program. Enhancing children's relationships with each other and the adults in their lives is essential to ensuring the wellbeing of children as well as the community. To ensure that children have the best experience possible careful attention is given to the following concepts related to development, education and care.

Image of the Child and the Role of the School. The program views the children as unlimited, active learners who construct their own understandings as they interact with children, parents, teachers, other adults, and the environment; further, the children are able to communicate their knowledge, beliefs and ideas in multiple ways. From this perspective of the image of the child, the role of school is to facilitate children's active efforts to construct, organize and modify their understandings through providing a responsive environment that offers indoor and outdoor experiences, supports social interaction with children and adults, provides experiences to use technology, and provides opportunities to include formal academic knowledge and skills necessary to express understanding, reflect, and build on prior knowledge.

Relationships. The importance of relationships and building a sense of a community as part of the educational process are central to our program. The program stresses participation, collegiality, communication and interaction among parents, children, staff, faculty and the community. In order to facilitate relationships the program continually examines different ways to encourage communication among children, families, and program staff.

Recognizing the essential role of the parent in children's education, the program seeks to develop reciprocal relationships with parents and families. Building relationships with parents begins at the time of enrollment when teachers learn about family expectations, goals, culture, structure, race, religion, and other ways they identify themselves. **All of the centers have an open-door policy, we invite parents to stop by their children's class to visit or observe at any time without prior notice.** Parents interact frequently with teachers and are involved in curriculum development activities, volunteering, sharing interest and expertise, sharing two-way journals, sharing books or objects from home related to project studies, joining the class at mealtime, and contributing art materials and other donations, participating in assessment of their children and the program, discussion groups and special events. Parent groups plan monthly activities such as potlucks, speakers, discussions, etc. Discussion topics identified by parents and staff, may include nutrition, home activities, community resources, guidance and, health and safety.

Positive relationships are developed with students, the university, and the community as teachers and other program staff welcome visitors, provide information them requested, and share ways the program may assist them. The centers also maintain resources for parents, students, and educators, all welcome to browse and check out materials. If you are interested in a topic or service that is not included in the resource area please check with a teacher or administrator.

The program is designed for children to have children experience as few teachers and classroom moves as possible in the program. Each child is assigned to a primary caregiver in the infant/toddler program or teacher in the preschool program who is responsible for working with the

child and a primary care group. Teachers are responsible for primary contact with children, providing appropriate learning activities supervision, caring, wellbeing and protection. When children transition to a new class every attempt is made for them to move with a group from their current class.

Since conflict is an inevitable part of relationships, when conflicts arise individuals are encouraged to speak with the individual with whom they are in conflict and use a positive, constructive sharing of information and ideas to resolve the issue. Sometimes it is not possible for conflicts to be resolved between individuals most immediately involved in an issue. For these kinds of instances there are alternative ways of addressing and resolving problems or conflicts in ways that are respectful to all parties involved. Since building and maintaining relationships is such a cornerstone of the program individuals are encouraged to program staff if they have questions or concerns.

Curriculum/Projects. The curriculum encompasses the learning goals delineated by the California Department of Education – Child Development Division (CDE) in the **Desired Results** system. According to CDE, “A *desired result* is defined as a condition of well-being for children and families (e.g., children are personally and socially competent).” The desired results for children encompass the four developmental domains, i.e., cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical development and include the indicators below:

- **Desired Result 1: Children are personally and socially competent.**
- **Desired Result 2: Children are effective learners.**
- **Desired Result 3: Children show physical and motor competence.**
- **Desired Result 4: Children are safe and healthy.**

Other sources for curriculum development include the *Pre-Kindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines* and *Infant and Toddler Guidelines, Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers* and *Developmentally Appropriate Practice* as recommended by NAEYC. The principles and practices related to a relationship approach also influence curriculum at the Programs for Children centers.

*Curriculum Outcomes (SEE REVISIONS FOR UPDATED DESORED RESULTS)*

The curriculum aims to maximize the potential of individuals to achieve academic excellence and have successful and fulfilling life by developing the following abilities:

- **Self-Regulation**

The ability to recognize one’s needs and find ways to satisfy these needs.

Desired Result 1, Indicator 1: Children show self-awareness and a positive self-concept.

Desired Result 1, Indicator 3: Children demonstrate effective self-regulation of their behavior.

- **Communicative Competence**

The ability to communicate with others

Desired Result 1, Indicator 5: Children show growing abilities in communication and language.

Desired Result 2, Indicator 4, Children demonstrate emerging literacy skills.

- **Task Persistence**  
The ability to persevere and overcome obstacles  
  
Desired Result 1, Indicator 1: Children show self-awareness and a positive self-concept.  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 1: Children are interested in learning new things.
- **Motivation for Learning**  
The desire to want to learn  
  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 1: Children are interested in learning new things.
- **Wanting to Go to School (Attendance)**  
The desire to stay in school and attend regularly  
  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 1: Children are interested in learning new things.
- **Intentionality (Focus)**  
The ability to direct one's actions to achieve a goal  
  
Desired Result 1, Indicator 1: Children show self-awareness and a positive self-concept.  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 1: Children are interested in learning new things.
- **Multiple Literacies**  
Different ways to express ideas  
  
Desired Results 1, Indicator 5: Children show growing abilities in communication and language.
- **Interests**  
The desire to pursue a wide range of studies.  
  
Desired Results 2, Indicator 1: Children are interested in learning new things.
- **Questioning**  
The ability to raise questions and seek answers.  
  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 2: Children show cognitive competence and problem-solving skills through play and daily activities.
- **Problem-Solving**  
The ability to use a variety of strategies to tackle problems  
  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 2: Children show cognitive competence and problem-solving skills through play and daily activities.  
Desired Result 2, Indicator 3: Children show interest in real life mathematical concepts.

- **Physical Well-being**

A commitment to wellness--engaging in active play, taking care of one's physical needs, eating nutritiously, practicing good hygiene and staying safe.

Desired Result 3, Indicator 1: Children demonstrate an increased proficiency in motor skills.

Desired Result 4, Indicator 1: Children show an emerging awareness and practice of safe and healthy behavior.

- **Creativity**

The ability to be creative

Desired Results 2, Indicator 2: Children show cognitive competence and problem-solving skills through play and daily activities.

- **Social Competence**

The ability to function as part of a social group and accept diversity.

Desired Result, Indicator 2: Children demonstrate effective social interpersonal skills.

Desired Result 1, Indicator 1: Children show self-awareness and a positive self-concept.

Desired Result 1, Indicator 4: Children show self-awareness, acceptance, understanding and appreciation of other's special needs, genders, family structures, ethnicities, cultures and languages.

Curriculum and projects are developed to be responsive to family beliefs, values, experiences and language, as well as developmental needs that are revealed through individual and group assessments. Curriculum based on children's interest, offers meaningful and rich topics that are multi-faceted and support children as they gain a greater understanding of their world. Some of the investigations that the children and teachers may undertake include investigations of nature, light, color, homes, sound, weather and careers. These curriculum studies allow children to develop their language, social skills, literacy, mathematical, scientific, creative and reasoning skills. In selecting projects, teachers observe and converse with children, noting their comments and questions. Project work is undertaken by a small core group of children with others entering freely from some of the project-related activities.

Rather than "covering" the curriculum or a project teachers and children together "uncover" a project (Katz, & Chard, 2000). Projects develop the language, literacy, scientific, mathematical and social knowledge of all children. Small groups are the preferred instructional organization because they provide a social context that fosters meaningful dialogue, collaborative problem-solving and productive "conflict" among children. Group projects such as murals and other large-scale, collaborative endeavors like constructing a dinosaur are encouraged (Rankin, 1998). Parents and others in the community interact with the children and teachers both formally and informally and are involved in curriculum development activities, discussion groups and special events.

When university students work in the classroom they are invited to be active participants in curriculum development. They are encouraged to observe the room and become acquainted with children in the room or center, understand the children's developmental needs and interest, and base their subsequent work on what they have learned from children and teachers in the room and/or center.

Documentation. Documentation is a visual account of learning. It consists of a formal, systematic, selective presentation that may include observational notes, photographs, audio-tapes, video, and/or the actual products of children's work (Rinaldi, 1998). Documentation serves as an individual and collective "memory" of activities, a method for reflecting on learning that leads to new experiences, a way of sharing learning with others (Vecchi, 1998). Documentation displayed in the centers affords opportunities for communication, discussion, assessment, and curriculum development between parents, children, teachers and community members.

Environment. The classroom environment is viewed as crucial to the child's development and learning. The environment must be safe, healthy and encourage engagement and interactions that will promote all development. When observers, visitors or staff see a situation that may compromise children's well being, or about which they have a question they are encouraged to share with a staff member or administrator.

