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**DICKINSON COLLEGE  
CHILDREN'S CENTER**

**FAMILY HANDBOOK 2015**

**DICKINSON COLLEGE CHILDREN'S CENTER  
CARLISLE, PA 17013  
(717) 245 – 1088**

## **DICKINSON COLLEGE CHILDREN'S CENTER**

The Dickinson College Children's Center (DCCC) is a non-profit day care center which provides campus child care for faculty and staff members, students of the College and community members. The Children's Center is a part of the Campus Operations Division of Dickinson College. DCCC is a part of the Keystone Stars Program. The Keystone Stars Program holds its centers to the highest standards in the state of Pennsylvania. The Kindergarten Program is licensed by the Department of Education. The Department of Education requires that our program be in alignment with Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood.

## **DICKINSON COLLEGE CHILDREN'S CENTER PHILOSOPHY**

Dickinson College Children's Center is dedicated to the belief that each child deserves to be provided an opportunity to learn within a safe and nurturing environment. Each child has the right to be accepted and respected for his or her own uniqueness and individuality.

The Center is committed to encouraging the child's individual growth, developing each child's social skills and self-esteem, and encouraging collaboration with others on projects of benefit to all.

We affirm our commitment to accept, respect, and indeed celebrate the individual cultural backgrounds and learning styles of every child. The Center's curriculum will enable all children to develop their physical, emotional, cognitive and social skills to the fullest potential.

Dickinson College Children's Center will provide opportunities for children to share positive experiences, to appreciate each other's contributions to the group, and to learn about a variety of cultural heritages.

Each child will be enriched by the involvement of teachers, administrators, families and community in the advancement of our philosophy.

Adopted June 20, 1989

Adapted May 2009

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Dickinson College Children's Center is to provide high quality child care for the employees of Dickinson College and the surrounding community so that families are able to fulfill professional and personal commitments secure in the knowledge that their child is cared for in a safe nurturing environment.

## **ADMISSION PRIORITIES**

As space becomes available, applications will be considered and spots will be assigned in the order of preference of the groups as listed below within predetermined age groups. Within each age group, applications will be considered by the date they are received in the DCCC office.

1. DCCC employee's child
2. Dickinson College employee or student's child with sibling currently enrolled at DCCC
3. Dickinson College employee or student's child
4. Child with sibling currently enrolled at DCCC
5. Child whose parent is a Dickinson College alumnus/alumna
6. Dickinson College employee's grandchild
7. Community member who receives tuition assistance from CCIS (Child Care Information Services)
8. Child was previously enrolled in DCCC
9. Community member's child

Waiting list information is available on our website under Enrollment Information. No application fee will be charged.

Available in the office is a copy of our Dickinson College Employee Sabbatical Policy. Please inquire if more information is desired.

## **CHILDREN SERVED**

Child Care and Kindergarten are available for children from six weeks to six years of age. During the summer months, a school-age program is offered for children ages six to ten.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Center is open 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. The Infant Room opens at 7:30 and closes at 5:15. Late pick-up fees go into effect at 5:30 (5:15 for the Infant Room).

The Center is **closed** on the following dates:

**June 29 – July 3, 2015** - Independence Day Week  
**August 14, 2015** – Staff Training Day  
**November 25, 2015** - Thanksgiving break  
**November 26, 2015** - Thanksgiving break  
**November 27, 2015** - Thanksgiving break  
**December 21-25, 2015 and December 28, 2015 – January 1, 2016** – DCCC Closed for Holiday Break (re-opens Monday January 4)  
**March 18, 2016** – Staff Training Day  
**May 30, 2016** – Memorial Day  
**July 4 – 8, 2016** – Independence Day Week

## **LOCATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

The Children’s Center is located at 28 Garland Avenue (please do not use this address for mailing or delivering items) which exits onto West Louther Street between Cherry and Cedar Streets. The mailing address is Dickinson College Children’s Center, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013. The telephone number is 717-245-1088.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Admissions and the provision of services shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, sex or sexual orientation.

Reasonable accommodation for access to services will be provided to eligible children with documented disabilities. These accommodations include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications to the facility may not be available and you should consider this factor when making a decision on whether to seek admission to the DCCC for your child. Children with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) will be provided competent, free language assistance. As need and availability permit, Dickinson College Children’s Center selects Dickinson College students that speak the child’s language and includes these students as aides or volunteers in the child’s classroom.

In addition, aides or volunteers may be selected from Carlisle High School and community organizations such as United Way.

This policy includes families with LEP.

