



Early Childhood Lab School Family Handbook

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*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

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WELCOME

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Early Childhood Lab School (ECL), part of the UC Davis Center for Child and Family Studies (CCFS), Department of Human Ecology! We look forward to working with you during the year ahead to create an enriching experience for your child and family. We recognize that the early childhood years are both exciting and challenging for families, and we want to provide you with as much support as possible during this time.

As staff, **we see ourselves as part of a community of learners** along with the children, families, university students, and researchers involved in our programs. We value the experiences, languages, traditions, and resources you bring to the ECL community.

As a university lab school, our **children's program fulfills more varied functions than a typical early childhood setting**. We serve multiple constituencies: undergraduate and graduate students; researchers; enrolled children and families; and community observers, early childhood practitioners, and policymakers who draw on our expertise. To meet the diverse needs of all these individuals requires clarity of purpose, policy, and practice. While embracing our core philosophy of respect for the learning process, **we continually evaluate whether and how we can better achieve our goals**.

Open communication is integral to your experience at the ECL. It is important that we be made aware of any questions or concerns you have regarding our program, including its design and implementation. Please share your experience, your family needs, and what support may be offered to make your experience a positive one.

With gratitude and enthusiasm for the partnership ahead!



Kelly Twibell Sanchez
Director, Early Childhood Lab School

ECL Vision, Mission, and CCFS Purpose

Vision

To provide **high-quality early childhood programs for children and families**, to **extend the education and deepen the learning of undergraduate and graduate students** studying child development, to **support research** conducted by faculty and graduate students, to **engage in our own applied investigations of child development and early childhood education**, and to continue to **serve as a resource** for regional practitioners, administrators, and policy makers, while expanding our professional development work throughout the state and nation.

Mission

Promote healthy development through the highest quality of care, support and education for young children and their families, while **demonstrating the integration of research, evidence and practice**. We are a learning laboratory for all our program participants, including children, families, undergraduate and graduate students, researchers, early childhood practitioners, and policymakers. Our commitment to excellence in nurturing the healthy development of the young child across all domains positively informs the current inquiry, practice, and decision-making of all those we serve.

Purpose

The **CCFS is part of the national system of Experiment Stations for the United States Department of Agriculture**. As a component of the Experiment Station, the CCFS focuses on issues of human health and wellbeing, and quality of life as they relate to the development of children and their families.

The primary directives of the CCFS are:

- To **design, implement, evaluate, and disseminate experimental infant and child programs** based on child development theories and research. These programs, administered by the Early Childhood Lab School, provide resources for families—including workshops, newsletters and online resource materials, developmental observation, assessment, and referral as needed. The ECL is to serve as a demonstration and implementation site for the community and state of California.
- To **provide an in vivo demonstration of developmental theory and principles of applied research** for UC Davis undergraduate and graduate students in child and human development, and from related disciplines.
- To **generate and support the research of graduate students and faculty** on typical and atypical processes in child development.

The CCFS provides resources and expertise to the region and state, in the form of tours, seminars, observations, and expert participation in community and state program development, policy-making and workforce training. As such, the CCFS contributes to educational articulation among the community college, state university, and university systems.

Philosophy of Care and Education

Respect is the fundamental value that guides our program's philosophy. As such, staff at the ECL...

- value and facilitate the development of interdependence, social competence, problem-solving skills, and the awareness of self and others.
- attach great importance to active learning, investigative thinking, and the development of conceptual understanding.
- encourage children to be intrinsically motivated by validating and affirming their efforts, and by highlighting and coaching the process of learning new concepts and skills.
- value diversity and work to expand children's understanding and acceptance of differences. Our curriculum is implemented in a way that reflects the family values, beliefs, experiences, cultures, and languages of all enrolled children.
- believe all behavior makes sense; we recognize that behavior may be influenced by biological traits and environmental influences.
- adapt our program to respond to and encourage the development of all children by individualizing care, support, and guidance.
- support the development of the whole child by providing experiences that challenge children physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally.
- encourage and value family involvement to build partnerships that support children's growth in all developmental domains.



Desired Outcomes for Children and Families

Each age group program is designed and staffed to facilitate high-quality experiences for children, as well as support for their families. Teachers work within a flexible, inquiry-based curriculum framework to meet the needs and interests of each group and of individual children.

While participating in program, all enrolled children will:

- freely explore an appropriately stimulating, varied, and safe indoor and outdoor environment in which to play and learn;
- exercise individual choice of activities and friendships and, with adult support, learn to take responsibility for their choices;
- learn a variety of critical reasoning and problem-solving skills and increase their mastery of existing skills;
- participate in an environment in which children and adults can interact with honesty, empathy, interest and affection;
- increase their mastery within all developmental domains, including social-emotional, linguistic, physical, and cognitive;
- build their knowledge and skills, as developmentally appropriate, in the curriculum content areas of early literacy, early mathematics, science and technology, creative expression, health and safety, and social studies, through active participation in curricular experiences based on their emerging abilities and interests;
- feel supported in self-initiated experiences that will foster their growing competence, sense of initiative, and positive dispositions toward learning;
- participate in developmentally appropriate teacher-initiated activities designed to introduce them to new information, ideas and opportunities; and
- feel supported in achieving their potential, enjoying their experiences, and participating according to their individual interests, abilities and preferences.



Family caregivers of each enrolled child will partner with staff members in supporting their young children's development and will be active participants in setting goals for their educational experience. All families are invited to participate in activities of the ECL community, including child development workshops, social events, and community improvement projects.

Each family may access individual consultation with staff as needed in addition to the initial family visit and two scheduled conferences each year (which include developmental assessment summaries). The staff provides frequent newsletters, resource materials and links to additional information and current research about child development. The teaching staff facilitates referrals for special services as appropriate.

Curriculum Statement

The ECL continually evaluates its curriculum and makes modifications based on current research and new evidence for effective practices, while maintaining our core values and desired outcomes for children. We know that effective curriculum for all age groups is developed through a cyclical process of observation, planning, implementation, documentation, and evaluation; reflection is at its core.

Theoretical Influences

The program, at all age levels, uses an approach based on **Piaget's theory of Constructivism** (learning through active, hands-on exploration) in the context of **Vygotsky's theory of Socio-cultural learning** (affirming the centrality of a child's culture, relationships and interactions) and with respect to **Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Framework** (the inherent qualities of children and their environments interact to influence how they grow and develop).