Included in each classroom are a variety of materials that are child initiated and open-ended. Objects and artifacts from our families and Fresno's heritage are incorporated in the environment and learning materials. Attention is given to the display of materials and their availability to children. Thoughtfully chosen, natural materials are emphasized. All curriculum aids, books, music, etc. are carefully selected in order to ensure diversity but also to be free from race, culture, and gender bias. Alternative family lifestyles are included. Materials must also present positive, contemporary and accurate images. The classroom environments (indoors and outdoors) are designed to encourage children to work together but also provide spaces where they can be alone. All classrooms also include areas and furniture for parents and other adults to sit comfortably and visit with children.

#### Children with Special Needs.

Special needs of children are addressed based on a philosophy that stresses "full inclusion" and the belief that all children can be successful learners. Each child has the right to the services and educational opportunities provided by the program. Thus the program, rather than the child, must adapt itself to these changing and diverse needs. Each site builds a partnership with the child's family and specialists and work together to develop a plan that is appropriate for the child and family.

For those children previously identified as having special needs, staff work closely with parents and other professionals involved in serving the family so that the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for the child is fully implemented and the learning environment appropriately modified so that objectives are successfully attained. Instructional activities afforded by the program enhance cognitive, language and physical development of all children. Social dimensions including self-help skills, self esteem and positive social interaction are emphasized.

For children in the program for whom a problem is suspected, staff consults with parents and other specialists on campus before a child is referred for further diagnostic work.

Assessment is ongoing and is part of the instructional program. Informal and formal methods are used including individualized educational and developmental plans (IEP), parent interview and survey, checklists, observation, anecdotal records and developmental profiles.

Fresno state Programs for Children centers meet requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and are fully accessible.

Fresno State Programs for Children refrains from religious instruction and worship.

### **III. RELATIONSHIPS**

Programs for Children promotes positive relationships among children and the adults in the children's lives, i.e., teachers, parents and family members, the school, the campus, and the community. All children and adults are valued and supported as individual contributing members of the school community. Through program participation individuals build a positive sense of self worth and sense of belonging. Below are some ways that Programs for Children promotes relationships in the program.

#### Partnerships Between Families and School:

Ongoing respectful communication between families, program staff, and visitors to the program helps to build meaningful partnerships and provides positive experiences for program participants. Program staff provide opportunities for ongoing reciprocal communication with families. Teachers and families establish and maintain regular communication. Teachers learn about families through journals, informal conversations, assessments, written reports, or meetings. The partnership between teachers and families helps teachers gain information about the each family's structure, including values, child rearing practices, culture, home language, race, religion, and individual child's needs.

Teachers and other program staff share information about school routines, expectations, and rules in order to provide a positive learning environment. Gaining and sharing this and other relevant information will ensure a smooth transition between home and school. Administrative staff support ongoing communication with families, staff and visitors through an open-door policy and scheduled meetings. On occasions where teacher and family practices and values differ, families and teachers work together to make sure that children are able to participate at school and have successful experiences.

#### Partnerships Between Teachers and Children:

Establishing positive relationships between children and teachers promotes emotional well being and builds the foundation for meaningful learning. Teachers create a positive emotional climate through respectful behaviors such as conversations, affection and shared laughter, and through establishing a supportive physical environment. Physical and emotional care of all children is consistent and predictable. Regular classroom routines, encouraging the use of materials,



consistent adult responses to children's emotions and behaviors, and helping children understand and label their own emotions provides security for the children. When a child is upset acknowledge the emotion and help the child label their emotion. Support and comfort the child until they are ready to join their peers, and then assist them with the transition to the group.

Teachers also support relationships through ongoing evaluation of their own interactions and responses based on the individual child's characteristics including temperament, individual abilities, and cognitive and social development. Teachers use communication strategies to build positive relationships with each child. Strategies used to promote positive communication include regular discussions with children, genuine listening to attention to thoughts and ideas, and response to children's questions and requests.

Infant and Toddlers: To support the unique needs of infants and toddlers, teachers are responsive to infants' and toddlers' individual nonverbal cues and provide immediate physical comfort and needed care. Teacher's interactions should be based on the child's temperament and level of arousal. Caregiving routines are used as an opportunity to build a one-to one relationship with each child. Social interactions with teachers should be ongoing and include verbal and nonverbal face-to-face communication.

**\*\*Teachers may never use physical punishment such as hitting, shaking or grabbing children, and do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion, threatening or withholding of food, belittling or derogatory remarks as a form of discipline.**

Fostering Friendships:

Friendships help children develop social competence and build a classroom community. Teacher and other staff members facilitate friendships through several practices that should be incorporated by all adults throughout the day. For all children, including infants/toddlers the following guidelines should be used:

- Encourage children to work together and learn from one another.
- Support children as they interact with one another as they enter, sustain, and enhance play.
- Facilitate positive interaction with all children, including those that who may be timid, lacking social experience, bullied, or excluded.

Conflict Resolution:

Conflict is part of any meaningful relationship, including children's relationships. Teachers use conflict to assist children as they develop social competence and a sense of self.

Teachers use the following practice throughout the day to support conflict resolution:

- Assist children in identifying feelings
- Describe problems and testing alternative solutions
- Guide children who bully, isolate or hurt other children
- Help all children understand and follow classroom and program rules

### Creating a Positive Environment:

Creating a positive environment for children in the program that is predictable, harmonious, and consistent facilitates positive relationships, enhances learning, and promotes pro-social behavior. Teachers facilitate a positive environment by being aware and anticipating potential behavior problems and sources of conflict by using the following practices:

- Treat all children, parents and other staff members with consideration and respect; remember adults are a role models of appropriate social behavior
- Encourage children to be an active participant in the classroom community developing rules, plans, and activities.
- Encourage children to talk about their and other's emotions
- Provide experience where you label and explore feelings and ways in which feelings can be expressed
- Include activities and discussions that promote a positive sense of self and value differences
- Intervene when children tease, reject, or exclude others
- Be aware and avoid stereotypes in the classroom, instead provide models, images, and artifacts which counter stereotypical limitations related differing abilities, gender, family structure, race/ethnic background, or culture.

### Challenging Behaviors, Promoting Self Regulation and Positive Guidance:

Addressing challenging behaviors is a key part of developing partnerships and relationships in the classroom. When addressing challenging behaviors our goal is to look beyond a child's surface behavior and attempt to understand the whole child and support the development of self regulation, temperament, stages of development, and to understand what the child is trying to communicate through behavior. When challenging behaviors are persistent, program staff will work parents and other professionals to observe the child's behavior and develop and implement an individual plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

"Positive guidance" refers to the methods utilized to help children develop behaviors that facilitate individual growth, positively resolve conflicts and develop social competence leading to constructive relationships with other children and adults. Guidance and discipline, like other aspects of child-rearing, need to be consistent with developmental stages and needs. A helpful reference on this approach is *Positive discipline*.

The positive guidance philosophy of Programs for Children is based on the belief that children are self-regulating and desire positive relationships with others. This philosophy has major implications for the types of guidance methods utilized, the organization of the environment and the role of the teacher.

Early childhood educators universally recognize the importance of young children's social development as important not only to their acceptance by others, but as a key to later success in school. A growing body of research indicates that unless children achieve minimal social competence by the time they enter first grade, they are likely to be at risk throughout life for significant academic and social problems. According to Katz (1997) given the life-long consequences, relationships should be counted as the first of the four R's of education.

A variety of factors contribute to behavioral challenges including the environment, unrealistic or rigid expectations of adults, poor planning or structure, inappropriate materials or activities, etc. Parents should also be aware that transitions from one developmental stage to another may be marked by an increase in problematic behavior.

Understanding behavior is essential in planning effective responses. Multiple aspects of the situation--temperament style, child behavior, specific circumstances, other children, family, environment, early childhood educator response, etc.--need to be considered in designing prevention and intervention approaches to develop positive behavior and greater social competence

Specific strategies for addressing challenging behaviors and for developing a behavior plans can be found in the appendix.

#### IV. CURRICULUM

Curriculum is what happens during the course of the child's day. Because young children are learning so much about themselves and the world at a rapid rate it occurs throughout the day during routines and specific activities. Curriculum in early childhood education is broad-based and addresses all areas of development including the social-emotional, language development, cognitive, and physical domains. Content areas include early literacy, early mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and appreciation for the arts, social studies, and health and safety. Teachers take into consideration several sources when developing curriculum, including partnerships with parents, individual and group interests of the children in the classroom, learning foundations and assessment information provided by California Department of Education-Desired Results Developmental Profiles and early childhood program standards recognized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. General principles used in curriculum development include.\*\*\*add addendum reference here\*\*\*

- Teachers use of a variety of strategies to facilitate a curriculum that is responsive to the needs of the individual and the classroom community. Strategies that support a responsive curriculum include:
- Development of a predictable yet flexible daily routine
- Materials and equipment that can be used in a variety of ways and reflect the children's experiences and cultures
- Opportunities for children build on prior learning and experiences they have had a school, home or elsewhere
- Inviting a child, parents, or a group of children to contribute curriculum ideas
- Teachers gain knowledge to develop curriculum through careful observation of the children, using information that emerges from assessments, and providing subsequent activities that are aligned with curriculum goals and objectives.
- Through planning, reflection and collaboration teachers gain insight about children's process, research, and how to scaffold learning

Please see the addendum for curriculum strategies.