Any family who believes that their child may have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Dickinson College  
P.O. Box 1773  
Carlisle, PA 17013

Office for Civil Rights  
Suite 372, Public Ledger Building  
150 S. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Department of Human Services  
Bureau of Equal Opportunity  
Room 223, Health & Welfare Building  
P.O. Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission  
Harrisburg Regional Office  
Riverfront Office Center  
1101 South Front St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17104

## THE CENTER

- **Enrollment**

Enrollment will be on a full-year (49 weeks for 2015-2016 school year) basis. Agreements, Emergency Consent Forms and Food Program Enrollment Forms must be signed upon enrollment in the Center. Families will be requested to update these forms every six months as required by the Department of Public Welfare. Families are encouraged to provide more frequent updates to such forms, if changes in personal circumstances warrant such modifications.

A welcome packet from your child's classroom will be distributed to you upon enrollment. This packet will include a letter from your child's teacher, a sample daily schedule, samples of daily reports and a list of items needed for daily routines.

New enrollments will officially start mid-August of every year. Current children will move up to new rooms at the same time. Room assignments for fall will be provided to teachers and families in June. Two weeks prior to moving up, children will have time to tour and visit their new room and new teacher. A more detailed letter about the transition experience will be provided to families in late July.

Within 45 days of your child's start date at the center, you will receive a developmental assessment of your child and an opportunity to schedule a family conference.

Each fall, families of returning students will be charged \$8.00 to their tuition account which helps cover the cost of the ELN (Early Learning Network) and will receive a letter explaining this charge.

A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$60 will be charged upon enrollment. All checks should be written to Dickinson College Children's Center.

- **Center Security**

All primary caregivers will be given a numerical code to gain access to the building. The code will be changed 2-3 times per year. Please do not share the code with visitors or designated release people. All others are to ring the doorbell to be greeted by a staff person in order to be properly escorted through the center.

- **Emergency Closure (Snow closings)**

To make families aware of a Center closure due to weather or other emergency please tune into WHTM channel 27. We will also use the family e-mail directory or phone directory to make you aware of conditions.

- **Disclosure of Information**

Prior to enrollment, we request that families make full disclosure of any medical/special needs (including asthma or allergies) that their child may have. At this time, we ask for that families who require assistance, such as the use of translators, sign-language proficient staff members, assistance with building accessibility, etc. make us aware of such a situation. The primary language spoken at DCCC is English. If a family or child's primary language is one other than English, a student volunteer/translator from the college and newsletters in a language that is understood by families will be provided. Other accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

We ask that Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for children be submitted to the office. The Director will then share necessary information with those who are in direct care relationships with the child. A release of information and communication about other specialists visiting must be signed. Specialists visiting the Center will be required to: sign in at the office, wear a badge from where they work, and maintain confidentiality about the child/children with whom they are working. These individuals must also submit a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, PA State Police Criminal Record Check and FBI Fingerprinting

- **Child Health Report**

Within 30 days of enrollment, a physician's report must be signed by the physician and submitted to the Director. Thereafter, according to state requirements and by recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics, additional physician's reports must be submitted to DCCC at the following ages: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, and every year thereafter on or near the child's birthday. Failure to do so may result in termination of enrollment. Health forms can be found on our website.

Please complete our health form and have the doctor sign the bottom of the form. The purpose of the health form is to document both well check-ups and immunizations. Please make sure that the date of the child's most recent exam is on the health form.

- **Family Code of Conduct**

Families of enrolled children and any other adults who are engaged with the Center or the children we serve shall at all times behave in a courteous and respectful manner in their exchanges with Center staff, other families, children, and visitors to the Center. The use of vulgar, profane or other inappropriate language on Center property is not permitted. Such language is considered offensive and will not be tolerated. Acts or threats of physical harm are strictly forbidden.

Any conduct by an individual other than an enrolled child's parent or guardian that violates this policy will result in that person being banned from the Center. Conduct by a parent or guardian that violates this policy will result in prompt action by the Center and may include the immediate and permanent termination of the child(ren)'s enrollment.

- **Withdrawing from the Center**

DCCC requests a 2 week notice if a child will be withdrawn from the Center. The child's records will be transferred at the request of the parent (signature required).

- **Dismissal from the Center**

Families will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of dismissal from the Center. A check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any balances must be paid within two weeks of the dismissal.

The Center director or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and families are required to leave Center property in a calm, respectful manner immediately. DCCC will request assistance from local authorities should any primary caregiver become disruptive and/or uncooperative while in the Center or while interacting with Center employees.

A dismissed child and his/her family are required to call and request an appointment with the Center director if they wish to return to the Center to retrieve belongings/files, etc. following dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center director and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent.

