

# CHILD DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY: PARENT HANDBOOK

## I. Introduction

### A. Welcome Letter

Dear CDL Family,

We are pleased that you have selected the Tennessee Technological University Child Development Laboratory for your child. We know that you will be happy that you have. As part of our CDL “family” we will do our best to keep you informed of your child’s experiences, progress, and development. We hope you will also feel comfortable enough with us to share the concerns and celebrations that are a part of parenting.

This handbook is intended to provide as much information as possible about specific procedures and policies in order to avoid misunderstandings or inadequate communications. Please read it carefully and ask questions about any information that you feel is not clear or not addressed.

We want you to:

- Know, understand, and discuss with us our goals and curriculum
- Look often into our busy, noisy, creative classrooms and see your child at play.
- Realize the validity of play and the importance of what is being learned.
- Work with staff so that together we can help reap many positive benefits and rewards for your child’s today’s and tomorrows.

We look forward to working with you and sharing in the growth and development of your child. We acknowledge and respect the trust you have put in us for the care of your child. We take our role in your child’s life seriously and welcome your feedback to help use refine and strengthen our program. Please feel free to contact me at anytime.

Sincerely,

Angie Smith  
Director, Child Development Laboratory  
Tennessee Technological University  
P.O. Box 5146/ 200 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cookeville, TN 38505  
931-372-6262 [angiesmith@tntech.edu](mailto:angiesmith@tntech.edu)

## **B. Goals and Philosophy**

### **1. Philosophy**

The Child Development Laboratory strongly believes that the young child learns best through direct experiences with his/her world and interaction with other children and supportive adults. Therefore our program provides a multitude of play and social opportunities through which each child is guided toward his/her optimal developmental level. We seek to create an inclusive environment that values all individuals regardless of ability, cultural, racial, or socioeconomic differences.

### **2. Goals**

The goals of the Child Development Laboratory are:

- a. To enhance the growth and development of each child to his/her greatest potential.
- b. To support and empower families to be successful in the area of child rearing.
- c. To provide experiences for University students that are realistic and reflective of a quality childcare environment.
- d. To contribute to the knowledge base and expertise of childcare professionals through an environment conducive to research and training.

## **C. Laboratory Students**

During the academic year our program serves as a laboratory experience for many students. These students are all prepared for their experience in the CDL through orientation provided by CDL staff and instruction from their professors. A Laboratory Student Handbook is made available and provides information about procedures and policies as well as current information on best practices with young children. At the CDL, University students have the chance to observe and interact with young children. This kind of “hands-on” opportunity contributes to their professional knowledge and skill. They are under the direction of their individual instructors and supervised by the staff of the CDL. Interacting and communicating with families is an important aspect of the education of future teachers. Your feedback on experiences with students helps us to refine their lab experience and guide them towards an appropriate level of professionalism. Laboratory students mean more individual attention for the children in our program. We consider their participation a benefit to our program. If you have questions about laboratory students, feel free to share them with staff.

## **D. Open Door Policy**

We extend an open invitation for you to visit, observe, and participate in our program whenever you have the time. You are welcome to visit in the classrooms or call during the day to talk to teachers or your child. Time spent in your child’s classroom, or observing that classroom adds to your understanding of the experience your child has daily and confirms for your child the importance of that experience to you. Parents are welcome to join us for breakfast, snacks, or lunch. Ask your child’s teacher for a schedule of meal

times. We highly recommend that parents volunteer some time each year in the lab.

#### **E. Inclusive Policy**

At the CDL all children are welcomed. We do not discriminate according to race, ethnic background, or ability. Our program welcomes and includes children with disabilities and works closely with other agencies and with families to provide exemplary services to these children. We believe strongly that all children deserve the right to developmentally appropriate programming and access to interaction with peers and supportive professional staff. The University has developed a model program of undergraduate study in which early childhood education and early childhood special education are combined into one major. This reflects the mission of the department and one of the goals of our lab; to provide experiences for future professionals that will model supportive, safe, developmentally appropriate and inclusive environments for effective learning. Inclusion means that special services are provided within the classroom environment if at all possible, and all children benefit from the added expertise of consulting professionals. The positive attitude and understanding of individual differences that result as a part of our program enhance the lives of all who participate.

#### **F. TTU Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Child Development Laboratory follows the TTU Non-discrimination Policy which states, "This agency does not discriminate against persons in the United States on the grounds of race, color, or national origin. They will not be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. No qualified handicapped individual (parent, child, or staff) shall by reason of this handicap be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

## **II. Oversight and Regulations**

#### **A. Licensing**

The Department of Human Services licenses childcare providers in Tennessee. A license insures you that the center has met minimum standards of health, safety, program, physical facilities, and staff requirements. As a Federally funded agency we receive a certificate of approval annually from DHS. Licensing counselors visit periodically during the year to spot-check for non-compliance. Fire inspectors, health and environmentalist also do a yearly inspection. Certificates are clearly posted in the hall outside the office door. If you should have any questions regarding regulations, please ask at the office for a copy of current regulations. We are rated as a 3 star center. For more information about this program visit [www.tnstarquality.org](http://www.tnstarquality.org)

#### **B. Food Program**

The Child Development Laboratory plans for breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks that meet United States Department of Agriculture nutritional guidelines.