Administrative Component

Physical Environment

- Staff plan and provide an aesthetically pleasing and attractive environment; the natural wood cabinetry and furniture serve as a neutral backdrop for displaying children's artwork, writing, dictation and explorations.
- Staff set the tone for community through décor, labeling, and documentation.
- Staff plan clearly defined learning areas that are organized and predictable in content.
- Staff design and organize the space to encourage children's active involvement.
- Staff provide spaces that accommodate large-groups, small-groups, and individual explorations.
- Staff use the outdoor environment as an extension of the classroom, emphasizing hands-on encounters with the natural world.

Equipment

- Rich variety of open-ended materials (staples and theme related play items) that serve many modes of expression and challenge children's developing abilities
- Emphasis on integrated learning experiences, and on repeated exposure to thematic explorations to deepen understanding and co-construct new knowledge
- Teaching staff implement differentiated instruction to support the developmental needs of all children

Staff

- Work as applied investigators and observers of child development
- Provide a warm, supportive environment and develop individual relationships
- Co-explore and scaffold learning during child-initiated work and teacher-initiated activities
- Model, coach, and guide children toward emotional intelligence and social-emotional competence

Pedagogical Component

Activities

- Thematic explorations are designed and implemented based on “big idea” concepts grounded in seasonal rhythms and studies of children’s interest.
- Activities based on themes/units of study are carried out as children engage in purposeful play with materials located in the indoor and outdoor learning areas, and planned field work.
- Children’s choices and intentions for play are encouraged and acknowledged through informal (e.g., give-and-take exchange) and formal (e.g., Plan-Do-Review) routines.
- Well-developed projects are used to engage children as leaders and decision-makers; their questions shape the pursuit of answers through deep investigations.
- Children participate in teacher-initiated learning experiences (e.g., small-group and large-group) designed to extend classroom explorations, promote collaborative learning, and support the development of new skills.

Motivational Strategy

Adults support and encourage children’s intrinsic motivation by providing positive descriptive acknowledgment and meaningful feedback reflective of children’s experience.

Grouping

Children at the ECL are grouped according to age, both for their own benefit and so that students and observational researchers can observe early development at particular stages. Classes are formed in the fall and remain together for the entire school year. Each class moves on together as a cohort for as many years as the children remain enrolled.

Scheduling

- Consistent and predictable to build trust and develop temporal understanding
- Balance of structured and unstructured experiences, teacher-initiated and child-initiated learning
- Large blocks of time where children can work on activities of choice
- Flexibility; children may move at a pace that suits their individual temperament

Assessment of children

- Use of naturalistic observation, work samples, photo documentation, anecdotal records, and learning stories to evaluate the development of the whole child; *Desired Results Developmental Profile (2015) Infant/Toddler Comprehensive View* and the *Desired Results Developmental Profile (2015) Preschool Comprehensive View*
- Use of the *California Preschool Learning Foundations* and *The Alignment of the California Preschool Learning Foundations with Key Early Education Resources: California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations, California Content Standards, the Common Core State Standards, and Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* (2012) to further understand developmental trajectories

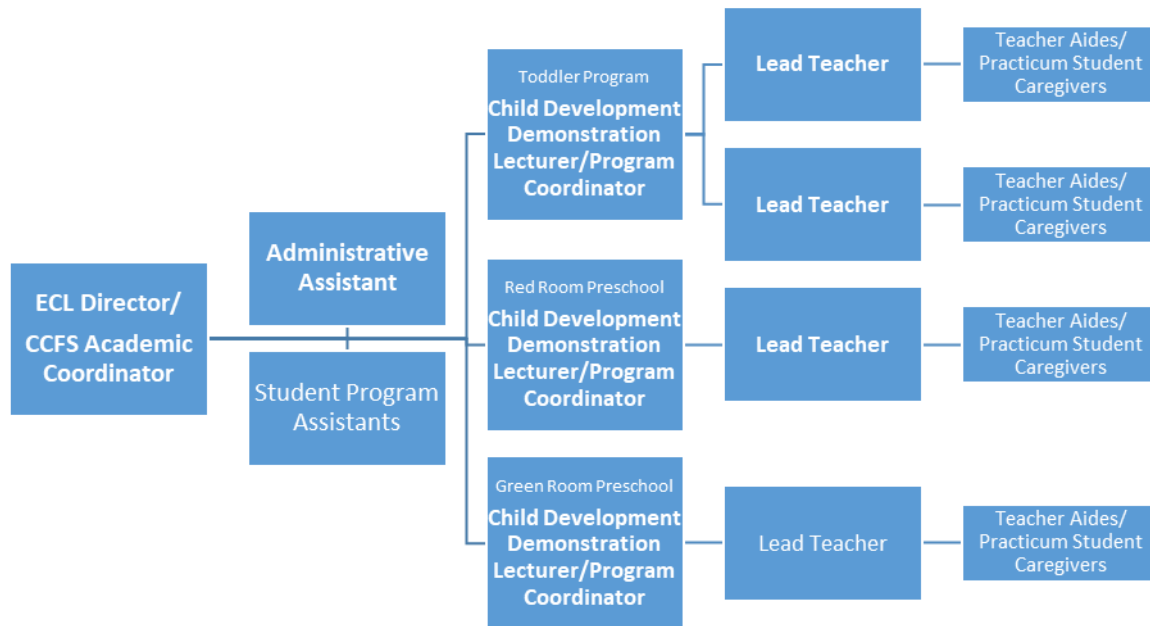
Program Evaluation

A program is seen as successful if children progress according to physical, cognitive, and affective norms, and previously listed *Desired Outcomes* are achieved. The following tools are used to evaluate program quality:

- Center-wide comprehensive NAEYC family survey (distributed and analyzed once per year)
- Comprehensive NAEYC teaching staff survey (distributed and analyzed once per year)
- CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System; administered by the ECL Director or an independent assessor once per year)
- PITC PARS (Program for Infant—Toddler Care, Program Assessment & Reflection System; administered by the ECL Director or an independent assessor once per year)
- POEMS (Preschool Outdoor Environment Measurement Scale; administered by the ECL staff once per year)

Staffing, Grouping, and Adult/Child Ratios

We employ a professional staff of people who are well educated in child development and early childhood education. They are mature, warm and nurturing, adept at applying their knowledge in the classroom, and respectful of each child as an individual.