## V. TEACHING/WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Teacher's direct work with children is integral to development and education. Teaching is multi-faceted and includes areas such as developing an engaging environment, providing supervision, using routines in learning goals, developing a learning community, making learning meaningful to all children, developing a learning environment that responds to children's interests and needs, and using teaching strategies and approaches that promote skills and knowledge that are responsive to the individual needs of the children. Each of these areas will be discussed in more detail below and in Appendix III.

### Learning Environments:

Establishing and maintaining safe, healthy and enriching learning environment requires ongoing collaboration and partnership between all teachers and program staff. Numerous sources are used when considering learning environments these include: individualized learning plans, including Individualized Education Plans (IEP's ) for children with special rights who are over three years of age; Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) for children 0-3 years with special rights and their families; Desired Results Developmental Profiles-Revised (DRDP-R's), and Environment rating Scales (Harms, ). Based on these and other resources learning environments in our program:

- Ensure children's needs for personal health, a healthy environment, and safety at all times
- Include routines, transitions, activities, and classroom arrangements that minimize or prevent challenging behaviors
- Allow for space and materials to be organized and provide for exploration, research, discovery and conceptual learning in all content and development areas (language and literacy, math, science, expressive arts, social-emotional, and physical development)
- Include displays that are relevant to the children's current work and interests (e.g. three-dimensional creations, emergent writing, art, and documentation). Children's work is positioned at the their eyelevel. The use of displays facilitates children's ability to reflect on their work, extend their experience and scaffold learning in the classroom.
- Promote collaboration between teachers and children in arranging the environment/materials in predictable ways.

### Learning Communities:

One of the goals of our program is to develop classroom learning communities where children, families, teachers, and program staff are all contributors. Appropriate learning communities are developed by demonstrating respect for the cultures of the children and families, respecting individual differences, and countering bias in the classroom. Learning communities are also developed when teachers use principles for guidance that foster a positive social climate for growth of the individual as well as the group.

Please see Appendix III for specific tools for creating learning communities.

### Supervision of Children:

Providing adequate supervision for children is a cornerstone of ensuring that children are safe at all times. Although supervision of children is the primary responsibility of program staff however, *all*

*individuals who work at any of the PFC centers are responsible for making sure children are safe at all times.* It should also be noted that in addition to the strategies outlined below, adequate supervision of children is the result of knowledge of child development, understanding routines and expectations of the classroom and program, and providing a balance of developmentally appropriate active and quiet activities.

Teachers should be able to hear and see children (infants, toddlers and preschoolers) at all times and position themselves so that they can easily turn or rotate to maintain visual supervision of the space. To make sure that children are always supervised while in the classroom, teachers must make sure that all staff position themselves in the room, including the restrooms, so that all children are visually supervised at all times. Since adults place themselves relative to the children's interest, this will require ongoing monitoring and moving throughout the room. For example, if children and a teacher move from the block area to the reading area, teachers may need to move in order to make sure that the block area is still supervised. *It may be tempting, but do not congregate with other adults (parents or staff members) in the classroom.* If another adult wishes to speak with you at length a meeting time may be set when children are not present.

*While children are napping they must be visually supervised at all times.* For infants and toddlers, when children are placed in cribs staff must check the sides to make sure they are up, locked and secure. A staff member must be present in the nap room while children are sleeping at all times. In preschool rooms teachers must be sitting *in* the classroom with the children. If it is necessary to leave napping children (infants, toddler or preschoolers) the teacher must make sure another staff member can take their place-even if it is only a short time.

*While outdoors, every area of the yard that the children use must be visually supervised, a teacher must be present in that area at all times.* When staffing prohibits all areas in the yard from being supervised adequately, areas that cannot be supervised must be "closed". For example in the late afternoon, when one teacher and eight children are outdoors, the children may use the climbing structure and the sand area (all other areas would be closed) so that the teacher can easily see and supervise all the children at one time.

#### Addressing Learning Goals and Routines Throughout the Day:

When working with young children addressing learning goals are not limited in a specific part of the day. Learning goals are included for individual children and the group throughout the day through participation in routine activities such as meals, diapering, and clean-up, as well as when children participate in planned activities such as art, block play, or group games. Learning goals are most likely achieved when they included in a manner that is natural and logical. Including goals in this manner requires thoughtful preparation of the routine, environment, activities, and interactions.

An appropriate daily routine is a cornerstone of ensuring that learning goals are addressed throughout the day. Appropriate daily routines include several components. On a daily basis, routines include times for indoor and outdoor activities, and provide sufficient time for children to choose from a variety of materials and to reflect about their work. Routines are predictable in terms of children and adults knowing what to expect (first is breakfast, then group, then work time...), however within each activity period, time and flexibility are provided to support children's interests, transitions, and interactions. Teachers also support children's learning goals as they work together

throughout the daily routine in a variety of activities such as set-up, participation in planned activities, clean up and maintaining the classroom.

Within the daily routine learning goals are addressed as teachers facilitate interactions with members of the classroom community. Teachers purposefully organize the day to allow time and space for individual, pairs, small groups and whole group interactions. Children of multiple ages have the opportunities to work together. This practice allows children to work on short and long term projects and activities while learning from one another.

During all routine activities such as tooth brushing, meals, hand washing, and toileting, teachers facilitate children's self awareness, language, and social interactions. For infants and toddlers, diapering is a rich learning opportunity and a cooperative process. During this time the teachers talk with the child throughout the process narrating what they are doing, why they are doing it, asking the child questions, and discussing what will happen next. All children are encouraged to help themselves as much as they can. For example, by holding the diaper or opening the diaper tabs. This helps develop self-awareness. All meals and snacks are served family style. During all meals and snacks adults sit and eat with the children modeling and engaging them in meaningful conversation, as well as promoting social skills, self-help skills, and self discovery.

#### Making Learning Meaningful by Understanding and Responding to Children's Interest and Needs Throughout the Day:

Learning is most effective when it is related to children's interests, needs and experiences, in other words, when it has meaning in the lives of the children. Teachers use information from the family, the child, assessments, observations and knowledge of the child and learning to understand which activities, experiences and teaching strategies will result in the most interesting, meaningful and beneficial opportunities for children.

Collaboration with parents is a primary means for understanding how to provide meaningful experiences for children on a daily basis. Daily conversations, journals that are shared between home and school, infant/toddler daily records, parent meetings and discussion groups, and being receptive to parents' ideas and suggestions help teachers to understand children's experiences, interests and needs. Teachers also gain information by listening and talking with children, and through observing and documenting interest and ideas. These methods help teachers gain knowledge of children's social relationships, developmental skills, interests and ideas, which will be used to develop learning opportunities for the group or for individual children.

Specifically teachers make learning meaningful by:

- Scaffolding children's work
- Designing the environment, organizing materials, and modifying schedules and teaching strategies to meet the needs of the children in the group
- Being mindfully present with the children
- Including group and individual assessment information while planning experiences
- Using curriculum as a flexible framework for teaching
- Ensuring curriculum is developed to support learning experiences and routines
- Included play as the cornerstone for learning experiences

- Engaging in conversations with the children that promote reflecting on previous experiences and using an enriching vocabulary

Families are included in this process when:

- Teachers offer opportunities for families to participate in classroom experiences
- Teachers support, develop, and maintain the home language whenever possible
- Ensuring that when children are acquiring language, teachers support the child's experience by using tools such as pictures, familiar objects, gestures and body language
- Teachers work together with families who may have differing values and practices to establish a meaningful relationship and shared understanding.

In addition to the strategies described above, for infants and toddlers, teachers use responsive caregiving techniques, such as:

- Understanding each child's unique nonverbal cues
- Encouraging the child's immediate interest, and supporting and extending the experience
- By using simple language with the children, for example using narration to describe what the children are doing, discussing emotions, or their interests.

#### Scaffolding the Children's Understanding: Including Skills and Knowledge Through Instruction

In addition to making learning is relevant to children by making sure it responds to needs, interests and is meaningful, teachers support learning by including a broad range of strategies, responses, and approaches that encourage development and provide skills and knowledge necessary for deeper understanding of concepts and ideas.

In daily practice teachers use the following techniques to encourage understanding, skills, and knowledge:

- Identify components of an experience and divide it into realistic and do-able parts
- Teachers understanding key concepts related to a topic or developmental area and are able to provide related experiences that are meaningful to children; therefore providing an experience for the children rather than a random activity.
- Teachers promote the inclusion of skills necessary to increase children's understanding and engagement related to the groups' or individual child's area of interest.
- Curriculum projects, explorations, and learning centers expand and build on previous learning, interest, and engagement. Emerging skills are practiced and fostered within this process. Teachers use knowledge of children's abilities to adjust their teaching techniques and scaffold learning as children gain competence.
- A balance of teacher and child initiated activities or interactions are used to support and challenge children's learning.
- Teachers facilitate children's entrance into and sustaining play
- Through being at the children's eye level, observing, and engaging children in conversations, teachers extend children's experience and deepen learning.
- Through their own knowledge of content, teachers extend learning by asking questions, posing problems, and facilitate the children's expression of their ideas, which builds on the meaning of their experiences.