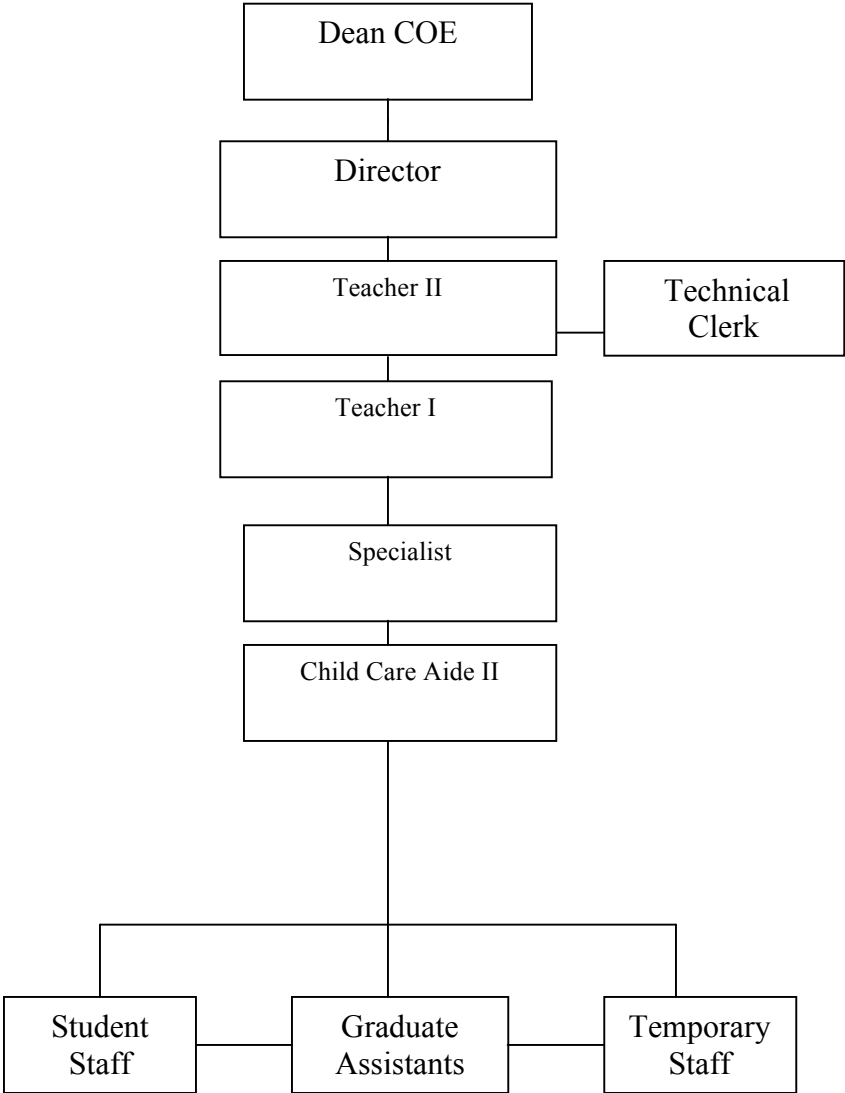
Both breakfast and afternoon snacks are provided as part of your fees. Lunch has a separate charge. Parents may, however, elect to send lunches to school. As a participant in the USDA Child Care Food Program, CDL families who are income eligible may receive reduced price or free meals. Applications are distributed at the time of registration and annually in the fall. A form is completed for each child enrolled to help defray the cost of providing nutritious snacks and meals. A copy of the planned menus is posted weekly outside each classroom and the kitchen. Families whose children have special dietary needs should meet with the director and lead teacher to discuss necessary adaptations in the food program. A physician's note may allow us to include special food purchases under the Child Care Food Program.

### **C. Organizational Structure**

An organizational structure of the Child Development Laboratory is available for reference on page five of this manual. Three subcommittees oversee all advisory board functions: Safety, Equipment/Facilities, and Program Development. The Faculty liaison/Coordinator and Director serve Ex Officio on all committees. The Advisory Board makes recommendations for policy to the Faculty Liaison/Coordinator. The Faculty Liaison/Coordinator then presents the recommendations to the Department Chair of Curriculum and Instruction and the Dean of the College of Education. These three combine the recommendations of the Advisory Board with DHS Licensing guidelines and university policy to create new policy. All new policy is then presented before the Advisory Board prior to notifying parents via written communication.