Each classroom’s professional staff includes a Child Development Demonstration Lecturer (CDDL)/ Program Coordinator and Lead Teacher, and is supplemented by undergraduate students enrolled in the Human Development practicum course HDE 140L: Laboratory in Early Childhood. They are upper division students who are putting into practice what they have learned about young children during the course of their studies. Each student is assigned a “care group” of children to observe and interact with closely. They are closely supervised and coached in their work, and always have a professional staff member present when they are interacting with children. Many students become so enthusiastic about their work that they apply to return for subsequent quarters. **Qualified students may serve as Teacher Aides** and assume more program responsibilities.

The **Lead Teacher and the number of Teacher Aides required to meet NAEYC recommended adult-child ratios are present with each classroom group** during the entire three-hour children’s class session. This is ensured by staff and child sign-in sheets, indoor-outdoor supervision protocols, and CDDL/Program Coordinator oversight. Teacher Aides are the only student staffers who are legally cleared (through criminal background checks), and appropriately oriented and trained to work alone with children. Other **support staff and volunteers do not ever work alone with children**; they must be with, and supervised by, regularly scheduled teaching staff at all times. No new teaching staff member at any level (Director, Program Coordinator, Lead Teacher, and Teacher Aide) may work alone with children until they have received an initial orientation to the program and the position.

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

Classroom	Age Range	Professional Staff Adult-Child Ratio	Care Group Adult-Child Ratio
Toddler Room I**	24-30 months**	1:6	1:3
Toddler Room II**	30-34 months**	1:10	1:3
AM Red Room	34-42 months	1:10	1:4
PM Red Room	42-54 months	1:10	1:4
AM Green Room	36-60 months	1:10	1:4
PM Green Room	48-60 months	1:10	1:5

**2021-2022 only

Days and Hours of Operation

The Early Childhood Lab School children’s programs offer sessions Mondays through Thursdays. Each child is enrolled for all four days, in either a morning class for infants and toddlers (8:45-11:45 AM) or preschoolers (8:30-11:30 AM), or an afternoon class (12:45-3:45 PM) for preschoolers. Sessions follow the UC Davis student calendar, meeting for three ten-week terms (Fall, Winter, Spring) each year. Children are enrolled for the entire school year unless parents/guardians make special arrangements with the ECL Director.

Ages of Children Accepted Into Program

The program accepts children between the ages of ~~12 months~~* and six years (until their enrollment in kindergarten). Each class of children begins together in the fall and moves as a cohort to the next room the following year. Children are not moved to a new class on their birthdays. Parents/guardians of currently enrolled children are asked to declare by March of each year, by means of a completed Return Form accompanied by a \$200 deposit, whether they intend to have their child remain in the program for the following academic year. The deposit is deducted from the family’s last quarter’s tuition bill.

The ECL maintains an applicant pool list of all children whose parents/guardians have completed applications **for enrollment for the upcoming year**, accompanied by the \$40 application fee the first year of application. Applications for the same child for subsequent years do not require an additional fee. The application details the procedures for assigning enrollment priority, including parent(s)’ UC Davis student status, child’s age, and research facility functions.

We ask that annual applications for Fall enrollment be completed and submitted during January or February of that calendar year so that child and family information will be current when our staff accesses applications and contacts families during March and April.

Daily Routines

Classroom daily routines are developed by teaching teams with respect to cohort needs and in alignment with developmentally appropriate practice. **Core components include:**

Arrival

Children arrive. Staff and student caregivers greet families and facilitate the transition into program.

Indoor Play, Exploration, and Discovery

Children make choices in exploration and play. Staff help children achieve what they set out to do, and children are provided time to solve problems they encounter.

Snack Time

Student caregivers and their care group eat snack and engage in meaningful conversation.

Outdoor Play, Exploration, and Discovery

Children make choices in exploration and play. Staff help children achieve what they set out to do, and are provided time to solve problems they encounter.

Group Time

Staff and children gather together for songs, fingerplays, stories, and other activities.

Departure

Children are dismissed as parents/family caregivers arrive. Staff and student caregivers check-in with parents/family caregivers and share information about the day's events.

Classrooms with **older children** may also incorporate the following routines:

Class Meetings

Teaching staff and children gather together to review new classroom activities, learn social skills, and engage in large-group discussion/decision making.

Table Activities

Children participate in activities designed to strengthen hands and develop fine-motor control.

Plan-Do-Review

Plan-do-review is the centerpiece of the High/Scope curriculum model. It includes all the elements of active learning—materials, manipulation, choice, language from children, and adult support.

Small-group Explorations

Children participate in teacher-initiated experiences designed to extend classroom explorations, engage children in collaborative learning, and promote the development of new skills.

Guidance

Professionals who work with young children expect to be met with challenging behavior from time to time. The overarching goal of the ECL's guidance policy is to enable our program to serve ALL children by guiding them as they increase in their capacities for self-regulation of attention, emotions and behavior.

At the ECL, we define challenging behavior as any behavior that:

- interferes with children's learning, development and success at play;
- is harmful to the child, other children or adults; or
- puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure.

It can be direct (e.g. hitting, pushing, biting, kicking) or indirect (e.g. teasing, ignoring rules or instructions, excluding others, name-calling, destroying objects, having temper tantrums).

We know that **children's behavior has meaning and function**, and that we cannot effectively address it unless we strive to understand a behavior's function for an individual child. We anticipate that young children will sometimes display their emotions or try to achieve their goals in unproductive ways.

Much of children's most valuable learning, especially in a group setting, occurs in the course of behavioral problem solving. The approaches we use vary by age group, but have the following elements in common:

- Adults **model positive behavior**. We show that we can accept, control and express feelings in direct and non-aggressive ways. We let children know that we are not afraid of their intense emotions and will not punish, threaten or withdraw from them.
- Teachers **design the physical environment to minimize conflict**. We provide multiples of toys and materials for groups of children, define classroom and outdoor areas clearly to allow for both active and quiet play, and strive to maintain an appropriately calm level of stimulation.
- Teachers **maintain age-appropriate expectations** for children's behavior. We attempt to minimize unreasonable waiting and transition times, and limit the length of large group and teacher-directed activity times according to children's developmental levels. We give children large blocks of uninterrupted, but well supervised time during which to make their own activity choices.
- Adults **closely observe and supervise children's activities and interactions**. They observe challenging behavior to identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that may predict and/or contribute to it. With our high ratios of adults to children and our emphasis on attentive observation, we can often intervene to guide children before situations escalate.
- Adults **help children verbalize their feelings, frustrations and concerns**. The staff will help children describe problems, generate possible solutions, and think through logical consequences of their actions.