- Collaborative inquiry and reflection are used with individual children or small groups to extend learning.
- For infants and toddlers, teachers gain information through observation and collaboration with families, and with consent, from other professionals. This information is used to prepare opportunities and the environment, which challenges infants' and toddlers' in all developmental domains.

## **VI. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Assessment and evaluation are essential activities for understanding children's progress, developing curriculum, maintaining program quality, obtaining feedback from parents, ensuring consistent high standards for performance of program staff, and monitoring compliance with the guidelines set by the State Department of Education and Community Care Licensing and accrediting organizations.

The instruments used to assess the program are: Desired Results Developmental Profiles, the Environmental Rating Scale, Parent Surveys and the Contract Monitoring Review. Information obtained from these sources is collected and analyzed electronically and is used to formulate plans for program improvement, and is shared with families, staff and the Programs for Children Board of Directors at the end of the school year. Specifically, assessment results are used as a basis for informing parents of children's developmental progress, planning and implementing developmentally appropriate learning experiences for children, and self-evaluation of the program in order to make systematic changes in policies and procedures used in the classroom, center, and program.

### Child Assessment Plan

Child assessments are integral to providing high quality education and care services. The purpose of using assessments is to gain information that may be used to support children's learning by:

- Identifying children's interests and needs
- Describing learning and developmental progress of each child
- Allowing teachers to adapt and improve curriculum, teaching practices, and the environment
- Encouraging children's curiosity
- Extend children's engagement and support self-initiative
- Communicating with families
- Arranging for additional screenings, diagnostic tests and referrals when necessary
- Planning for program improvement

Fresno State Programs for Children uses the Desired Results Developmental Profiles for ongoing assessment of all children enrolled in the program for ten or more hours per week. Additional methods such as checklists, or observations may also be used to gather assessment information. The Desired Results system of assessment adheres to principles of authentic early childhood assessment in which teachers and parents gather information about all aspects of the child's life including individual growth and development, experiences, abilities and disabilities. In order for



assessments to be meaningful and relevant they also include information about the child's family values, culture, language and priorities. Furthermore, when teachers communicate with families about their child's assessments it shared in a way that is sensitive to family language, identity, culture, and values. Information about children is gathered primarily through observing children in settings that are familiar to the child. For each child an assessment is conducted two times per year, usually once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester. The first assessment must occur within sixty days of enrollment. In addition to this formal assessment teachers share information about the child verbally and through documentation.

During the assessment process parents and teachers each contribute information about the child that provides a picture of the child's sensory, language, cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social/emotional development, health and safety practices, and the child's approach to learning. Information contributed by parents, teachers, and relevant specialists is integrated into a Desired Results Developmental Profile that is shared twice a year in written form at the parent conference. Parents are also provided with information verbally about their child's progress on a regular informal basis. At this time individualized learning plans, goals, and any additional referrals to professionals that may be necessary are developed. A plan for ensuring follow-up on referrals is also included.

At group and individual parent meetings, parents are informed about the purpose and use of the assessment, specific instruments used, access and interpretation of data, assessment methods, training and confidentiality. If parents feel that the assessments used are not appropriate for their child, teachers will work with parents to come to an agreement on methods that will meet their child's needs.

As part of each child's initial assessment and parent conference, parents are provided with information about confidentiality and assessment. This should include the following information:

- Categories of individuals who will have access to assessment information about individual children, and the reasons they will need access.
- Information and regulations about family rights and access to files.
- Description of how records are kept confidential.
- Explanations of how an individual child's assessment information will be represented, used, and interpreted. SEE APPENDIX
- The purpose for which the assessment is designed, and how it is used in the program.
- How results of assessments are determined, and how results are used to develop learning opportunities for their child.
- How teachers were trained to use the assessment, interpret the results, and under what circumstances the child will be assessed.
- Where parents can find information about assessment instruments used.

#### Child Assessment Methods and use of Information

Information used to assess children, and included in each child's developmental profile is gathered through a variety formal and informal methods including intake information gathered at the time of enrollment, two-way communication journals with parents, observations, child portfolios, anecdotal

records, daily journals, and other types of documentation. These diverse methods promote sensitivity to family culture and home languages, children's abilities and disabilities, and allow for information to be collected in settings that are familiar and natural for the child. Information gathered is used to encourage parents and teachers to collaborate improve curriculum, adapt teaching practice and the environment, and provide individualized learning experiences for each child in the program.

#### Using Assessment Information in the Classroom

Using information gathered through assessments and ongoing conversations with children, teachers develop curriculum and providing experiences that address learning goals through developmentally appropriate experiences. During weekly classroom meetings teachers discuss their own and parent observations of children's interests, needs, strengths as they related to learning goals. When appropriate, lab students, student teachers, or other qualified professionals may be involved in this process. This information, as well as assessment results are used to develop the weekly plan for the group and individual children an monitor children's progress.

Since assessment is an integral part of any program, teachers are provided with ongoing training and guidance about appropriate assessment methods for young children, training specific to the Desired Results Developmental Profiles, and its purposes and values of assessment in the program. Staff share and explain this information with others.

#### Employee Evaluation Procedures

Fresno State Programs for Children, Inc. (PFC) is committed to providing high quality early education and care services. This commitment is reflected in ongoing assessments and evaluation procedures that support examination and reflection of individual performance, practices and beliefs as they relate to the program's vision, mission and goals, and professional criteria outlined by the National Association for the Education for Young Children.

PFC addresses evaluations through a structure that includes observation and evaluation by supervisors, opportunities for discussion and feedback about job performance, support and suggestions for improvement, and opportunities to establish goals. The purpose of performance evaluations is to promote professional and personal growth, and ultimately program improvement.

Individuals who will participate in annual evaluations are:

- Teachers (associate teachers, teachers, master teachers)
- Administrative staff (including office and kitchen staff)
- Site Supervisors
- Students

Schedules and Procedures:

1. The evaluation period will be from April 1 – March 31, with evaluations administered no later than May 31. Self-evaluations by each employee is an expectation of this process. Specific evaluation procedures are outlined below.

2. **Teachers and Staff:** Employees will be evaluated through ongoing observation and feedback. Evaluations will be completed by the employees' immediate supervisor in consultation with a faculty administrator, with the program director responsible for final review. Once completed, evaluations will be administered to the employee. The original evaluation will be signed by the employee, supervisor and administrator and then forwarded to Auxiliary Human Resources to be placed in the employee personnel file. Additionally, a copy will be kept in the employee's on-site personnel file and one will be provided to employee.
3. **Site Supervisors:** Site supervisors will be evaluated through ongoing observation and feedback. Evaluations will be completed by the center director or the program director, with the program director responsible for final review. The original evaluation will be signed by the employee, supervisor and administrator and then forwarded to Auxiliary Human Resources to be placed in the employee's personnel file. Additionally, a copy will be kept in the employee's on-site personnel file and one will be provided to employee.
4. **Students:** Students will be evaluated annually by the master teacher or supervisor. However, the master teacher or supervisor may evaluate a student employee each semester. The evaluation will be administered to the student, kept in the onsite file and the student will be provided a copy.

#### Program Self Evaluation Plan

In addition to assessing children's development, Programs for Children completes an annual program assessment that includes assessing the summaries of children's developmental profiles, the learning environment, parent surveys, and contract monitoring that ensure compliance with regulatory agencies.

Research demonstrates that a quality learning environment in the ECE program, has long-term benefits for children's school achievement and social adjustment. Therefore Fresno State Programs for Children centers and classroom environments are annually assessed using the *Environment Rating Scales*. Assessments of the learning environments are conducted in the fall semester. Based on assessments findings, action plans are formulated for improving the learning environment. Classroom teachers, administrators and parents who have been trained to use the Environmental Rating Scales are welcome to participate in the process.

As part of the annual program assessment, Fresno State Programs for Children requests that parents complete an Annual Parent Survey. This survey provides information about how the program is meeting the needs of the child and the family. The survey results are reviewed at the classroom, center, and program levels to identify trends and areas that may require modifications or improvements. As an additional part of the annual self-assessment the program also reviews its administrative practices. Documents related to admission and enrollment and program governance are reviewed to ensure compliance with California Department of Education Funding Terms and Conditions and Community Care Licensing regulations. Parents, Board members, and program staff are encouraged to participate in program assessment.

The NAEYC Accreditation self-study process is conducted annually, and every 5 years the centers undergo a comprehensive review and program visit to maintain accreditation. This comprehensive assessment of all aspects of the program is undertaken to ensure that Programs for Children meets the highest standards of quality as established by the ECE profession

Information about all assessments conducted in the program is shared with parents. Information provided includes the purpose and use of each instrument, and how it will be used in the program; interpretation of results, and how those results will be included in future opportunities for children; how teachers or other program staff were trained to use instruments-including training procedures, interpretation of results, appropriate conditions for use of instruments; and how to find information about assessment instruments used in the program.

## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

In order for children to fully engaged and fully benefit from their school experience school and families must work together to make sure that the children are healthy and are in a healthy environment. Ensuring healthy environments requires working with parents on an ongoing basis on supporting children's health, diligence about the physical maintaining a safe and healthy environment, and carefully following health and safety practices and policies.

Ensuring healthy children and healthy environments begins at the time of enrollment. In partnership with parents a comprehensive report is developed that includes a routine health screening, immunizations, allergies, any special conditions, or chronic illness. Health consultants are utilized to inform the program of possible health threats, and to observe and provide feedback regarding health practices and written policies.

Our nutrition program for the children is an extension of our philosophy regarding the nurturance of healthy individuals. We provide breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack for the children in our programs.

The program receives funding for the Federal Child Care Food Program for the children's nutrition program. Thus the nutritional program meets federal standards. Meals served are: breakfast (8:00 AM), morning snack (10:00 AM), lunch (12 PM) and afternoon snack (3:00). Menus emphasize foods based on their nutritional value and the diversity of cultural and ethnic food choices. Raw and fresh foods are used extensively and the amount of ready-prepared, frozen items kept to a minimum. Salt, sugar and fat content are carefully watched. A variety of different ways of preparing foods, cooking foods and eating foods are introduced to the children. Menus are published on a weekly basis in the classrooms.

Meals are served family-style. Teachers and assistants are trained to model healthy behavior and appropriate table manners at mealtimes. The children are encouraged to try new foods, but are never forced to do so. Food is never used as a punishment or a reward. Mealtimes are pleasant with friendly conversation. The atmosphere is relaxed and children are not rushed to finish before they are ready. If appropriate for age level, children assist in table setting and clean-up. To enhance the

mealtime experience, real tableware is used. Preschool children use table plates and silverware and infant and toddler use plastic plated and silverware. Use of tableware also increases awareness of the importance of reusable items over paper and other non-recyclable materials as part of our efforts to conserve the environment and natural resources.

For infants and toddlers, staff carefully follow parent directions regarding breast milk, formula and solid foods. Infants are always to be held when given a bottle. Children are assisted in learning to feed themselves by being given finger foods. Messes are expected. Information regarding what a child has consumed is conveyed to parents directly or in writing.

Prior to all meals and snacks, children wash their hands with soap. You will be asked to supervise this procedure.

In order to support healthy nutrition habits Fresno State Programs for Children participates in the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All centers act in accordance with CACFP rules and guidelines related to food preparation, serving and storage.

It is Fresno State Programs for Children's policy that food may not be brought from home except when a child has dietary needs that cannot be met by the program. If a child must have special diet due to allergies or other health concerns the program must receive a note from the doctor indicating which food must be eliminated from a child's diet and which food should be used to substitute. With the parent's or legal guardian's consent, food restriction information is posted in the kitchen and in the center or classroom where the child attends. This will ensure that the child receives appropriate nutrition that falls within CACFP guidelines. Food brought from home must:

- Be labeled with the child's name and the date
- If a cold food, must be refrigerated until it is served
- If necessary, the program will provide food to supplement food brought from home
- Any food with a past due expiration date will be discarded
- All meals and snack are served family style
- The temperature of hot food will be checked prior to setting it on the table for children. Food that is hotter than 110 degrees is kept out of the children's reach at all times.
- **\*\*PLEASE NOTE: Any food brought from home for the a group of children must be commercially purchased and packaged, or whole fruit. No home-baked goodies are permitted.**

The program also work in partnership with local organizations such as First Five Commission of Fresno, the Department of Dietetics, the University Farm Store and, Gardening and Horticulture to continually learn new ideas related to nutrition and heal that can be used in the program and shared with families. Guidelines and policies for ensuring appropriate nutrition and extensive. Below is a partial list of guidelines related to the nutrition program to be used in the program.

- Children are to sit or be held while eating.
- Infants who are not able to sit are held while being bottle-fed.

- Children are never to have a bottle in a crib or cot, and are NEVER to eat from a propped up bottle.
- Children should not carry cups or bottles while crawling or walking at any time.
- With the exception of breast milk, staff serve only infant food and formula that is purchased by the program or is brought to the center by parents in factory sealed containers or prepared according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Bottles may not contain solid foods (e.g. formula and rice cereal) unless the child's health care provider provides written documentation including the reason and instruction for this practice.
- Formula or breast milk that is prepared but not consumed or refrigerated after one hour is discarded.
- If necessary to warm formula or breast milk it is heated in water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no longer than 5 minutes.
- Milk or formula is never to be warmed in a microwave oven.
- Unless recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by the child's family, solid foods and fruit juice is not offered to infants younger than six months.
- If juice is served to children older than six months it is only to be 100% fruit juice, and should be no more than 4 ounces per child daily.
- Only formula is provided for children younger than twelve months of age, and whole milk is used for children between 12 and 24 months.
- In order to reduce the potential for choking children in the program are not served hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut or soy butter or similar types of sticky foods, or food in pieces that is larger than can be swallowed whole.
- For infants food should be cut into pieces no more than ¼ inch, for toddler pieces of food should be in pieces no more than ½ inch and match the child's ability to chew and swallow food safely.
- Weekly menus are to be posted and copies available for parents at each center. Copies of menus must also be available for review by CACFP or CCL officials if requested.
- Meals and snacks are provided every 2-3 hours for all children (and on demand for infants and toddlers)
- Parents, the child's health provider, and teachers will work together to determine when to introduce new foods, transition from a bottle to a cup, and to make sure that food provided by the program meets the child's nutritional needs. This information will be documented on the daily record, or at a parent conference.
- For children over one year teachers will include cleaning gums and tooth brushing after one meal.
- 

In order to help parents provide the benefits of breastfeeding for their children, Fresno State Programs will accept, store and provide breast milk as long as it meets sanitary and storage criteria (See bullets below). In addition teachers will work with mothers to coordinate feeding schedules and make sure all of the infant/toddler programs have space for mothers to breastfeed. The following guidelines will be used for storing and preparing breast milk.

- Milk must be provided in ready-to-feed containers labeled with the infant's name and date.

- Milk must be stored in the refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than 3 months.
- When preparing milk for feeding staff should gently mix, not shake, the milk.

Maintaining children's health and safety indoors and outdoors requires active participation from all adults in the program as well as providing children with information about health and safety, and opportunities to use safe and healthy practices during the day. Several operating policies ensure that the children are in a safe and healthy environment:

- All full time staff in the program are trained in pediatric first-aid and CPR. Training must include managing a blocked airway and rescue breathing for infants and children. A full time trained staff member is to be with each group of children at all times.
- To minimize exposure to communicable illness the program has policies for exclusion of ill children, contacting parents when children are ill, and informing and following procedures outlined by the local county health department, Community Care Licensing and the Center for Disease Control.
- When an outbreak of a communicable illness occurs information is provided to families through posting of fact sheets and verbally that includes symptoms of the disease, how the disease is spread from person to person, period of communicability, and control measures that are used at school and should be used at home.
- Hand washing is required in order to keep children and adults healthy, and must be included throughout the child's and adult's day. To support the regular practice of hand washing all adults working in the centers or visiting the program, and children who are developmentally able are taught proper hand washing procedures and monitored on a regular basis. When necessary, adults help children wash their hands
- A healthy and safe environment is also maintained through ongoing regular cleaning and sanitation of toys and equipment, reporting of potential health and safety hazards, and through teachers' attention and adherence to personal health practices. The specific practices that are necessary for maintaining a safe and healthy environment are extensive and must be followed carefully. The Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table (NAEYC) and Code of Safe Practices for the classrooms, offices and food preparation provide specific tasks and procedures to be used in Programs for Children centers. These documents can be found in the appendix of this document and are provided to employees when they are hired. For quick reference they are posted in each classroom.
- The centers strive to minimize the use of chemicals used to clean and sanitize. Ventilation and routine cleaning are used rather than room deodorizers, sprays and air fresheners in the centers.
- To minimize the possibility of spreading infectious disease the following procedures are used:
  - Surface that may come in contact with body fluids are disposable or made of material that can be sanitized.
  - Staff use barriers and techniques that minimize the possibility of contact with body fluids, openings in the skin, or mucous membranes (e.g. gloves, tissue, diaper squares).
  - When spills occur they are immediately cleaned with detergent then rinsed with clean water.