**Child Development Laboratory  
Organizational Chart**



## **2. Grievance Policy of the Child Development Laboratory**

Awareness of the hierarchy of the organization will assist you in addressing concerns to the proper person. Questions concerning individual classroom experiences should initially be made to the lead classroom teacher. The staff is required to document parental concerns as they make efforts to resolve them. If the question cannot be answered, or the problem resolved at that level, then the documentation will be forwarded to the program director. If a parent feels the issue is not satisfied at that level, it will be elevated to the Faculty Liaison and Coordinator of the CDL in the College of Education, Dr. Martha Howard, at [mhoward@tntech.edu](mailto:mhoward@tntech.edu). You may contact any of these individuals, as you feel necessary.

In accordance with the Human Resource Services Policies and Procedures Number Three from Tennessee Technological University, the Child Development Laboratory recognizes the right and responsibility of each stakeholder (faculty and non-faculty) to discuss all matters of concern, including grievances, complaints, differences of opinion and constructive suggestions, with appropriate university personnel, including administrators and committees, councils and other university bodies responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the University in a manner which is consistent with its mission and with all local, state and national laws, statutes, regulations, and citizens' rights. The Child Development Laboratory also recognizes its responsibility to provide formal processes through which the most serious of cases can be handled so as to ensure that all aspects of such cases will be heard impartially and fairly, that appropriate resolution will be achieved and that all processes will be completed in a timely fashion. At any time that a parent or guardian feels their concerns and issues are not being addressed the Faculty Liaison/Coordinator or the Director may be contacted to start the formal grievance process.

## **D. Emergency Preparedness Plan**

### **1. Fire**

Fire evacuation plans are posted in each room. Fire drills are practiced every month with the date, time, number present, and evacuation time recorded. An evacuation crib(s) is located in/near the entrance of the infant room and used to evacuate infants and non-ambulatory children. The building has a fire alarm/sprinkler system, which is tested and maintained by the University.

### **2. Tornado**

Tornado drills are practiced periodically with regular drills throughout February-June. Children are evacuated to the assigned areas posted within the building.

### **3. Bomb Threat (or any situation requiring extended evacuation of the building)**

### **4. Staff Training**

The staff is trained during new hire orientation in the procedures used for emergency situations. In addition they are made familiar with the

location and function of the fire alarms, extinguishers, fire panel, and switches. The student staff is also made familiar with emergency procedures during initial student staff meetings each semester.

### **5. Emergency Contact Book**

When a child is registered at the CDL the parents/guardians are asked to complete an emergency contact form. With parental permission a current photograph of each child will be attached to the back of the information page. The original of this form is kept in the child's classroom in a binder designated as the emergency contact book. Anytime the center is evacuated the book is taken with the staff as part of the evacuation procedures including drills. This means that in case of an actual emergency evacuation staff will have all information necessary to contact parents or to receive emergency medical care for a child. We ask parents to update this information anytime there is a change in the information both in the classroom and the director's office.

## **III. Operation Policies**

### **A. Registration Requirements**

When a parent is notified that an opening is available for their child an appointment will be established to review paperwork, meet with the child's teacher and set up a schedule for transition into our program. We recommend that parent and child visit the classroom together at least once prior to the first official day of attendance. We believe gradual orientation into the classroom, other children, and staff provides a smoother transition for the child and parent.

#### **2. Transition Policy**

The Child Development Laboratory recognizes the transitioning period as a time of concern for families, teachers, and children. To facilitate positive development during this process, families will work with the previous and new classroom teachers to create a transitioning plan to ease children into the new teaching environment. Criteria for determining appropriate transitions are as follows:

- Developmental readiness
- Chronological age
- Slot availability

Transitions traditionally occur in August of each year, but may occur at any at any time. Before your child's transition, you can expect to receive a welcome letter from your child's new teacher. This letter will give you a better idea of what to expect in his/her classroom. Your family will also be asked to meet with your child's current and up-coming teachers to come up with a transitioning plan to make everything run smoothly for you and your child. We strive to assure that children feel comfortable and confident in their new classes by encouraging classroom visits, parent participation, and meet your teacher nights. In order to better serve the families and children of

the CDL, siblings will be given priority on the waiting list as vacancies become available.

#### **B. Hours of Operation / Holidays and Closings**

The Child Development Laboratory is open daily from 7:15 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. *Children will not be kept prior to or after hours.* The Child Development Laboratory closes on the following schedule as consistent with the University: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (2 days), and Christmas holidays (dates TBA, based on the University schedule). Other holidays may be added as the University makes changes to the holiday schedule. The CDL closes one full week in the summer to allow for repairs and improvements to the physical facility and for staff planning and training for the new academic year. The Child Development Lab remains open during snow, with the exception of when University classes are cancelled due to inclement weather. If Tennessee Technological University classes are cancelled, the Child Development Laboratory will not be open and fees will not be assessed. If the University closes due to unforeseen circumstances, the Child Development Laboratory will also close on a case-by-case basis. Parents will be notified in the event of such changes. There are no reductions of fees for absences.