Local authorities will be contacted if any family or child harasses, threatens or causes harm to anyone affiliated with the Center by calling, writing, or other means.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- **Tuition**

Families will be charged tuition on a weekly basis. Tuition for the current week is due by Friday of that week. An additional \$10 is charged if tuition is not paid when due. Failure to pay tuition may result in termination of a child's enrollment.

Full weekly tuition amounts will be charged each week with the exception of the three full weeks that DCCC is closed.

- **Other Fees:**  
Returned checks – There will be a \$30 fee for returned checks. Three or more returned checks in one fiscal year will require a family to pay tuition in cash for the remainder of the child's enrollment at DCCC.
- **Tuition Assistance**  
Tuition assistance is provided for persons eligible based on total family income, family size, and major financial responsibilities. College staff members will be given priority in scholarship assistance. Information is obtained from the Director. Assistance is also available through CCIS (Child Care Information Services), call 243-4014 for information on these services.
- **Late Pick-Up Fee**  
In consideration of our staff, the Children's Center closes promptly at 5:30 each evening. Families should arrive at the Center with enough time to pick up their child and gather their child's belongings and exit the building by 5:30. Families will be charged one dollar for every minute that they or their child remain in the building after 5:30.

The Infant Room closes at 5:15 p.m. Families should arrive to the Infant room with enough time to pick up their child and gather their child's belongings and exit the room by 5:15. Families will be charged one dollar for every minute that they or their child remain in the room after 5:15.

Families who are late in excess of 3 times per fiscal year will have their late fee increased to \$5 per minute for the remainder of the year. This will be documented in the office.

#### **CHILD PICK-UP**

If the child will be released to someone other than a primary caregiver(s), please notify the office by phone call (verbal permission) or by submitting a written note prior to the time of pick-up. Families who wish to have their child released to an older sibling must have a note on file with the office, the sibling must be 18 years of age or older and show valid identification upon arrival at the Center (driver's license). Please remember that the office must have communication from the primary caregiver prior to the child being released. Simply having their name listed on the Emergency Consent form is not sufficient. This person will be required to show identification upon arrival at the Center. For the process that will be followed for releasing children in case of emergency, your attention is directed to the Emergency Operation Plan letter which is included in our Enrollment Packet.

In an effort to keep our children safe, if a designated pick-up person arrives at DCCC to pick up a child and appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the staff of DCCC will confront the person and provide him/her with an opportunity to make immediate arrangements to have an unimpaired person come to pick up the child. Should a the person decline this option, or should the behavior be repeated, DCCC staff will immediately contact Public Safety who will in turn contact the local police department. Additionally, the DCCC staff reserves the right to contact the Carlisle Police Department, Child Protective Services and the other parent. Any other authorized person who attempts to pick up a child, and who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, will be denied access to the child. Under those circumstances, DCCC staff will notify the child's parents or other authorized contact person.

#### **VISITORS TO THE CENTER**

Due to the number of visitors to Center, families will be required to stop in the office to sign in all visitors. If you have someone accompanying you and you are going to be in any room for an extended amount of time, we ask that they wait in the office. If they are family members or close friends, arrangements can be made to accompany you. However, please keep in mind that eating and napping times are not the best times to interrupt children's schedules. Some children within rooms do not react well to visitors to their classroom. It can also be difficult for teachers who need to tend to their children, discuss confidential matters openly during their day, and to abide by their daily schedules. In order to respect all children, teachers, and families, we hope that you will be considerate of this policy.

## OTHER CHILDREN'S CENTER POLICIES INVOLVING DAILY ROUTINES

- **Arrival/Departure**

The Center opens at 7:30 AM. Children should arrive at any time between 7:30 and 9:00 AM. While in the building, children must be supervised at all times. Families must sign sign-in/sign-out sheet upon arrival and departure from the Center. In order to staff appropriately for the day, as well as for the teachers to plan accordingly for their educational instruction, children will not be admitted to the Center after 11:00 AM unless the office was given prior notice due to a medical/dental appointment.

*\*see below for Winter Weather Policy and arrival times.*

Families are asked to remove temporary belongings from the child's cubby each day. Bedding and extra sweaters, etc. may remain in the cubby during the week and should be taken home each Friday.

In order to minimize the disturbance to other children, if a family needs to remove a child from the Center during nap time, they must ask an office staff member to have the teacher bring the child and the child's belongings from the room. We recommend that immunization appointments be scheduled toward the end of the day, if possible. If they must return to school we also recommend that they do not return during rest time (12:30 – 3:00) as this is upsetting to the other children in the classroom and it is usually difficult for a child to settle down to rest when their routine is disrupted.