Even infants will hear their caregivers describing actions, problems, solutions and logical consequences. The adult role is to be a helper in positive problem solving. We want children to value cooperation and teamwork. We help them to learn peaceful approaches to interacting.

- **Children whose behavior endangers others will be temporarily supervised away from other children.** This is not the same as the practice of using a “time out” (the traditional chair in the corner) for a child. An adult will help the child move away from a group situation. The child will then process the problem verbally with the staff member and any other concerned parties. An adult will stay close to any child who is having trouble self-regulating and needs private time to regain composure. The adult will model self-calming strategies.
- For children with persistent, serious, challenging behavior, **teachers, families, and other professionals work as a team to observe, document, and develop and implement an individualized action plan of graduated behavior supports** that will address the behavior and facilitate the child’s inclusion and success.
- **Guidance, will always be positive, productive and immediate** when behavior is inappropriate. There are no circumstances in which a child will be humiliated, shamed, frightened, coerced or subjected to physical punishment or verbal, physical or psychological abuse by any staff member, student, or volunteer working in the ECL programs.
- Examples of **prohibited staff practices include slapping, pushing, hitting, kicking, grabbing, shouting, forcibly isolating, verbally daring, and/or strongly or publicly criticizing a child.** Also prohibited is any punishment that deliberately violates or denigrates the cultural values of a child’s family, such as taunts about eating or toileting norms, clothing or appearance, or religious or cultural practices.
- Every member of the ECL professional staff understands and follows our disciplinary approach as well as the standards on guidance and management in our [California State Licensing Regulations \(https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/child-care-licensing\)](https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/child-care-licensing). We work intensively with our practicum student caregivers so that they also understand and employ this guidance approach. Practicum students are never left responsible for responding to a child’s serious challenging behavior alone.
- **When a pattern of behavior persists** that endangers self, others or property, or significantly disrupts the program, **we work with a child’s family to find solutions**, up to and including referral for outside services or exclusion from the ECL program. **Exclusion will always be a last resort**, after all other possible interventions have been exhausted and there is agreement that a different setting is in the best interest of the child. In that circumstance, the ECL will offer assistance to the family in accessing services and an alternative placement. Our actions will always comply with federal and state civil rights laws.

Violence-themed Play: Position Statement

We believe that **every child has the right both to be safe and to feel safe in our program.** It is our goal, therefore, to create a physical, social and emotional environment within which every child feels safe enough to explore, to build meaningful relationships with others, to develop a positive sense of self and to engage in creative play. These are the core elements of early learning.

We recognize that **children of all ages are affected by a continuum of exposure to violence** that can range from what they see on television and in video games, to toys that promote war play, to witnessing and/or being a victim of violent acts themselves. This, in turn, creates a natural curiosity and fascination with violent behavior that is typically demonstrated by children through their play. Some adults express worry about such play.



Common concerns include:

- Safety—that children will be physically out of control, hurt themselves or others, or become scared as they engage in play.
- Super hero, violent or war play is not open-ended and adults see it as more limited to replaying the same situation over and over.
- This type of play teaches children that violence and force can be used to get what they want, even if used for a good outcome.
- When using a zero-tolerance policy and children are caught engaging in this type of naturally occurring play, children learn to lie or deny what they were doing. This, in turn, teaches children that they must sneak around or lie about what they are playing when asked.

But there are also **benefits.** Super hero, violent, and war play:

- Helps children cope with their emotions and fears.
- Helps children communicate their thoughts and feelings.
- Allows children from military and first responder families to see themselves and their parents/family caregivers in their play and helps to process situations they may encounter with their families.
- Allows children to see all types of family interests and hobbies such as hunting, sport shooting, etc.
- Encourages cooperation and group play.

- Helps children understand abstract concepts such as good/bad, right/wrong.

We believe it is necessary, therefore, for us to **provide children in our care with a safe space to explore such natural curiosities, while guiding children toward more prosocial and respectful behavior.**

The foundation for this respectful behavior is already in place: we provide a consistent and predictable daily routine, we encourage cooperative problem solving, and we demonstrate respect for one another through modeling, talking about the perspectives of others, and creating a sense of community within our classrooms. While **we do not ban all forms violent-themed play**, we do intervene immediately to address behaviors that violate anyone's sense of physical and/or emotional safety in a respectful and age-appropriate way. We **coach rough and tumble play** to minimize injury and **redirect play themes as necessary** to ensure each child's comfort.

Adapted from *Supporting Super Hero Play in Child Care: Concerns and Benefits* (https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/supporting_super_hero_play_in_child_care_concerns_and_benefits)



Holidays and Celebrations

Special occasions and celebrations occur regularly in the life of a school community, just as they do in the life of a family. At the ECL we acknowledge and celebrate with children the changing seasons, the birth of new babies, the visits of grandparents and special guests as well as other events important in their lives. We are a community of families from many religious and cultural backgrounds, who observe a vast array of holidays and events.



We welcome children's stories about their family observances and we affirm their excitement in our conversations with them. We incorporate authentic artifacts, images, and storybooks within the classroom to highlight diverse cultural celebrations. As possible, **families are invited to share holidays and traditions to foster inclusion, deepen understanding, and promote respectful curiosity.**

We believe, however, that it is not appropriate for us, as a diverse community, to formally celebrate specific religious and cultural holidays not shared by everyone; children's earliest experiences with these occasions should be shaped by their own families in accordance with family values and customs. For example, instead of scary costumes and candy in October, we invite children to explore pumpkins and gourds, crunchy fall leaves, cooking projects with fall foods, and art materials in fall colors.