#### **C. Arrival / Pick-up and Parking**

The center is opened at 7:15 a.m. to receive children. Staff cannot be responsible for children until 7:15 a.m. Mornings can be very hectic as families separate and teachers greet individual children and their families. It is very important that any information necessary for the teacher or staff during the day be written down on your child's daily report form.

The CDL closes at 5:30 p.m. Children are required to be signed out when they are picked up from the CDL. Children will be released only to an adult authorized to pick up the child on the registration forms. Until staff is familiar with faces they will ask for identification. Please bear with us for the inconvenience this may cause. Changes in designated adults to pick up your child must be made in writing both with the classroom teacher and with the director so that all pertinent forms will reflect the change. No parent can be denied access to their child unless a copy of the custody agreement that relinquishes such parental rights is on file in the office. We appreciate your cooperation in assuring the safe departure of each child from the center.

#### **D. Suggestions for Appropriate Dress**

Children in preschool are expected to wear clean, comfortable clothing and sneakers for both indoor and outdoor activities. Tennis Shoes provide comfort and safety for your child. Most accidents occur when children are running, climbing or playing while wearing sandals, dress shoes or loafers. All clothing items should be in good condition, of appropriate size and fit and free of suggestive language or symbolism. Clothing with pictures or slogans pertaining to violence, sex, drugs or disrespect for others is not permitted.

Children should come dressed according to the current days weather conditions. In colder weather conditions the following items are suggestions of appropriate dress; long pants, tights, long sleeve shirts, sweaters, coats and etc. Sometimes it is best to dress in layers so that if a child gets too hot they can



remove some layers of clothing to make themselves more comfortable. In warmer weather conditions, the following items are some suggestions of appropriate dress; shorts, t-shirts, skirts, sun dresses and etc. Hats can be worn outside in cold weather conditions to help keep in the child's body heat and in warm weather conditions to help protect the child from the sun.

## E. Fees and Payment Procedures

**Current fee schedule for the Child Development Laboratory is as follows:**

<b>Infants</b>	<b>\$180.00 per week</b>	<b>(\$40.00 per day)</b>
<b>Toddlers</b>	<b>\$175.00 per week</b>	<b>(\$40.00 per day)</b>
<b>Preschool</b>	<b>\$160.00 per week</b>	<b>(\$40.00 per day)</b>

### Multi-Child Discount:

Immediate families with more than one child attending the Child Development Lab shall receive a multi-child discount on tuition with the youngest child paying full price, the oldest receiving a 10% discount and any other children in between receiving a 5% discount. For example, a family with only two children will receive a 10% discount for the oldest child and the youngest will pay full price. A family with three children will receive 10% off the oldest child, will receive 5% off the second oldest child and pay full price for the youngest child.

The CDL employs a full-time technical clerk to handle billing and payment of fees. This individual is available in room #117 or by phone throughout the day at extension 3905 or at 372-3905. At the time of registration you will select a payment schedule. Following are payment guidelines:

### 1. General Information

- a. *Please do not slide checks under the office door or leave checks on the desks! Please do not give payments to CDL staff. Staff members are not allowed to handle money.*
- b. We have the capability of allowing families to pay online. If you choose to pay online, please make sure you enter the correct name of the child for whom you wish to pay.  
<https://www.tntech.edu/education/cdl/parents/>
- c. Make checks payable to TTU-CDL (or Tennessee Tech University-Child Development Laboratory).
- d. Include your child's name, a description of the payment and the time period the payment is for (e.g., "Annie's August Meals" or "Annie's Fees, 9/8-9/12") on your check.

### 2. Fees

- a. Fee payments are due by the indicated date of the bill. If a payment schedule is not worked out fee penalties may occur as follows:
- b. Late fees are only waived per written request of the director.
- c. **There is a graduated late fee system for all over due fees:**  
**\$5 per first week**  
**\$10 per second week, letter of encouragement**

**\$15 per third week**, letter of consequences

**\$20 per fourth week**, letter of termination of services, account turned over to Business Office.

- d. No fees are charged when the center is closed.
- e. There is no reduction of fees for absences.