- **Winter Weather Policy**

**Closing/delay due to bad weather:**

DCCC will be closed when the college is closed due to bad weather (snow/ice). We will continue to notify families via the e-mail distribution list and through the following media outlets:

TV Stations: WGAL Channel 8 (NBC), WHTM Channel 27 (ABC), WPMT FOX 43, WHP Channel 21 (CBS), and WLYH Channel 15 (UPN)

Radio Stations: WHP 580 AM, WRVV 97.3 FM The River, WRBT 94.9 FM BOB, WHKF 99.3 FM KISS, WITF FM 89.5 NPR, WINK 104 FM, WROZ 101.3 FM The Rose, and WI00 1000 AM (Carlisle Station).

In order to provide the utmost safety to the children within the Center, DCCC also reserves the right to decide to close even if the college would remain open.

If the College decides to delay, DCCC too will delay.

- On a one hour delay DCCC will open at 8:30 (11:00 arrival policy remains in effect)
- On a two hour delay DCCC will open at 9:30 (11:00 arrival policy remains in effect)
- DCCC opening at 10:00 a.m. – the 11:00 arrival policy will be extended to 11:30 a.m. to help accommodate the number of children at drop-off.

Once again, if possible we will notify families via the e-mail distribution list and local TV stations.

**Early Dismissal:**

When the college decides to close early due to worsening weather conditions, DCCC will close as well. However, we will add an hour to our closing time in relation to the college time to allow families within the community enough time to make arrangements to pick up their child safely. (For example, if the college decides to close at 3:00 p.m., the Center will close at 4:00.)

This message will go out via e-mail distribution list, local TV stations and, when necessary the classroom teachers will call their individual families.

Please keep in mind that the college does not decide to close very frequently. However, when they do, it is necessary that we now follow their same schedule in order to provide the utmost safety to

the DCCC staff as well. **We will be certain to make sure that the Children's Center is specifically stated in order to avoid confusion.**

- **Personal Belongings and Items Brought to the Center**

Any clothing, bedding or other belongings brought to the Center **MUST** be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Toys may not be brought from home unless families have obtained special permission from the teacher. Classroom toys are frequently rotated to provide variety for each child.

We particularly ask that families not allow their children to bring toy guns, war toys or toys of violence.

All children are required to keep a complete set of seasonally appropriate extra clothing for emergency changes in their designated classroom area (bins, etc.) Families are responsible for taking home soiled clothing and replacing them with clean extras.

- **Naps/Rest Time**

DCCC feels it is important for each child to have a quiet time for rest. Older children who need less sleep will still be given the opportunity for a quiet rest. During nap time the child will hear a quiet story and lullaby music before falling asleep. A staff member will remain in the room throughout the rest period. Children at DCCC are very active — running around, playing, and exploring their surroundings — so it's a good idea to give them a special opportunity to rest. Some children have a hard time falling asleep but it is important to set aside some quiet time during the day for relaxing their bodies.

Infants will not be given bottles *in bed* at nap time. Bottles will be used in the Infant Room only and will be given while the infant is held in the care giver's lap. No other children may have bottles at nap time.

Families may bring a small, soft blanket, crib sheet and a favorite soft toy for their child's comfort at rest time. Please label all items with your child's name. All blankets and belongings will be taken home each Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday.

## **KINDERGARTEN POLICIES**

- **Enrollment**

The DCCC Kindergarten enrollment procedure will begin in February. Children attending DCCC Kindergarten must be turning five by September 30<sup>th</sup> of that Kindergarten year. Please check with your school district to be informed of their Kindergarten cutoff date so that you can plan accordingly. No child will be permitted to repeat DCCC Kindergarten for a second year in a row. We encourage families to evaluate the best decision for their child's academic success. This includes speaking with the Pre-K teacher about the child's Kindergarten readiness

- **Fees**

Before or After Kindergarten care - \$10

Advance arrangements must be made with the office if your child will need this option.

Children who are enrolled for the Kindergarten day only will be dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Tuition cost does not include an afternoon snack. Late pick-up fees will be as follows: \$5 for the first 15 minutes after 3:00 and \$1 for every minute after that.

- **Curriculum**

DCCC Kindergarten Curriculum is in alignment with the PA State Early Learning Standards in the following subject areas: Language Arts, Mathematics (Everyday Mathematics), Science and Social Studies. Children will be assessed two times a year in the areas of Math and Reading through the use of a standardized testing program (TEMA3 & TERA3). All other content areas will be assessed through ongoing observations and will be shared with families at conference time two times per



year. Weekly lessons will be e-mailed to families as well. Field trips and guest speakers from the college are encouraged to expand on topics such as: creative arts, science and social studies. Students are also encouraged in the areas of Social, Emotional and Physical Development through a variety of activities.

- **Absenteeism**

Student absences must be reported by the family on the date of the absence. DCCC has an obligation to report any child absent three days or more without lawful excuse.