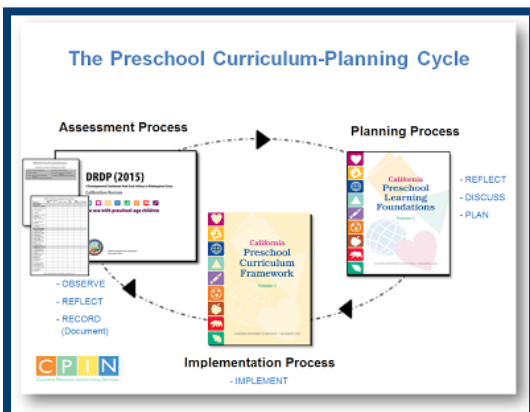
We **acknowledge birthdays, as preferred by child and family**, by singing to each birthday child who wishes to be recognized during our group time. Some families inquire about sending special food treats for their child to share with classmates. Our accreditation requirements stipulate that "food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers." This complies with USDA Child Care Food Program guidelines. Teachers will serve these at the group's regular snack time. Families are expected to check with staff in advance because some classrooms have children with severe food allergies which may require more stringent practices. Children often enjoy bringing a small non-food item to share on birthdays instead of a snack. Stickers, pencils, or special napkins for snack time work well. For health and safety reasons families may not send candy, gum or balloons. In addition, if families plan a private birthday party for their child and wish to invite friends from the ECL class, they may distribute invitations on-site only if they include every child in the class. All other party invites should be shared off-site.

Assessment and Program Evaluation

An integral component of our high-quality early care and education program is ongoing assessment of children's developmental progress, including screening for developmental delays and other special needs. It allows teachers to work with parents/family caregivers to tailor the program to children's individual needs.

As a research-based lab school, the ECL experiments with various approaches to developmental screening and assessment. The following formal assessment tools are currently used for all age groups, and are combined with ongoing informal observation and personal communication with family caregivers:

- **Ages & Stages Questionnaire:** This parent/family caregiver-completed questionnaire is designed to monitor a child's path through early developmental milestones. Families return the completed screening form to the teaching staff. Staff then incorporate its information into program planning and adaptations for individual children.
- **Desired Results Developmental Profile (2015) Infant/Toddler Comprehensive View and the Desired Results Developmental Profile (2015) Preschool Comprehensive View:** All programs at the ECL use the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). The DRDP is an ongoing child observation system based on children's work samples, learning stories, classroom dictation, photos, teachers' anecdotal notes, and parent/family caregiver observations about each child's behavior and learning across developmental domains and curriculum content areas. Curriculum goals and objectives for growth in all areas guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress. The observations are discussed by each teaching team, and then are transcribed and summarized into a report for parents/family caregivers to keep. They provide a basis for discussion during parent conferences, and parents/family caregivers have the opportunity to add their own comments and observations before, during, and after conferences. Teachers use



these child assessment observations as they engage in curriculum planning that is responsive to children's needs and interests.

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The ECL engages in program evaluation and strategic planning on an ongoing basis. Each aspect of the process is completed and/or reviewed annually, and as the need arises. The ECL evaluation and planning process includes the following elements:

- Center-wide comprehensive NAEYC family survey and dissemination of results;
- Comprehensive NAEYC teaching staff survey and dissemination of results;
- CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System; administered by the ECL Director or an independent as-

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

essor once per year);

- PITC PARS (Program for Infant—Toddler Care, Program Assessment & Reflection System; administered by the ECL Director or an independent assessor once per year);
- POEMS (Preschool Outdoor Environment Measurement Scale; administered by the ECL staff once per year);
- PAS (Program Administration Scale; administered by the ECL Director or an independent assessor once per year);
- Financial review by Human Ecology Business Office Account Manager and budget review meeting of ECL Director, ECL Administrative Assistant, HE Account Manager and Chief Administrative Officer or designee;
- Regularly scheduled fiscal review by CA&ES Dean's Office;
- Biannual rate (tuition) review with Cluster Five Account Manager and College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies Financial Analysts; and
- Whole-staff discussion and planning for improvements and future directions during whole-staff gatherings. The staff revisits the ECL mission statement and desired outcomes for children and families to discuss whether program practices continue to align with them and to determine whether new research, evidence, and circumstances warrant changes to the program's goals and/or approaches.

Summary of findings, discussion, and plans are disseminated to the ECL Department Advisory Committee, ECL staff and families, and other campus stakeholders.

The program establishes goals for continuous improvement and innovation using annual evaluation findings. Next steps may include professional development and program improvement activities, pursuit of facilities improvements, and reexamination of operations, procedures and policies. When the staff, administration, families, or Department Advisory Committee identifies new or unusual needs, outside consultants may be brought in to help with problem solving and various aspects of staff and program development.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Enrollment Procedures

The following forms must be completed before your child enters the program.

All materials are to be submitted to Molly Logan-Jones in the CCFS Administrative Office. PDFs can be obtained on the CCFS website: <http://ccfs.ucdavis.edu/ECLforms.html>. The following forms need to be printed out, filled in, signed, and sent to the ECL office:

- Identification—Emergency Information
- Permissions Forms (Field Trip Consent, Photo Consent, Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment)
- Policy Agreements
- Child’s Preadmission Health History—Parent’s Report
- Physician’s Report
- Account Setup/Family Directory
- Child and Family Information Form
- Parents Rights
- Personal Rights—Child Care
- Contract and Informed Consent

Children are enrolled for the entire academic year, consisting of three 10-week quarters. In February of each year parents/guardians will be asked if they would like their child to return to the ECL Program for the following year. For kindergarten-eligible children, the decision will be made jointly by the child’s teaching staff and parents/guardians and based on developmental assessment.

Tuition

In addition to a once annual \$45 administration fee, tuition is currently \$857 per child for each academic quarter. Families will be given at least 90 days advance notice prior to any tuition rate change.

ECL quarterly tuition bills will be distributed to enrolled families at least two weeks before the beginning of each quarter. **All tuition is due by the first day of the ECL quarter.** After 30 days it will be considered overdue. A child whose tuition payments are overdue (i.e., not fully paid by the Friday of Week Four of a quarter) **may not return to the ECL program for the following quarter (e.g., if Fall Quarter tuition is more than 30 days late, the child may not re-enroll for Winter Quarter).** At or before the end of the academic year the UC Davis Accounting Department will send past due account information to an outside agency for collection.