### 3. Meals

- a. Bills for meals go out monthly. You will be billed for meals ordered in any given month during the first week of the next month (e.g., during the first week of October you will receive a bill for meals ordered for your child during September.) The due date for meal payments will be on the bill.
- b. **Lunch count is called in to our meal provider by 9:00 a.m. If your child is not in attendance at that time we will not order a lunch for him/her unless you call to let us know they will be arriving before lunch is served. It is important that you let us know by phone call or in writing if a lunch needs to be ordered for your child if they are arriving after 9:00 a.m.**

### 4. Late Pickup Fees

- a. There will be a \$ 1.00 per minute late fee after 5:30 p.m.
- b. Late pickup fees can be paid with the tuition fees (please indicate on check).
- c. If fees are not paid when incurred or with next tuition payment, you will be billed by the office.

### F. Withdrawal

A **two-week** written notice must be given to the director when your child is withdrawn from the CDL program. If a **two-week** notice is not given, fees for the two weeks will be assessed. This is necessary so that sufficient time is allowed to enroll another child in the program.

### G. Illness Policy

As parents and child care providers, we both share a common goal of wanting happy and healthy children. However, in spite of everyone's efforts, children do and will get sick. Young children get sick more often because their immune systems do not fight illnesses as well as adults and they haven't yet been exposed to many of the germs (viruses, bacteria, etc.) that cause infection. Maintaining health and preventing the spread of contagious diseases among the children in our program are responsibilities, which must be shared by the parent and the CDL staff. Our policies and guidelines have been developed from the Tennessee Department of Human Services requirements for licensing, the input of the Regional Health Office, TTU Nursing Department, and a nurse practitioner. Our program cannot keep sick children. It is the parent's responsibility to plan for alternate arrangements in the event of an illness. At the CDL, we always put a child first when making a decision as to his/her well-being and ability to participate fully in our program. If you are unsure about your child's condition, we encourage you to call us before you come. It is difficult for both parents and staff when a child arrives at the center only to be excluded from participation that day. **A child must be picked up immediately**

**when a parent is called.** If your child is sent home from the lab you may be given a “**sick send home form**” a copy of which is kept at the center. If a child appears to have chronic or returning symptoms or a communicable disease such as **strep, pink eye, impetigo, ear infection/sinusitis, thrush (yeast infection) or has undergone surgery or been hospitalized a return to group care form** signed by a physician must be completed before your child can return to the program. Again, our aim is to keep all our children, families, and staff as healthy as possible. We do appreciate your cooperation and assistance in enforcing our policies.

**1. FEVER of 101+:**

We will require that any child with a fever of 101 or above be picked up immediately. The child cannot return to the center until he or she has been fever free (under 100) for 24 hours *without fever suppressants*.

**2. VOMITING:**

We will call parents for pick up after **one** episode of vomiting. Child cannot return to center until **24 hours** after last episodes.

**3. DIARRHEA:**

We will call for parent pick up after **two** episodes of diarrhea. A Child cannot return until **24 hours** after last episode. If diarrhea is a result of medication, teething or allergies, a doctor must specify this in writing or by a phone call before child can return to care.

**4. COLD:**

It is difficult to differentiate between a “cold” and a more serious condition. If a child exhibits 2 or more of the following symptoms, we will ask the parents to remove the child from the center: Consistently runny nose, green mucus from the nose, persistent cough. The child may return to the center when the child is symptom free or when a doctor’s note states the illness is a “cold” and that the child is fully able to participate in group activities.

**5. RASHES:**

If the child develops a rash of unknown cause, we will ask that a doctor check the rash and verify in writing or by phone that it is not contagious.

## **H. Medication Policy**

The CDL will administer medication to children whom a plan has been made and approved by the Director. Because administration of medicine poses an extra burden for the staff, and having medication in the facility is a safety hazard, families should check with the child’s physician to see if a dose schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is in the child care facility. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction. Parents or legal guardians may administer medication to their own child at any time during the childcare day. The CDL will administer medication only if the parent or legal guardian has:

- Provided written consent
- Medication is in the appropriately labeled and stored container
- CDL has on file the written or telephone instructions of a licensed physician to administer the specific medication.
  - For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide caregivers with the medication in the original, child resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child’s

name; the name of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider that wrote the prescription, the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

- Instructions for the dose, frequency, method to be used, and duration of the administration will be provided to the child care staff in writing (by signed note or prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. *This requirement applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medications.*
- A physician may state that a certain medication may be given for a recurring problem, emergency situation, or chronic condition. The instructions should include the child's name; the name of the medication; the dose of the medication; how often the medication should be given; the conditions for use, and any precautions to follow. Example: children who wheeze with vigorous exercise may take one dose of asthma medication before vigorous large muscle play. A child with a known serious allergic reaction to a specific substance who develops symptoms after exposure to that substance may receive epinephrine from a staff member who has received training in how to use an auto-injection device prescribed for that child (e.g. EpiPen). A child may only receive medication with the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian and when the staff person who will give the medication has the skills required.
- Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication in a sturdy, child resistant, closed, locked container that is inaccessible to children and that prevent spillage.
- Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of any instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. The physician will renew instructions, which state that the medication may be used when needed, at least annually.
- A medication log will be maintained by the facility staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will also be noted on this log.