- After cleaning surfaces they are sanitized with a bleach water solution described in the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table posted in each classroom.
  - Rugs and carpets are cleaned by spot cleaning, blotting with a disinfecting detergent, as well as by steam cleaning or shampooing.
  - Diapers and other contaminated materials are placed in a plastic bag that is tied, and then placed in a closed container.
- Maintaining health requires that children be provided with periods of outdoor play. All children in the program are provided with daily opportunities for playing outdoors. When qualified officials determine that weather or air quality present health risks, or unsafe conditions the children will be provided with alternative indoor activities, that as much as possible, are similar to outdoor activities, but safe for indoor spaces. When children are not able to go outdoors safe alternate activities will be provided indoors.
  - To protect children from outdoor elements and hazards teachers take the following precautions. Teachers are careful to ensure the children are dressed appropriately for the weather, including layering clothing in order to stay warm, and wearing light clothing in the summer months. During the summer months children have opportunities to play in the shade at all times when outdoors. When in the sun, children must wear sun-protected clothes, and/or use sun screen with UVA and UVB of SPF 15 or higher. When public health officials recommend that insect repellent should be used they must contain DEET, and should be applied only to children who are two months or older, and only once a day. Parents must complete the Authorization to Administer Medication form prior to applying sunscreen or insect repellent.

Although the children in the program enjoy animals in their classrooms, and they provide numerous educational experiences, precautions must be taken to make sure that the children are protected from potential injuries and illnesses that can result from having animals in the environment. Teacher must carefully supervise interactions between children and animals, and teach the children about appropriate handling of animals, and if child has allergies to a animal make sure that he or she is not exposed to the animal. When animals are in the classrooms they must appear to be in good health and have documentation stating that they are immunized if appropriate, and are not a danger to children. Reptiles are not kept as classroom pets.

### Medication

To make sure that medication is administered to children properly, and appropriate procedures related to health are followed the following policies are to be used.

Any teacher or administrator or teacher who administers medication (a) has specific training, (b) an annual written performance evaluation by a qualified health professional on the five right practices of medication administration:

1. Verification that the right child
2. Receives the right medication
3. In the right dose
4. At the right time
5. The right method with documentation of each right time the medication is administered.



If it is requested that teachers or administrators provide special medical procedures for a child in the program the procedures must be approved by Community Care Licensing, the program director, and teachers must be trained by a health professional that they competent in the procedures and are guided in writing about how to perform the procedure.

The following steps are to be followed in order to make sure that medication is administered properly.

- Only prescription medication is to be used in the program. Parents may request that their child's doctor prescribe over the counter medication.
- Medication may be given to children ONLY if the Authorization to Administer Medication form is completed and signed by the parent or guardian.
- Any medication received from the parent or guardian must be in the original container and include:
  - The child's first and last names
  - The date that the prescription was filled, or was recommended by the licensed health provider
  - The name of the licensed health care provider
  - The expiration date or period of use for the medicationManufacture's instructions, or original prescription label that details the name of the medication, the strength, and instructions for administration and storage of the medication
- All medications are kept on locked containers

#### Diapering and Assisting Children in the Restroom

The following policies and procedures are to be used with children who are not potty- trained.

1. Only commercially available disposable diapers and pull-ups are used for children who are not potty-trained.
2. Based on the daily record, diapers are checked a minimum of every two hours when children are awake, and when they awaken. Each time a diaper is changed it is documented in the child's daily record.
3. Diapers are always changed when wet or soiled.
4. While changing diapers on an elevated surface teachers are to keep one hand on the child at all times.
5. Diapers and soiled underwear are changed only in the designated changing area in each classroom. Diapers or soiled clothing are not changed anywhere else in the center.
6. Our changing area is located at least 3 ft. from other areas that children use and is only used for one designated group of children.
7. Changing procedures are used to evaluate teachers who change diapers.

8. Surfaces used for changing diapers or soiled clothing are NEVER used for other purposes. EVEN IF IT IS FOR JUST A FEW MINUTES.
9. Containers used for disposing of soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly, using a hands- free device.
10. Containers are kept closed and not accessible to children.
11. Kitchen Assistants/ food preparers do not change diapers until their food preparation duties are completed for the day.

In addition to the general health and safety information included above, the following procedures are to be used with infants and toddlers.

#### Infant and Toddler Naps

- In order to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) infants should only be placed on their backs when napping.
- Items such as pillows, puffy quilts, stuffed and other toys and materials are not placed in the crib with children who are younger than eight months.
- If blankets are used the child should be placed at the foot of the crib, the blanket should be tucked under the mattress, and reach no higher than the child's chest.
- Infant's heads should never be covered at anytime while napping.

PLEASE SEE THE APPENDIX FOR SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR CLEANING PROCEDURES AND FREQUENCY, WATER PLAY, HANDWASHING, TOOTH BRUSHING, DIAPERING AND TOILETING, AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS.

#### Suspected Child Abuse Reporting

##### Fresno State Programs for Children Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policies

All program staff are mandated reporters and are required to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers or others to Child Protective Services. When staff report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from termination, retaliation, or other disciplinary actions for that reason alone, unless it is proven to be malicious. Although it is not required to share this with a supervisor all staff are able to share their suspicions with a supervisor.

#### VIII. TEACHERS/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Working effectively with children and families, and ensuring high quality early education and care programs occurs when program staff are committed to their ongoing education, and when they continually examine their goals, practices and beliefs as they relate to the services provided by the program. Fresno State Programs for Children strives to support professional development of staff

by providing them with information and support in obtaining required certification, building and maintaining skills, and continuing professional growth. The goals of including these types of support are to strengthen individual growth, attract and maintain qualified program staff to continually examine ways of improving program quality, and to model professional growth for programs and individuals. Staff development focuses on providing planning, training and resources that emphasize the importance of team building, community partnerships, and working closely with families.

All teaching and administrative staff are required to possess a current Child Development Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and meet, or be working towards, accomplishing NAEYC teacher requirements. Once a semester employees will be asked to meet with a supervisor to review progress made toward meeting or maintaining teacher requirements. Individuals will be asked to submit transcripts, current enrollment information, and professional development activities planned or attended to make sure teachers are current, or are making satisfactory progress toward meeting teacher requirements. As part of the process of obtaining and maintaining the permit individuals will develop an individualized professional growth plan that will include educational and professional goals. Teachers and administrators are encouraged to share goals with a supervisor, professional growth advisor, and other colleagues for feedback and suggestions. When staff share their goals with a supervisor he or she may provide information, ideas, resources, and referrals that may assist in meeting professional and educational goals. Any plan developed should coordinate with the Child Development Permit Matrix and any applicable requirements of the California Department of Education, Community Care Licensing, or NAEYC.

Although student employees are not required to hold a valid teacher permit, for most positions they are required to possess child development or early childhood education units. If students have questions related to working with children they should speak with their academic advisor. They may also wish to speak with a teacher or administrator about their experiences related to working with children, families, leadership, and the community.

See the Appendix 6 for specific teaching requirements.

When hired with Fresno State Programs for Children employees will participate in an initial orientation where they receive an introduction to the program and receive and review the Employee Handbook and Policy and Procedures Manual. These documents are extensive and intended to provide employees with initial information about the program and also serve as ongoing resources and training tools to support work with children, families and students. Students who will be completing lab placements or student teaching assignments will receive information about the centers from center staff and their professors.

**Topics discussed in the Employee Handbook include:**

- Nature of Employment
- Employee Requirements
- Employment Categories and Classifications
- Payroll and Time Keeping
- Employee Benefits
- Leaves of Absence
- Work Conditions and Employee Conduct

Student Employee Information  
Miscellaneous Information

**Topics included in Program Policies and Procedures Include:**

Program philosophy, values and goals  
Expectations for ethical conduct  
Working with diverse families in the program  
Health, safety and emergency procedures  
Individual needs of children they will be teaching and caring for  
Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques  
Daily activities and routines of the program  
Program curriculum  
Completion of Desired Results Developmental profile  
Completion of age appropriate Environmental Rating Scale  
Assessment of children and program  
Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures  
Program policies and procedures  
NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards  
Local, state and NAEYC regulatory requirements

Information required to work with young children is extensive. In addition to discussing these topics during orientation newly hired staff will have a mentor (more experienced staff member) with whom they can discuss these or other items. One month after hire a supervisor will meet with new staff members to check on progress and see if there are any additional questions or information that is necessary, and to provide follow-up training. If at any time program staff have questions or concerns they are encouraged to discuss them with a supervisor. New staff members have an introductory period of three months; during this time an administrator makes a professional judgment as to whether the employee is competent to work in the program, if hired the employee will be provided with benefits.

In addition to developing a professional development plan based on required Child Development Permits, employees participate in continual self-growth through reflection and feedback. This process will take place through an annual formal evaluation with supervisors, and in less formal settings such as in meetings, or conversations with colleagues. The goals of these kinds of evaluations are self-evaluations and development of personal goals, as well as ongoing reflection and feedback. Information gathered from these sources informs teachers' practice, adds to the knowledge base, and offers opportunities for continuing the cycle of reflection and growth.

Programs for Children strives to continually improve the quality of the services it provides to children and families and to participate in the growth and professional recognition of the field of early care and education. In order to achieve these goals Programs for Children works towards all staff obtaining degrees in higher education in child development or early childhood education. The program also maintains California Department of Education and Community Care Licensing staffing regulations at all times.