BILLS CAN BE PAID IN PERSON AT DUTTON HALL CASHIER'S OFFICE OR MAILED TO THE ADDRESS ON THE BILL. Be sure to include a copy of the tuition bill with payment. Checks must be made out to “UC REGENTS.” Please do not bring tuition payments to the ECL office. All processing of payments is handled by the UC Davis Accounting Department in Dutton Hall. ***Please save your receipt as proof of payment.***

The **Taxpayer ID #** for the ECL is noted on each tuition bill: **94-6036494**

Attendance

Children are expected to attend their lab school program every day it is in session, **except when they are ill.*** Having all children attend regularly is critical to fulfilling our function as a child development learning laboratory for the UC Davis student caregivers assigned to work with specific small groups of children. Their course assignments are based on their observations and interactions with their assigned group. Children's consistent attendance also supports their own successful participation in the program. Please schedule

REMEMBER TO CALL
Remember to call the
ECL Office before class
start time if your child
will be absent that day.
(530) 752-2888

family travel for non-school periods. (See Lab School Policy Agreements document for details.) ~~Your presence in the classroom will help to smooth your child's initial transition into the program, especially in the infant, toddler, and transition (morning red room) age groups.*~~ The teaching staff will work with you to establish a daily goodbye routine to help your child feel secure while here and confident that you will return. The timing of this will depend on each individual child's needs. Children are expected to attend program sessions independently ~~after their initial transition period.*~~ This is essential so that the group can grow into a classroom community. If, after an agreed-upon length of time, you and your child are still not feeling comfortable with separations, you and the teaching staff

may decide that the lab school program is not a good fit for your family. The staff also cannot allow *siblings* of enrolled children to play in the indoor out outdoor classrooms, and participate in classroom activities during or after program. Any questions or concerns about these policies may always be brought to your classroom's Program Coordinator or to the ECL Director.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Requirements

The State of California requires that an adult (over 18) use his/her full legal signature to sign in a child upon arrival each day and to sign out the child before taking the child from the program, whether during program time or at the end of each day's session. This full legal signature officially transfers legal responsibility for the child's care from one adult party to the other. In addition, it is the responsibility of the teaching staff to be sure that at least one teaching staff member makes personal contact with the adult bringing/picking up each child at the time of arrival and departure, both for purposes of safety and for the facilitation of family-staff interaction and information-sharing. When a child is picked up by someone other than a legal guardian, that adult must be on the family's list of names of persons authorized to take child from the facility. The parent/legal guardian must provide the ECL staff with written authorization for any unlisted person to pick up the child by email or note. The teacher must request identification (driver's license or equivalent) of any unfamiliar person. The parent may later add that person's name to the child's emergency form in our main office.

UPDATE YOUR EMERGENCY FORM

*Persons not listed on
your child's emergency
card as authorized to
pick up your child will
not be permitted to take
your child from the ECL.
Photo ID will be
requested of adults not
familiar to our staff.*

Withdrawal and Fee Refunds

If you need to withdraw your child from the program for any reason please inform the ECL Director and complete a Program Withdrawal Form in the West House main office. For any applicable refund, **we require two weeks' notice of any withdrawal**. Your refund will correspond to the length of your child's attendance as follows:

1 week - 80%; 2 weeks - 60%; 3 weeks - 40%; 4 weeks - 20%; 5+ weeks - 0%

Your initial \$200 deposit is not refundable.

Disenrollment

The ECL Director retains the right to terminate a family's enrollment based on any of the following circumstances:

- Lack of parental cooperation with ECL procedures or staff requests;
- Excessive absences unrelated to child illness;*
- Ongoing late pick-up of child;
- Extreme child behavior that presents health and safety threats to others;
- Inappropriate parental conduct toward staff, student caregivers, or other ECL children or their families;
- Overdue tuition payments (i.e., not fully paid by the Friday of Week Four of a quarter).

Photo Consent

As a lab school, The ECL is a multipurpose demonstration program. We incorporate photographs of the program in action into classroom and lab school newsletters, educational workshops, presentations, print and electronic publications and website resources, and use them to illustrate articles and books submitted for publication by our academic staff members. Occasionally, ECL photos appear in print and electronic publications of professional organizations that share our educational and advocacy goals, including the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), our accrediting organization. In addition, we use photographs to publicize our program on campus and in the broader community. We ask for your permission to use photographs that may include your child for these educational and informational purposes. (See "Permissions Form" on back of enrollment form "Identification and Emergency Information.")

Please also remember that your Contract/Informed Consent to attend the ECL contains the following: "Selected students and/or faculty may take photographs, make video or audio recordings, and/or gather observational data of my child at the ECL. Students and faculty will respect my child's right to privacy. Some material may be retained by the ECL staff and be kept at the ECL or in the offices or storage rooms of the Department of Human Ecology. Such material is identified by my child's first name only, unless otherwise permitted by the ECL Director. Access to this material is limited to the director and to faculty and students enrolled in certain classes or engaged in research."

Parking

Finding parking near the ECL site is difficult. Parking permits are required on campus from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Permits are generally not required for campus parking on weekends or University holidays (unless special event attendants are present). Housing areas and restricted spaces require permits 24 hours a day, seven days a week

The driveway parking next to East House is reserved for UC Davis Facilities and ECL staff members.

There are a limited number of designated 15-minute parking spaces for your use while dropping off or picking up your child. The 15-minute parking spaces are for anyone on a “first come” basis. Please remember that the parking spaces belong to the University, not the ECL. **The Director of TAPS (Transportation and Parking Services) is aware of the unique needs of the ECL, and has agreed to allow even parents/family caregivers without “A” permits to park in the large “A” lot (corner of First St. and A St.) at pick-up times, from 11:35-11:50 a.m. and 3:35-3:50 p.m.**

We encourage parents who have “A” Parking Permits to use them at arrival times to reduce the demand on the 15-minute spaces. We encourage carpooling, bus transit, biking or walking whenever possible. It may, at times, be necessary to wait for another car to leave a drop-off space before you are able to park. We ask that you avoid idling vehicles in the parking area except as needed to maintain interior temperatures in extreme heat or cold.

We suggest the following options for individuals needing to exceed the 15 minutes (we cannot guarantee that you will find a spot in any of these locations and fees may not be refundable):

- Use the [ParkMobile app](#) for Lot 5 visitor parking (near Solano Park)
- Purchase A and C parking permits through [Transportation & Parking Services](#)
- Utilize city street parking or Davis Commons parking for early morning times before most businesses are open or busy – free with 1-1/2 to 2-hour limit. City of Davis policies for this lot vary year-to-year.