## **IV. Program**

### **A. Curriculum**

Our curriculum is the framework for "what we do" with the children in our care. At the Child Development Laboratory we have looked at a variety of commercial curriculum, discussed established guidelines for best practices in

early childhood education (NAEYC's *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*) and reflected on the goals of our program to establish the framework within which we prioritize the daily experiences planned for your child. Our aim is to always approach each activity and experience your child has in a developmentally appropriate way. This means that first we consider the developmental needs and interest of your child and family. A young child's growth and development cannot be controlled, contrived, or forced by adults. Each child's growth and development unfolds in a unique way so that the child is truly the center of the learning process. We consider our curriculum to be "whole child oriented". This means it focuses on planning across all areas of children's development by organizing around the domains of physical (doing), cognitive (knowing), language (communicating), social (relating to others), and affective (relating to themselves) development. We believe that children learn by their interactions with their environment and other people. We value play as the avenue in which children naturally practice and master skills. Play is the process through which the child begins to recognize his self-worth, develops inner satisfaction, builds trust and confidence in himself, in others, and in his environment. We plan for play-centered activities that are balanced between active and quiet, indoors and outdoors, individual and group oriented. Each of our classrooms has a teacher letter and a schedule that you will receive during your transition meeting with the lead teacher. Daily routines and schedules will be discussed at this time. *Parents can also assist the staff in meeting the daily needs of children by informing the care giver as to variations in the child's usual routine that may affect his/her day (a restless night, up early, etc.) Writing these communications on the daily report form means every staff member that works in your child's room will be aware of the information. We encourage you to discuss any issues regarding curriculum, daily routines and schedules with your child's teacher.*

## **B. Assessments and Conferences**

When a child enters the Child Development Laboratory the teacher begins a portfolio for that child and family. Portfolios are a collection of materials that help us look at a child's development over time. They may include written checklists of developmental tasks, anecdotal notes of teachers, questionnaires filled out by parents, work samples (art, writing, etc), pictures, audiotapes, or videotapes. Portfolios belong to families and when your child leaves our program you should take it with you. Twice a year your child's teacher will schedule conference times for discussion of your child's experience at our center. In the late fall and spring, teachers complete a developmental checklist on each child which becomes part of the child's portfolio. The checklist is used to develop a discussion with parents about the current skills and developmental issues that are being addressed for your child. They are not formal assessment instruments and should not be seen as such. If we have concerns about the development of a child we will contact the parent and help arrange for an assessment to determine if additional supports would benefit the child. Individual teachers may send home pre-conference questionnaires that help them prepare for conferences. These questionnaires are confidential and are incorporated into your child's portfolio (which is only available to parents). You may schedule a conference with the teacher or the director any time throughout the year.

### **C. Nap and Rest Periods**

Nap/rest periods are included in the daily schedule for all children. Infants have cribs, which are assigned individually so that they are only used by one child. Toddlers and preschoolers are assigned cots labeled for individual use. We provide sheets and blankets for infants and toddlers and launder them weekly or as needed. *The preschool rooms require that parents provide a crib size sheet and blanket for their child.* Children may also bring a small pillow and/or soft toy to sleep with. All nap materials are sent home for laundering on Fridays and must be returned each Monday. We do not expect all children to nap daily. However, it is expected that children who do not nap will spend the time quietly looking at books, or playing at their cot and not disturbing other children. You can assist us by encouraging this quiet time for your child.

### **D. Outdoor Play**

We feel strongly that children need fresh air and sunshine everyday when possible. Outdoor experiences provide children with the opportunity to be noisy, exercise large muscles, and experience exploration of the world around them. Please provide your child with the appropriate clothing for changeable weather. We use sunscreen, hats, jackets, and mittens all as necessary for the weather conditions. We will go outside if the temperature is above freezing considering wind chill. Of course we stay out only a short time if temperatures are low. Your child should not come to school if he/she is not well enough to go outside. Exceptions are doctor's notes for chronic conditions (such as asthma) for which we will plan staffing adjustments. Otherwise, staff-child ratios will require the entire class to stay inside which would be a hardship to the other children. Please discuss any concerns with your child's teacher or the director.

### **E. Field Trips and Other Experiences**

Occasionally children participate in educational trips outside the center. When these trips are arranged you will receive information and a permission trip form for their participation. Parents are always welcome to accompany their child on a field trip. The advantage of being on campus is that we can take part in many of the events and activities that are taking place here. *At the time of registration you will be asked to sign permission for your child to have "on-campus" field trips.* This allows your child to walk or be "buggied" around to different areas of campus.