- **Dissemination of Records**

Student records are kept on file for two years after withdrawal date. Records can be released to school districts at the request of parents. If this is the case, a signed form will be provided in order for the requests to be honored. If the child does not enroll in a Pennsylvania school, the file can be given to the parent. After the second year goes by, the file will be discarded. The Financial Records (Office Center) are backed up nightly at an alternate location. Academic Records are backed up on a flash drive and maintained at an alternate location as well in the event of fire or theft.

- **Concerns/Referrals**

Families with concerns regarding their child may contact Carlisle School District building principals to initiate a screening or evaluation of their child's specific need at any time. To obtain additional information call:

Carlisle Area School District – 717 240-6800

## **CURRICULUM (Infants – Pre-K)**

- **Infants – Pre-K**

DCCC has adopted the Creative Curriculum as a basis to build on and to support our philosophy about the education of Infants through Pre-K children. Our curriculum enables the children to explore and create in an atmosphere of warmth and enthusiasm for each day's happenings. The children gain positive self-concepts as they find enjoyment and success in the developmentally planned activities. They participate in activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Language enrichment through stories, puppets, finger plays, dramatic play, conversation
- Creative art, involving diverse media for painting, drawing, cutting, tracing, gluing, molding and constructing
- Gross motor (large muscle) development on safe, supervised equipment
- Fine motor development, work with manipulative media such as clay, blocks, sand, objects of size appropriate to the child's age and wide variety of puzzles
- Visual and auditory perceptual activities involving shapes, color, rhyming and many other activities appropriate to their age and leading to readiness in reading and math
- Psycho-social development through supervised play, imaginative dramatic play and activities fostering cooperation and respect for oneself and for others
- Multicultural activities including cooking projects, music, dancing, and games.
- Science and Math activities using manipulatives and discovery tables with a variety of materials.

When planning activities, the staff will encourage community awareness by utilizing the many resources found on the campus and in the extended community of Carlisle. Families are encouraged to be involved in the classroom activities by sharing theme-related ideas or specialized skills with the class.

Upon enrollment and upon each new classroom transition you will be asked to fill out a Developmental History Questionnaire. The information that you provide by filling out this form will be used for the Teachers to better care for your child throughout the year. The information will be used as a reference to help aid in planning their individual goals and activities related the curriculum.

In addition to the Creative Curriculum, several classrooms use various other resources to supplement their daily lesson planning including Color Me Healthy.

DCCC has two Anti-Bullying programs implemented in to their daily curriculum. These programs are PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) and the Bucket-Filling Program. More information about these two programs is available in the office.

- **Health Education**

Health Education will be a part of the curriculum for staff, families, and children. Weekly classroom lessons will reflect various health education topics. Topics for staff and families will be addressed through Parent Meetings, Bulletin Board (staff and family) postings, and Staff Meetings. Topics may include: nutrition, stress management, exercise, child development, and more. Speakers and materials for staff and families may be obtained from community or children's hospitals, voluntary health organizations, and other community organizations. All health education activities and materials for children will be developmentally appropriate. DCCC will notify families if sensitive topic areas are included in the health education plan. Families must notify the staff of the facility if they do not wish for their child to be involved in activities related to a specific topic.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Each child will be assessed twice a year using The Ounce Scale (Infants & Toddlers) and Work Sampling System (ages 3 and up).

The Ounce Scale helps us get to know children better by observing their everyday activities at home and in the program. We will record notes in your child's portfolio to keep track of your child's behaviors and accomplishments. The Ounce Scale is *not* a test. It is a way to observe children as they play and take part in daily activities such as eating snacks, dressing, playing, and being with children and adults. The Ounce Scale focuses on what children can do, *not* what they can't do.

The Work Sampling Developmental Guidelines and Checklists are part of the Work Sampling System. The purpose of the Work Sampling System is to document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments across a wide variety of curriculum areas on multiple occasions in order to enhance teaching and learning.

The results of these assessment tools are confidential (only classroom teachers will have access) and will be placed in each child's file along with their Individual Goals. They will be used to help make decisions about curriculum content, teaching approaches, and interactions with children.

A parent teacher conference will be offered twice per year to discuss the results and any questions you may have. If you choose to decline a conference, you will be asked to sign the appropriate form from your child's teacher. All teachers and assistant teachers will be trained yearly on assessment procedures.

## **THE STAFF**

All Children's Center staff members support the philosophy of the Center. Upon hire, they are required to submit a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, PA State Police Criminal Record Check and FBI Fingerprinting. They also must have a bi-annual physical and once upon hire test for TB. Annually, all staff members complete 24 hours of training, Bloodborne Pathogens Training, Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in PA and follow diapering and hand-washing guidelines within each room's Health & Safety Manual. **Please refer to our website for more detailed information regarding classroom teachers.**

In addition to the teaching staff members, Dickinson College students employed as staff, interns from other universities, and volunteers from the community are required to have clearances, a current health appraisal, TB test and 2 references.