In the event that a staff member is accused of child abuse a report will be submitted by the program director to Community Care Licensing, the Auxiliary Human Resources Department,

Auxiliary staff counsel and the executive director. As appropriate the staff member and program will be advised on in what capacity and where the staff member will work so that the rights of the child and staff member are protected.

## IX. FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

Fresno State Programs for Children serves a unique and diverse population comprised of children of students, faculty, staff, and community members. Families enrolled in the program reflect the diversity of our community.

Parent education and involvement. It is our goal to establish intentional practices that foster strong reciprocal relationships with families. Program staff begin develop this partnership as they learn about individual children and families at the time of enrollment through meetings with office staff, administrators, teachers, and through visiting the centers. This is a continual process that takes place as program staff and families formally (parent survey, enrollment and parent conference information) and informally (daily conversations and school social events) share information about regarding family dynamics, including child rearing practices, goals for children, socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and culture backgrounds. This information is used to adapt the program environment, curriculum and teaching methods to the families served. Staff also work with families by participating in campus and community cultural events and performances designed for children and their families.

Partnerships are also developed with families by providing leadership opportunities within the program. At the program level, parents may serve on the Programs for Children Board of Directors participating and participate in developing policy and providing oversight of the program. Parents may also provide leadership at the center level by joining the Programs for Children, Parent Advisory Council and working with other parents to support the program, and mentor, and learn from one another. Parents are also encouraged to develop relationships with program staff by visiting the center at anytime and participating in daily routines and special events in their child's classroom. Advanced notice is not required for parents to visit the program.

For more information about family relationships please see the following sections/pages of this manual:

Curriculum and Relationships  
Philosophy, Goals, and Values  
Communication techniques  
Assessment

Families are encouraged to be advocates for their children by:

- Promoting families to contribute to decisions about goal, plans, activities, and services for their children
- Work collaboratively with teachers raising concerns and finding solutions which may be included in classroom practices
- Supporting families to make primary decisions for services their children need
- Encouraging families to advocate for needed services

- Encouraging families to use a variety of techniques to negotiate difficulties that may arise in their interactions at school
- Facilitating and sharing information community resources for children and families
- Supporting transitions within the program and the larger community
- Providing information about community programs

### Community Relationships

In order for early education programs to thrive they must develop and maintain strong community relationships that support individual families, advocate and provide resources for the program, and invite involvement as a community member in local, state and national organizations that support early education. Fresno State Programs for Children is a participant in both the campus community, as well as the larger valley community in these three areas. The program makes sure that all families, regardless of structure, race, religion, cultural background, gender, abilities, socioeconomic factors, or language have opportunities to become involved in the program and larger community as it relates to the program and the field of early education.

Community Relationships to Support Individual Families. Positive community relationships are necessary to support reciprocal parent partnerships. Programs for Children staff are responsible for being knowledgeable about community resources, where to find information for families, and developing and maintaining relationships with community organizations that may assist families and the program. This collaborative effort results in a broad base of campus and community services that providing families and program staff with a network of support and resources intended to meet family needs.

Request for community services may emerge from the California Department of Education, Desired Results Annual Parent Survey; shared through informal communication, or on occasion, emerge from other sources. When the request for information arises families are provided with a list of community resources that may be of assistance. When requested, and ***with written consent from the family***, staff will assist parents by facilitating connections with community programs and resources. In addition, a list of community resources is also located in a parent resources area of each center and is available for parents at all times.

When a family or parent requests community resources from a staff member it should be reported to a supervisor. The supervisor will collaborate with the staff member to make sure that the parent is provided with the information requested, including a consent form, and any assistance that may be necessary.

When information or resources is presented it should be provided a way that is useful and meaningful to the family. For example, any literature provided should be culturally and linguistically appropriate for the family; encourage coordination and continuity of services, and support the family's or child's ability to fully participate in the process.

***Please note—this section of the handbook does not refer to incidences that require reporting to a social services agency. Please see the Employee Handbook for guidelines to use in these instances.***

Community Resources and Program Enhancement. Programs for Children uses community resources, both campus and larger community, to enhance children's, families' and program staff's experiences. Staff are encouraged to work with their supervisor and participate in making connections with campus and community groups that may be interested in working with the program. Participation with community groups facilitates curriculum and the children's learning experience. For example, the music department, art department, or science department may be invited to visit the centers. Families and the centers are also encouraged to attend and participate in events on and off campus such as community performances, art shows, museums, and cultural events. If individuals know of events that may be of interest at the centers, please feel free to share information about the event with center or program administrators so that it can be shared with parents and teachers.

Community Participation and Advocacy. As outlined in the California Department of Education, Desired Results, Programs for Children encourages membership and participation in events that promote quality early care and education in the program, at local, state and national level.

Parents and staff are welcome to attend Programs for Children Board meetings, share ideas and participate in program improvement activities. In addition Programs for Children provides numerous opportunities for parents, teachers, administrators and other staff to collaborate and participate in activities related to Fresno State and the community. Opportunities may include serving on governing boards, working with community organizations presenting or attending workshops at the local, state and national level, participating in development of early childhood programs and resources, and participation in research studies. Please see a supervisor if you would like more information about how you may become involved in some of these activities.

## X. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment in early childhood programs is a reflection of the program's mission, goals, and values. Program staff carefully choose supplies, materials, equipment and furnishings that support the program goals, curriculum, and that encourage desired outcomes for children. The environment should be welcoming to children and adults, accessible, and engaging. The environment also mirrors the program's beliefs about development and learning, relationships, parent partnerships, and health and safety. In essence, the environment is "a third teacher" (Gandini 1998); the parent and teacher, respectively, being the first and second. Since the environment plays such an important role in the child's experiences it necessary to continually reflect is meeting the needs of its participants.

All Programs for Children centers continually assess and if necessary modify the environment through formal and informal means. On a daily basis environments are checked to make sure they are, safe, sanitary, free of hazards and provide appropriate opportunities and experiences for the day's work. The physical environment is continually assessed to make sure it is clean, sanitary, and free of hazards. Activities and experiences are assessed to make sure there is a balance of child directed and adult directed activities, opportunities for children to work alone and in groups, sufficient indoor and outdoor activities, and sufficient open-ended activities.

Annually, as part of the California Department of Education Desired Results self assessment, all centers evaluate the environment through completion of the Environment Rating Scale (Harms, ), and the National Association for the Education of Young Children self study. Both of these instruments allow staff to assess the physical environment and provide modifications of necessary .

Criteria for ensuring safe and health environments are important and extensive. Please review the appendix for more detailed information about standards and rules for making sure environments are safe and appropriate. However, below are some basic practices that all employees and programs visitors should follow.

- Children should be supervised by sight and sound at all times.
- Walkers are not permitted in the program.
- Never leave children alone, even for a few seconds.
- Immediately report any unsafe conditions to a supervisor.
- Make sure coverings are secure and will not cause children or adults to trip.
- Immediately address hazards such as risks that may lead to electrical shock, tripping, slipping, falling, or burns.
- Remove any broken or unsafe toys or equipment (if possible) and immediately report to a supervisor.
- Identify and remove all choking hazards
- When using strollers or buggys make sure children are restrained in accordance with manufacturers instructions.
- Follow cleaning and sanitation procedures outlined in the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table (see appendix) and Code of Safe Practices
- Make sure you are familiar with center emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Make sure all exits are free not blocked.
- Make sure fully equipped first aid kits are immediately accessible indoors, outdoors and for field trips, including walks away from the center.
- The indoor and outdoor spaces should be free from rodents, harmful insects, pests and other
- When areas have work done that may result in dangerous fumes or vapors the children will attend another center until the area is free of danger or health hazards.



- On “Spare the Air” Days outdoor play should occur in the morning or as directed by health officials.
- Area near the centers are smoke free. If you notice anyone smoking near the children or playground please notify a supervisor.
- All center have monthly practice fire/evacuation drills. As a part of each drill smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors should also be tested. Drills and checking detectors will be documented on the Fire Drill Log.
- Refer to the Code of Safe Practices as an additional means for monitoring the environment and ensuring children’s safety.

It is not practical to list all criteria that are necessary to set up and maintain a safe, healthy, and engaging environment. Appendix IV provides detailed list and procedures about the environment. Please refer to the appendix for more complete information.

## XI. LEADERSHIP AND MANGEMENT

In order for programs to be of high quality and effective they require administrators that are competent, knowledgeable and able to develop and implement systems that result in positive outcomes for children, families, staff, Fresno State, and the lager community. Administrators are responsible for:

- Mentoring others through sharing expertise, understanding individual needs, and supporting professional and professional growth.
- Continuing their own growth by making a commitment to increasing competence and professional growth.
- Continually working to build and maintain positive relationships with staff.
- Being fiscally accountable through sound long and short term fiscal planning and management, and by establishing priorities based on the program mission.
- Managing the program in order to ensure that program operations are carried out in accordance with appropriate regulations and the program mission.
- Evaluating the program, centers and individuals for continued improvement and accountability.
- Upholding safe and healthy environments and practices.
- Collaborating with individuals in the program, on campus and in the community to carry put the program mission. ( NAEYC Accreditation Standard 10, Leadership and Management)

Fresno State Programs has administrators at each of the centers and for the program. Appendix\_\_\_\_ includes an organizational chart that illustrates the organizational structure of Programs for Children and identifies program administrators and other program staff. All program staff are encouraged to understand the program organization and contribute to its operations. If

you have questions about the program please feel free speak with an administrator if you have questions or would like to make suggestions.