Breastfeeding Support

~~The ECL supports breastfeeding and welcomes mothers to breastfeed during program time as they wish. The infant room includes a curtained room and rocking chair that mothers may use at any time. Parents may bring bottles of breast milk or formula in ready-to-feed sanitary containers labeled with the child's name and date for caregivers to feed to infants according to written parent instructions. Staff members will gently mix, rather than shake, bottles of breast milk to preserve the milk's essential components. All bottles will be stored in the infant room refrigerator and any remaining milk will be discarded after one hour.*~~

Clothing and Weather Protection

You can help your child to have a comfortable experience in our programs by providing clothing suitable for play. Active learning can get messy! Children of all ages play and work actively, indoors and outdoors, almost every day in almost any weather. (The only times we do not play outside are when heavy rain and/or wind, air quality, or environmental safety conditions, as defined by local officials, pose a health or safety risk). This means that children's clothes may come in contact with water, mud, sand, paint, and food. While we use smocks and paint shirts when appropriate, accidents do happen. We would not prefer a child to decline to participate in an experience because of fear of getting their clothes dirty. Please have your child

wear comfortable clothing that is easily washed after their adventures here. If an outfit is precious, it is best to save it for other places. Also plan to keep two complete sets of extra clothes in your child's backpack every day. We will help children change out of wet or dirty clothes that are bothering them, and will place the original clothes in a plastic bag in the child's backpack.

If you want to protect shoes from playground mud during the rainy season, please bring rain boots, marked with your child's name. We also encourage the use of rain gear during wet seasons. See your child's teachers for recommendations about what works best. We welcome donations of outgrown clothing to add to our collection of emergency extras. Larger sweatpants and shirts as well as boys' underwear are especially useful.

When taking children outdoors, the teaching staff ensures that children are dressed in clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. They also take appropriate precautions in hot, sunny weather. These include continuous access to large shady areas and individual water bottles. Staff members will help children wear hats and other sun-protective garments that parents/family caregivers provide. Parents/family caregivers are asked to apply sunscreen at home before program. Davis is not designated by public health authorities as an area at a high risk of insect-borne disease, so the staff does not apply insect repellent to children. Parents are encouraged to do this at home before program if they so choose.



Items to Bring to School Each Day

You will be asked to pack the following items into a small, child-sized backpack for your child each day.

- Extra clothes (two sets of each item) and rain gear must be labeled. Soiled clothing will be returned to families in a plastic bag. Be sure to check your child's backpack each day to replace "extra clothes".
- Labeled, 16 oz. water bottle. The bottle will return home each day and should be cleaned and sanitized before its return to program.
- Child-friendly snack (i.e. requiring as little adult support as possible). While it is not preferred, snack/lunch items should be packed in one-time use material. Consider wax paper to limit plastic waste.

There will be no food provided by the program as we are unable to support food preparation on-site. Staff may assist children to refill their water bottles as needed.

No toys or other objects from home will be permitted on site.

Field Trips

Each class takes periodic short-distance field trips during the year to destinations on the UC Davis campus (e.g., campus fire station, sculpture walk, duck walk along Putah Creek) or in downtown Davis (train station). Infants and toddlers ride in buggies and preschoolers walk or, in the case of physical disability, are assisted appropriately by a caregiver. The high ratio of adults to children (infants 1:2, toddlers 1:3, preschoolers 1:4) is always maintained and families are often invited to accompany the group.*

Preceding each field trip, safety guidelines are reviewed with adult and child participants, and each adult is assigned responsibility to account for and ensure the safety of specific children during the outing. The group remains on pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and each child holds the hand of an adult when crossing streets. A designated staff member brings a first aid kit, cell phone, and drinking water.

Prior to departure, staff post a sign on the classroom door indicating the location of the field trip, departure time, estimated return time, and contact information in the event of an emergency. Families are notified of departure and return using Curacubby messaging.

The field trip form in the annual enrollment packet gives parent/guardian permission for each child to participate in these walks.



PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES

Communicating effectively with families is at the heart of quality child care. Because children develop within relationships, the issue of attachment is particularly important. Young children need positive attachments with the adults in their lives in order to feel safe, secure and ready to learn. Building relationships with children is made easier when the staff and parents/family caregivers have positive relationships.

Staff design and implement the early learning environment but they also set the tone for their program's social climate. It is important that the climate be open and accepting of families. Showing respect for primary relationships helps children feel safe and secure and families feel valued and important. The **ECL staff receives training in working with families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.**

Initial Connections

Family Visits

The ECL staff makes it a priority to connect with families prior to their entrance in program. To reach this goal, 20-30 minute family visits are scheduled with each individual family. All families are offered a classroom visit; additional family visits at different times and locations may be offered and used as deemed appropriate by parents/family caregivers and teaching staff.

A typical family visit begins with the sharing of the classroom staff picture (photo of Lead Teacher and CDDL/Program Coordinator). Next, the CDDL/Program Coordinator reviews handouts pertaining to assessment and detailing ECL events and housekeeping information. The CDDL/Program Coordinator then leads the family through a series of questions used to help staff become more familiar with the child and the family.

The Lead Teacher uses the family visit as an opportunity to build an individual relationship with the child, and/or introduce the child to the classroom environment and daily routine.

Parent/Family Caregiver Orientation

Parent/Family Caregiver Orientation is a time to gather as a community to introduce to the ECL, program staff, curriculum, and daily routines. The ECL Director leads the initial presentation and overview of the site. Families then meet with the other families of their classroom cohort.