## HEALTH POLICIES

The main protection of your child's health is for the Children's Center to prevent ill children from attending the Center and thus infecting your own child with the illness. The Children's Center staff members have been trained to recognize possible infectious disease symptoms, and families of children with these symptoms will be asked to keep their children at home and away from well children.

Please observe the following child care health policies:

1. **All illnesses** must be reported to the Center so the staff and Director are aware of the child's absence and/or infectious disease. Please notify the Director prior to returning to the Center after an injury, serious illness, or operation.

2. **DCCC reserves the right to exclude a child from care if they are not able to participate in all of the daily activities, if additional staff are required to provide care for the child thus compromising the health and safety of other children, or if their illness poses a risk of spread of disease to others. (According to the guidelines provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics).**

3. If your child is sent home because they are suspected of having a highly contagious illness, such as those listed below, a doctor's note, containing an actual diagnosis, will be required before the child may return to DCCC:

- conjunctivitis, such as pink eye
- measles, roseola, rubella, fifth disease, chicken pox, whooping cough, mumps
- skin infections/rash, such as poison ivy
- head lice
- strep throat
- hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child is diagnosed with a bacterial infection, such as **pink eye** or **strep throat**, they will be excluded from the DCCC until they have been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours. This policy is intended to prevent the spread of infection to other children and staff. If your child is diagnosed with bacterial pink-eye and prescribed an antibiotic and you choose not to follow the recommended treatment, the child cannot return to the center until the child is completely symptom free in the judgment of the DCCC. Depending on the severity, this may take a few days. An additional doctor's note may be required confirming that the child is not contagious before he or she is allowed to return to the Center.

If the diagnosis is a **contagious or non-contagious skin infection**, please remember that a doctor's note will be required with a diagnosis and a safe return date. For **any of the other conditions (lice, chicken pox, etc.)** please contact the office as soon as possible for Center specific policies regarding that illness.

Children must be excluded from the Center for the following conditions, **and** for 24 hours after the symptom is no longer evident:

- fever 100 degrees
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- influenza

If any of the conditions listed above are present in a child while at the Center, the family will be contacted and asked to take the child home. If you are unable to pick up your child within an hour, please arrange for a friend or relative to come in your place. Repeated failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the dismissal of your child from the center.

5. Families will be notified when their children have been in contact with an infectious disease. More information on symptoms will be made available to you as needed (fact sheets available on our website).

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

**Medication may be administered to a child by trained Center personnel ONLY when directions are written by the parent on the individual medication log within the child's classroom and when the following conditions are present.**

- a. Child's name must appear on the medication.
- b. Physician's directions for dosage must appear on the medication label on the original container.
- c. Any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) must be accompanied by a signed doctor's prescription, which identifies the medication and the dosage.
- d. With the understanding that every attempt has been made to administer the medication at home, medication will be administered at 12 o'clock and 4 o'clock.

Topical ointments such as Chapstick, sunscreen, hand lotion, vaseline, etc. should be labeled with the child's name and will be kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom and a permission form must be signed by the parent before the Center will use such ointments. We do not use spray sunscreen.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

If a child has a serious medical problem or emergency, the staff will first call 911, then Department of Public Safety and then the primary caregivers. If primary caregivers are unavailable, those listed under Emergency Contacts on the Emergency Form will be contacted.

## **FOOD**

Caregivers shall not offer to children less than 4 years of age foods that are common choking hazards.

Avoid foods that are: round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth or slippery.

Examples of foods to avoid (at DCCC we will NOT serve them):

- Hot dogs that are whole or sliced in rounds - slice the rounds into quarters
- Whole grapes - cut them into quarters
- Cherry tomatoes - cut them into quarters
- Hard candy
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Raw Peas
- Raisins/dried fruit
- Raw Carrots and Celery
- Hard pretzels (thin pretzel sticks are permitted)
- Chips
- Popcorn
- Marshmallows
- Ice cubes or ice chunks
- Fruit Snacks/Gummies

Dickinson College Children's Center is enrolled in the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) for morning and afternoon snack. Children ages 12 months and up are only served one 4 ounce serving of 100% fruit juice per day. The center will provide morning and afternoon snacks and milk for lunch. If your child has a diagnosed food related allergy (doctor's note required), DCCC will provide an alternate snack.