## APPENDIX I

### RELATIONSHIPS

#### Guidelines for Supporting Children and Managing Behavior

Teaching staff promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children. Teachers:

- a. Model turn-taking, sharing and caring behaviors.
- b. Help children negotiate their interactions with one another.
- c. Engage children in the care of the classroom and materials.
- d. Ensure that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- e. Encourage children to listen to one another.
- f. Encourage and help children to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.
- g. Use verbal description to describe ongoing interactions and to identify pro-social behaviors.
- h.

Teach the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills using environmental modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.

#### Guide to Positive Discipline and Setting Limits

Each child has the right to be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature. The Early Education Center does not allow any physical or emotional punishment. Our emphasis is on redirection and helping children develop positive methods of problem solving.

Put yourself in the child's place. What is the root of this behavior? Consider the difference between "Don't touch that!" and "It's hard to wait; I know you're curious and it looks nice, but..." The second approach states the same limit, but it shows the child some understanding. Hurried caregivers sometimes see only a child's surface behavior, not the whole child.

**Expect children to test limits;** that's how they learn. The more the environment sets clear limits, the easier your job will be. Behavior problems often develop when children are either over stimulated, bored or restless. Sometimes it helps to look at the environment when behavioral problems occur.

Children will test you. Recognize when children are "pushing your buttons". Realize it is not a personal issue. Ask a teacher for help when you feel a particular child is pushing your button".

**When you focus on negative behavior,** it has a negative effect. Recognize positive behavior and focus your energy on encouraging these types of behaviors.

**Express limits in positive terms.** "Be gentle. Touch the baby like this." vs. "Don't pinch the baby." Remember, running is for outside." vs. "Don't run in the classrooms."

**If there isn't a choice don't offer one**, or make a demand sound like a question. "Let's clean up now, OK?" or "Don't you want to take a nap?" are surefire set-up for the answer, 'No!' Then you're stuck!

**Notice your tone of voice.** Yelling at children is a kind of violence, often as destructive and painful as physical violence.

**Point out the difference between the child and the action:** "I like you but I don't like it when you throw sand." vs. you are a "bad boy" or "nice kids don't hit." Recognize children's accomplishments by acknowledging their achievements (i.e. "You put the whole puzzle together.")

**Separate feelings from behavior.** Children need permission to express feelings such as anger, sadness, and depression; although they can't hit another child when they are angry, the feeling of anger is OK.

**Give children space** if they are too angry or upset to listen. Stay until the child calms down, lead the child by the hand out of the situation, help them reengage in an activity once they are ready.

**Follow through** on your words with action. A hand on a toddler's shoulder to prevent climbing onto a table will do more than a verbal command.

**Recall moments** when you felt loved, safe, and accepted from your own childhood. Do you remember being held, nurtured, talked to lovingly? These impulses deep in your heart can be trusted; let them be your guide.

### Resources for Challenging Behaviors

#### A. Plan for Challenging Behavior

Teachers observe children who have challenging behavior. They identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that influence challenging behavior and may contribute to the child's actions. Rather than focus solely on reducing the challenging behavior.

There are several possible explanations for inappropriate behavior in the classroom including developmental experience, individual differences or temperament, the environment, or unmet needs. When addressing challenging behaviors, teachers approach the situation expediently, logically, objectively and using a plan of action. Staff should follow the steps outlined below:

- To ensure the safety of all of the children, including the child exhibiting the behavior, use the positive guidance techniques outlined above and address the situation immediately.
- Bring your concerns and written observations to your classroom supervisor. Observations should be developed using Johnston's (n.d.) instrument for understanding behavior.

- Together a plan will be developed that includes the child, family and school (SEE APPENDIX).
- Towards a Better Understanding (Johnston, n.d.), outlined in appendix I, may be used as a guide for developing a behavior plan.
- An approved plan, timeline and follow-up meetings will be established by the parent and teaching staff, and administrator.
  - While implementing the plan teachers should consult with parents and their immediate supervisor to evaluate progress.  
PLEASE ALIGN

## **I. FOOD/NUTRITION POLICY**

Our nutrition program for the children is an extension of our philosophy regarding the nurturance of healthy individuals. We provide breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack for the children in our programs.

The program receives funding for the Federal Child Care Food Program for the children's nutrition program. Thus the nutritional program meets federal standards. Meals served are: breakfast (8:00 AM), morning snack (10:00 AM), lunch (12 PM) and afternoon snack (3:00). Menus emphasize foods based on their nutritional value and the diversity of cultural and ethnic food choices. Raw and fresh foods are used extensively and the amount of ready-prepared, frozen items kept to a minimum. Salt, sugar and fat content are carefully watched. A variety of different ways of preparing foods, cooking foods and eating foods are introduced to the children. Menus are published on a weekly basis in the classrooms.

Meals are served family-style. Teachers and assistants are trained to model healthy behavior and appropriate table manners at mealtimes. The children are encouraged to try new foods, but are never forced to do so. Food is never used as a punishment or a reward. Mealtimes are pleasant with friendly conversation. The atmosphere is relaxed and children are not rushed to finish before they are ready. If appropriate for age level, children assist in table setting and clean-up. To enhance the mealtime experience, real tableware is used. Preschool children use table plates and silverware and infant and toddler use plastic plated and silverware. Use of tableware also increases awareness of the importance of reusable items over paper and other non-recyclable materials as part of our efforts to conserve the environment and natural resources.

For infants and toddlers, staff carefully follow parent directions regarding breast milk, formula and solid foods. Infants are always to be held when given a bottle. Children are assisted in learning to feed themselves by being given finger foods. Messes are expected. Information regarding what a child has consumed is conveyed to parents directly or in writing.

Prior to all meals and snacks, children wash their hands with soap. You will be asked to supervise this procedure.

## **X. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

**Prevention is the key—never leave a child unsupervised!**

All teachers and regular instructional aides are certified in CPR and First Aid Procedures. In case of emergency, notify a teacher or instructional aide. Do not try to handle a situation if you are not properly trained!

In the event of an emergency or if a child is injured or becomes ill during the day, notify the teacher or administrator immediately. The parent is then contacted first. If the parent cannot pick up the child within one hour of being called, the parent must make arrangements to have the child picked up within one hour. If the parent cannot be reached, other persons on the emergency card will be contacted in order in which they are listed.

Fire drills are conducted monthly. The emphasis is on helping children evacuate the building calmly and safely. Only assist the number of children you can safely and comfortably handle. Exit routes for each program are posted on the rear door of each classroom.

## II. HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

- There are clear guidelines on children's exclusion from the program when ill. If a parent indicates a concern about the child's health, direct them to a teacher immediately.
- Hand washing is the number one prevention of the spread of illness for yourself as well as for the children.
- Kleenex, wash cloths, bibs, utensils etc. are used for only one child. Placing soiled tissues, clothing or toys in their proper place can decrease the spread of illness.
- If you have concerns about any child's health please notify the classroom teacher.

Child safety is a serious matter and is given high priority by center staff. Any accident, whether a bump, scrape, or fall that a child has while in the Center is recorded on an accident form. Please report even the smallest accident to your supervising teacher and s/he will help fill out an accident form for the child. Minor scrapes and bruises are treated with soap, water and a Band-Aid in the classroom. Children with more serious injuries are brought to the office for necessary first aid and observation. Parents are notified as soon as possible regardless of all injuries. If medical intervention is required, emergency procedures as specified on the emergency card are followed and campus police notified for any assistance if needed.

If you are injured at work, please notify the teacher and/or supervisor immediately.

### Program Phone Numbers

#### **Campus Children's Infant Toddler Program**

Office 278-2652

#### **Campus Children's Preschool Program**

278-2004

#### **Huggins Early Education Center**

Rm #25	Office	278-0225
Rm # 24	AM Preschool/ School Age	278-0056
Rm # 26	Infants	278-0297
Rm # 38	Toddlers	278-0369
Rm # 40	Preschool I	278-0371
Rm # 50	Preschool II	278-0374
Rm # 52	Preschool III	278-0375





**Procedures for Using Breast milk in centers**

- Programs for Children encourages the use of breast milk in its centers. Breast milk use in the centers must meet the following criteria.
- Milks must be provided in ready-to – feed containers labeled with the infant’s name and date and storing it in the refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than 3 months.
- When preparing milk for feeding staff should gently mix, not shake, the milk.
- Infants should be held while drinking a bottle.