### **F. Birthday and Holiday Celebrations**

We recognize how important each child's birthday is. Teachers make sure that children are aware of the day by singing, finger plays, and special recognitions. If you wish to bring in a special snack for your child and be present for the sharing of the snack, the usual schedule for afternoon snack is approximately 2:45-3:00 p.m. Please discuss this with the teacher ahead of time. Presents are not allowed at classroom celebrations. If invitations for parties outside the classroom are distributed in school they must be placed privately in each child's cubby. It is important for us to respect and reflect the holidays celebrated by the families in our center. We try to plan activities that focus on seasonal celebrations and activities. If your family has additional

traditional celebrations that you would like to share, please let us know. The benefit of being part of a University campus is that we have exposure to other cultures and traditions. Please share these with our staff and children. We treasure all forms of celebration of life.

## **G. Discipline**

The purpose of discipline is to guide children in the development of self-control and self-management skills. We respect each child as an individual even when behavior is inappropriate. This means that we do not verbally belittle, humiliate, or physically punish the child. Rather we use the following strategies to minimize conflicts and guide behavior.

- Create a nurturing, supportive, and secure environment.
- Set reasonable limits for the child's developmental stage.
- Use positive communication such as "we walk in the room", "we use gentle touches with our friends", etc.
- Provide redirection to another activity or play area.
- Demonstrate and label appropriate behaviors for children through active adult presence and participation as appropriate in children's play and social interactions.
- Temporarily remove children from a situation in which they are unable to gain control.
- Work closely with other staff and parents to reinforce acceptable behavior and develop a guidance plan if necessary.

It is important that parents understand both typical behaviors and characteristics that result from emerging development. These impact the types of behaviors we see at different age levels such as biting, name calling, or mood swings. Your child's teacher will share more information about behaviors specific to age levels or you may request information on those that are of concern for you. Teachers will arrange a conference with parents when they feel that a child will benefit from combined planning and efforts of staff and family to help manage some specific behaviors.

Changes in routines and environments can be upsetting to a child and be reflected in behavior. We will try to let you know when changes are taking place at the lab- a teacher absent or on leave, a new class member, or some disruption in our regular routine. We ask that you also share with us changes in your home routines and environment that may affect your child. Things like a parent out of town on business, a visit from a relative, moving from crib to a bed, death of a pet, or even rearranging furniture can impact a child's behaviors. We will respect your confidences while feeling more prepared to offer your child needed support and guidance during these times.

### **1. Exclusionary Clause**

The Child Development Laboratory seeks to provide quality care for children with typical and atypical development. To the fullest extent possible, all state, university, and community resources will be utilized in providing services to meet the needs of families attending the CDL. In the event that there is a question of the goodness of fit between a child and placement at the CDL, the Program Development Committee of the Advisory Board will work in conjunction with the classroom teacher, the faculty liaison/coordinator, the department chair and the Dean of the College of Education to determine if

exclusion from care is in the best interest of all parties. The following steps will be implemented with documentation at all levels.

- The classroom teacher will collaborate with the parent of the child and other classroom teachers of the CDL to implement a behavioral modification plan. The plan will be implemented and data collected for at least two weeks. Weekly parent/administration progress meetings will be held.
- The classroom teacher will collaborate with the Director and the Faculty liaison/Coordinator to determine additional measures of behavioral modifications. The plan will be implemented and data collected for at least two weeks. Weekly parent/administration meetings will be held.
- The classroom teacher will collaborate with the Make A Difference Foundation, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, the Upper Cumberland Child Care Resource Center and the Tennessee Early Intervention System to create modifications and improvements for the behavioral modification plan. The plan will be implemented and data collected for at least two weeks. Weekly parent/administration meetings will be held.
- The classroom teacher will collaborate with the Program Development subcommittee of the Advisory Board to determine additional measures of behavioral modification. The plan will be implemented and data collected for at least two weeks. Weekly parent/administration meetings will be held.
- After two weeks, or a period determined by the Program Development subcommittee, all stakeholders (family of the child involved, classroom teachers, center director, faculty liaison/coordinator, agency representatives and the Program Development subcommittee) will meet to determine if exclusion is in the best interests of all involved. If determination is made, a two-week notice will be given to the family to allow for provision for alternative care.

## **2. Implementation Plan for Biting**

Although the Child Development Laboratory recognizes that biting (any occurrence whereby a child sinks his/her teeth into any part of someone else's body) is developmentally appropriate for children ages 13 to 24 months, we also recognize the emotional connection for the bitten and his or her family. We recognize that children who bite usually do so because they are frustrated or angry and lack the language skills to say what they want or need. To prevent biting and to respond to biting when it occurs, the following plan has been developed.

- Ensure that the classroom environment is effective as possible.
- Classroom environment will be continually checked to make sure it meets the needs of all children and modified as needed
- Prevent biting by being alert to potential problem situations.
- Stay near the child who bites and carefully watch him/her.
- If he/she seems about to bite, pick him up and move him.