Lunch should be sent with each child in a clearly marked lunch bag which will be refrigerated. Lunches will be heated in microwave ovens if necessary. We will heat up food that has already been cooked but will not prepare a lunch (i.e. Easy Mac, oatmeal). All families are asked to send food with nutritional value (fruit, vegetables, proteins) and to avoid other foods of low nutritional value which the child may prefer to eat first.

**Due to the number of children at our center with severe peanut and tree-nut allergies, foods containing such products are not allowed at DCCC. The Children's Center is a PEANUT and TREE NUT FREE environment. DO NOT SEND any peanut butter sandwiches, items cooked in peanut oil,**

**or other items made with any tree nuts. Please read labels to assure that food products do not contain traces of peanuts or were not processed in a facility that contains products with traces of nuts.**

**\*\*DCCC will make every effort to be peanut and tree nut free however, because lunches are provided by individual families we cannot guarantee that children will not come into contact with some sort of nut.**

The Center will not send home lunch items that have been served but not eaten. Food that has been served but not eaten will be discarded. The only food that may be returned to the family is food that does not require refrigeration or holding at a hot temperature, that came to the facility in a commercially-wrapped package, and that was never opened.

### **BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY PARTY POLICY**

Families are welcome to send in a small snack to share on the day of their child's birthday. The items must be store bought and packaged. Please see the list below to choose from. Because of time requirements we are asking that the item be provided for the AM snack only. Please **do not** send napkins, plates, candy or party bags for any of the holidays (Valentine's Day, Halloween, etc) or special class days. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

Fruit (bite size)	Bread (banana, pumpkin, blueberry)
Muffins (no nuts)	Yogurt
Cheese	Vegetables
Crackers	Pudding or Jell-O

Pizza lunch - please give 2 days **advance** notice to the classroom teacher and the office. Also check for special dietary needs within the classroom.

Please remember we are a "nut free" center. Please read the labels carefully.

Please also consider visiting the class to do something special for your child's birthday such as playing a group game together or reading a special story. In order for the classroom teacher to plan appropriately, at least 2 days advance notice needs to be given to the teacher for this activity.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Outdoor play enhances the health of children. DCCC, along with recommendations by D.H.S., Academy of Pediatrics, ECELS, and our Child Care Health Advocate (VNA) state children should play outdoors daily. DCCC follows the PA Position Statement in regards to outdoor play. Our "weather permitting" policy is this: Children are expected to go outside when the forecast temperature/wind chill are above 25 degrees, the forecast temperature/heat index is less than 90 degrees and there is no current air quality alert.

It is understood that given these parameters there may be portions of the day that do not meet these conditions since forecasts are generally targeted to a point of time in the day. In this case, all groups will be provided with large motor activities inside for the scheduled time in our "Big Play Room."

In winter families are required to provide each child with snow pants, boots, warm jacket, hat and mittens for outdoor play.

### **CHILD PROTECTION**

The welfare of children is protected by the State Department of Human Services which mandates that child care providers and pediatricians must report any suspected incidents of child abuse. Inappropriate behavior, unusually dirty clothes, persistent uncleanness, or suspicious bruises, abrasions, burns, and other physical marks may be evidence of abuse or neglect and must be reported. The Office of Children and Youth will investigate such reports.

## **DCCC GUIDANCE PROCEDURES/ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAMS (PATHS & Bucket-Filling)**

At DCCC, guidance is regarded as a learning strategy and the procedures are based upon the philosophy of the Children's Center. The Center believes that all children should be treated with respect and that developmentally appropriate guidance strategies should be implemented. The focus will be on helping children learn inner control and resolve conflict among themselves. Classroom teachers use some of the following strategies to encourage the children to encourage the children to make the right behavior choices: charts, stickers, positive reinforcement, redirection, and timers. The entire version of **DCCC's Guidance Procedures** is available on our website.

The Children's Center has two Anti-bullying programs implemented daily within the Preschool Curriculum. These programs are the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Program and the Bucket-Filling Program. At the preschool age, the main focus of the programs is preventing bullying behaviors in young children.

## **GOVERNANCE OF THE CENTER**

The Children's Center is an integral service of Dickinson College and is part of the Financial and Auxiliary Services department. The Director reports to the Associate Vice President of Financial Operations & Auxiliary Services. As such, the College makes all final policy determinations. However, family participation is encouraged and welcomed through both Family Meetings and the Advisory Committee.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

- **Family Meetings**

All families are invited to attend Family Meetings. These meetings take place bi-monthly to lend support and guidance to the daytime home for their children. If a need arises, additional Family Meetings may be scheduled.

- **The Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee serves to discuss policies and procedures of the Center and bring family concerns to a Committee of people. As Committee member terms expire, Center parents express interest in serving on the Advisory Committee and if necessary voting takes place to decide on new members. Other non-elected members of the Advisory Committee include non-parental College professional and staff members and non-parental residents of the community. The Director, Assistant Director and VP of Financial Operations & Auxiliary Services are non-voting members of the Advisory Committee.

If a family has a Center concern that they would like to be brought to the Advisory Committee, they should speak directly with the Director. Advisory Committee members are to express concerns to the Director prior to the meetings so that if appropriate, the item can be added to the agenda.

- **Program Evaluation (Family Survey)**

A yearly center evaluation will be completed by families and staff. Center strengths and areas for improvement will be shared and discussed through staff and Family meetings and followed up with an improvement plan. Families will be provided with an improvement plan and given an opportunity to be involved in the process. The results are usually shared at Advisory Meetings and Family Meetings.

- **Fundraising**

Fundraising efforts for special projects, program support or scholarships will be carried on throughout the year. All families are expected to support fund raising activities. By participating in Fundraising efforts you will interact with and meet other families in the Center while at the same time improving your child's experience at DCCC and supporting each other's common interests.

## **FAMILY/TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Daily communication between teachers and families is an essential key to providing high quality care for your child. Each classroom has a process in place to assure that you get information about your child's day (daily reports, wipe off boards, etc.). We recommend that you speak to your child's teacher directly at drop-off and pick-up.

Transitioning/visiting classrooms will take place during the summer months. Each child will spend time in their new classroom with their new teacher. Move-ups will take place once per year. When transitioning classrooms families will be notified of move-up date and given a move-up packet (will include updated agreement, classroom tour, etc.). Necessary child records will be transferred to the next classroom.

Weekly, the office will e-mail a lesson plan to you for your child's class. This will help you plan for your child's day and give a more detailed account of the day's activities. We do ask for family involvement and participation in many of our special events. The lesson plans, newsletter and calendar of events are also posted online.

As regulated by the Department of Human Services, bumps, bruises and other minor injuries not requiring medical attention, such as scrapes, splinters, etc) will be reported to the family on an Incident Report. The parent and teacher will sign this form and one copy will be given to the parent, one logged in the Center Incident Log and placed in the child's file, and one placed in the Center Incident File.

DCCC has a Calendar of Events which gives a Center-wide overview of important dates (closures, events, etc.), it is available online.

Other modes of gathering information throughout the Center are: the Community Bulletin Board which contains referral numbers and resources throughout the community, Family Information Board, and Health & Safety Education Board. All of these Boards are located in the main hallway of the Center.

In an effort to help negotiate differences and difficulties (between teachers/children or teachers/families) in a peaceful and respectful manner, the center has adopted the following guidelines:

1. If there is a classroom concern or conflict, we ask that you first speak to the teacher. It may be necessary to set up an appointment so that you and the teacher may sit down and have a discussion.
2. The next step is talking to the Director who will help mediate the situation and develop a plan for improvement.
3. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled with those involved in the situation and the plan effectiveness will be assessed.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

A situation might arise which reveals a child's inability to function well in a group situation. Should a DCCC employee observe behavior that suggests that a child cannot cope with group child care or may be engaging in behavior that endangers himself or herself, the other children, the teacher, or the property of the Center, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The employee will inform the Director who will then observe the child during a variety of activities in order to determine whether a plan for the child must be developed and to develop such a plan, where needed.
2. The Director, and such other DCCC personnel as the Director may choose, will confer with the families to review the plan and to establish goals and means for the child to achieve the objectives of the plan.
3. The Director may refer the family to the College Employee Assistance Program counselors, Franco Associates, or to other referral agencies, as is appropriate to that case.
4. The Director will set up a follow-up appointment three to four weeks from the initial referral to assess the child's progress.
5. If the child does not progress to the point of good adjustment to group care or if the families do not follow through with the referral, the enrollment may be terminated.

In a situation in which a child's behavior and continued enrollment in the Center presents an immediate danger to the child, other children, the teacher, the program or the property, the Director may immediately suspend the child from the program. After suspension, if appropriate and reasonable in the judgment of the Director, the steps outlined above may be followed. The hoped for end result would be reinstatement of the child in the program. However, if the circumstances suggest that the risks of continued enrollment of the child cannot be resolved through reasonable behavior management steps, the suspension will converted to a dismissal of the child from enrollment at the Center.

I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge receipt of the  
(Parent Name)

Dickinson College Children's Center Family Handbook or to electronic access to the Handbook at [www.dickinson.edu/departments/children](http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/children).

I have had the opportunity to read the handbook and understand that I am bound to comply with the policies and procedures contained in it.

I further acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the policies and procedures contained in the Family Handbook before signing this acknowledgement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**\*PLEASE RETURN TO THE OFFICE\***