- If he fights, gently restrain until he stops struggling. If the child accepts being moved, immediately channel his attention to an activity.
- Do not lecture, but explain that biting hurts and we do not bite people.
- Provide the child with something acceptable to bite, such as a teething toy or a washcloth.
- Reinforce acceptable social behavior.
- Praise the child for acceptable behaviors.
- Let him know what he is doing that you like and encourage other children to do so as well.
- Suggest self-calming methods such as redirection, drawing, singing, looking at a book, etc.
- Help the child to verbalize his feelings to you and to other children.
- If biting occurs, let the child know it is unacceptable.
- Although biting should decrease with preventative measures, it is still appropriate for toddlers to bite occasionally despite our best attempts.
- When biting occurs:
  - Separate the biter and the bitten child. Say to the biter very firmly, “No! It hurts when you bite.” Use redirection first, and time out as a last resort for multiple biting situations in one day.
  - Implement the behavioral modification program in conjunction with the director and the faculty liaison.



## V. **Parent and Family Participation**

### A. **Parents At Work (P.A.W.)**

Parents At Work (P.A.W.) is an informal group for families with children enrolled at the Child Development Lab. Its purpose is to help support the CDL and its staff, to provide information and opportunities for parents to increase their knowledge of issues surrounding young children and families, and to encourage families to take advantage of the friendships and camaraderie available through socializing with other parents. Annual fundraisers provide the money for the purchase of needed equipment for the classrooms or playground and pay 50% of the annual membership fees to NAEYC for staff. Being present at P.A.W. meetings gives you input into parent programs and projects, fundraising, and decisions about how money raised will be spent. All parents with children at the CDL belong to P.A.W.; there are no fees or dues required. We encourage every family to be involved in the P.A.W. group.

### B. **Parent Education**

As a licensed center it is our responsibility to provide opportunities for parents to receive information and training on issues involving young children, parenting, and family life. P.A.W. is one source that you may utilize to request speakers and information on topics important to you. P.A.W. also offers you the chance to share your areas of expertise that might be of interest to other

families such as computers or cooking with your children. In addition, the CDL sends home flyers and information about educational opportunities for parents that take place in our community. The CDL also offers one parent educational workshop per licensing year for all families receiving service. At the request of parents and families we will be glad to organize presentations or contact speakers.

### **C. Volunteer Opportunities**

Studies show that one of the strong factors of success in school for children is their parent's involvement. We realize that the families we serve are dual or single working parents, full-time students, and frequently a combination of both. So how to be involved at this early stage in your child's educational experience is always a question.

Your presence is one effective means. You are welcome to come by any time during the day to visit, share snack or lunch, or just observe your child. We strongly recommend that each parent volunteer one day a year (or half a day) to work in the classroom. Nothing else will help you understand your child's experience as well. It sometimes is not easy to work in your own child's room and you may find it more effective (and less disruptive for your child) if you do your volunteer day in another room.

Sharing your talents, ideas, and caring also makes a tremendous difference. Many of our families have unique skills and talents to share with children. Think about your interest and how they might be shared with children – woodworking? Arts? Music? Gardening? Cooking? Cultural awareness? Children are fascinated with the world of adults, so every parent here has something to share and we welcome your contributions. Materials that relate to teachers' lesson themes such as books, pictures, food, etc are all welcomed on loan from you. Resources (for toys, materials, experiences, information) that you share help enrich our program and benefit other families as well. Telling others about our center and the benefits of quality childcare and letting the University know how important the role of the CDL is in your child's life, increase community and University support.

Your presence, time and sharing, given in small amounts in your busy life, do make a difference not only for the Child Development Lab, but also in your child's attitude towards his/her educational experiences. Together we create a supportive and enriching environment for your child.

### **D. Communication**

We sincerely hope that you will feel secure and confident enough with us to communicate openly and as frequently as possible. Daily communication with your child's teacher is usually brief and in the midst of drop-off in the morning or pick-up in the afternoon. Please remember that teachers are responsible for all the children in the classroom and may be unavailable for extended conversation at that time. You can help us by putting all-important information in writing, either on your child's daily report form or a separate note. Teachers can arrange to contact you by phone later in the day for more extended conversation, just give them a suitable time and contact number. Staff is also available with notice for conferences scheduled at your convenience.

- Director - 372-6262
- Technical Clerk – 372-3905
- Teacher II- 372-6272
- Seedlings- 372-3488
- Sprouts- 372-6008
- Saplings- 372-6263
- Blossom- 372-6009
- Willow- 372-3906
- Cypress- 372-6010

All phone lines have voice mail. Be aware that teachers may not always be available and may have to return a call that is not an emergency. The mailing address of the CDL is Box 5146, Cookeville, TN 38505.