This portion of the meeting is conducted by CDDL/Program Coordinator and Lead Teacher(s). As a way to establish the classroom community, staff leads families through a "get to know you" activity. They then provide a detailed overview of individual classroom design, implementation, and evaluation. With the remaining time, families are encouraged to ask questions. Dependent on campus guidelines and ECL leadership, this meeting may be conducted via Zoom.*



*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

Ongoing Communication

Arrival and Departure

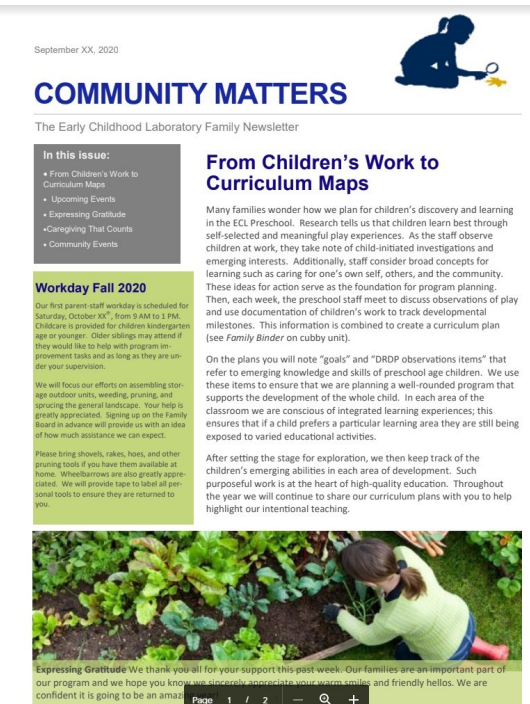
Arrival and departure time is an ideal opportunity for staff to communicate with families informally. Lead Teachers make themselves available during arrival and departure time to facilitate transitions, support student caregivers, and carry on casual conversation with individual families.

Occasionally some families use these routines to address sensitive issues about home-life stressors or ECL program planning. Since Lead Teachers must guide children and student caregivers through the daily routine and time is limited, we ask families to either seek out the Program Coordinator (for urgent questions or concerns) or schedule a time to connect with the Lead Teacher via phone or Zoom. Parents/family caregivers may also choose to email staff directly to communicate any needs.

Newsletters

You can expect to receive a variety of newsletters throughout the year from ECL staff.

Lead Teachers are responsible for sharing classroom documentation of recent learning experiences, forecasting upcoming curriculum plans, and introducing opportunities to extend the learning into the home or inviting families to participate in upcoming program events. These **e-newsletters** are sent **every three weeks** and a hard copy will be posted in the classroom.



September XX, 2020

COMMUNITY MATTERS

The Early Childhood Laboratory Family Newsletter

In this issue:

- From Children's Work to Curriculum Maps
- Upcoming Events
- Expressing Gratitude
- Caregiving That Counts
- Community Events

From Children's Work to Curriculum Maps

Many families wonder how we plan for children's discovery and learning in the ECL Preschool. Research tells us that children learn best through self-selected and meaningful play experiences. As the staff observe children at work, they take note of child-initiated investigations and emerging interests. Additionally, staff consider broad concepts for learning such as caring for one's own self, others, and the community. These ideas for action serve as the foundation for program planning. Then, each week, the preschool staff meet to discuss observations of play and use documentation of children's work to track developmental milestones. This information is combined to create a curriculum plan (see *Family Binder* on cubby unit).

On the plans you will note "goals" and "DRDP observations items" that refer to emerging knowledge and skills of preschool age children. We use these items to ensure that we are planning a well-rounded program that supports the development of the whole child. In each area of the classroom we are conscious of integrated learning experiences; this ensures that if a child prefers a particular learning area they are still being exposed to varied educational activities.

After setting the stage for exploration, we then keep track of the children's emerging abilities in each area of development. Such purposeful work is at the heart of high-quality education. Throughout the year we will continue to share our curriculum plans with you to help highlight our intentional teaching.

Workday Fall 2020

Our first parent-staff workday is scheduled for Saturday, October XX, from 9 AM to 1 PM. Childcare is provided for children kindergarten age or younger. Older siblings may attend if they would like to help with program improvement tasks and as long as they are under your supervision.

We will focus our efforts on assembling storage outdoor units, weeding, pruning, and spraying the general landscape. Your help is greatly appreciated. Signing up on the Family Board in advance will provide us with an idea of how much assistance we can expect.

Please bring shovels, rakes, hoes, and other pruning tools if you have them available at home. Wheelbarrows are also greatly appreciated. We will provide tape to label all personal tools to ensure they are returned to you.

Expressing Gratitude

We thank you all for your support this past week. Our families are an important part of our program and we hope you know we sincerely appreciate your warm smiles and friendly hellos. We are confident it is going to be an amazing year.

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CDDL/Program Coordinators are responsible sending a **weekly email** titled *Caregiving that Counts* that includes a summary of what practicum students are learning in lab, as well as ideas for translating approaches to caregiving into the home environment.

The **ECL Director** is responsible for sending a **monthly newsletter** that includes program reminders and housekeeping; campus and community events; opportunities to participate in research; and other site-relevant general information.

Family Engagement

There are several specific ways that parents can become involved in the program:

Classroom Visits: ~~Parents or other family caregivers are welcome to visit their child's classroom or outdoor play yard at any time. Especially at the beginning of each new term, spending a few extra minutes helping your children settle in upon arrival often eases their transition.*~~

Family Interests: ~~Parents and other family members may choose to share a special interest, hobby, project, story, or cultural tradition with their child's class, or arrange a walking trip for children to their interesting place of study or work, either on campus or downtown.*~~

Parent Workshops: Each year we arrange workshops and discussions on topics of interest to parents. We welcome your topic suggestions.

ECL Workdays: Each fall and spring, ECL parents and staff members gather for a Saturday workday to work on improvements to the program's facilities and outdoor play spaces. ***Each family will be expected to participate for a minimum of two hours in either the September or April Parent/Staff Workday.*** No special skills are required.



Family Community Committee (FCC): Any ECL family adult who chooses may participate in the ECL Family Community Committee (FCC). This is an organized group coordinated by parents/family caregivers interested in building community within the school and supporting the program and its families in a variety of ways, including:

- Organizing informal parent "Meet-and-Greets" after program arrival time once each quarter;
- Assisting with the set-up and clean-up of beginning and end of year family picnics;
- Planning and organizing monthly "teacher appreciation" events;
- Providing input to the staff about parent education topics of interest;
- Offering translation services for multi-language parents;
- Organizing and hosting off-site summer and Friday play days for all ECL families;
- Organizing family field trips for non-school days (e.g., pumpkin patch, berry picking)
- Planning and executing fundraising projects to benefit the lab school;
- Participating in periodic parent panel discussions at staff meetings;
- Advocating to the University for amenities and safety (e.g., parking issues);
- Providing labor and expertise for fall and spring parent/staff workdays;
- Meeting periodically as a parenting support group and to build community;
- Bringing parent concerns to the attention of the Director.

Although University policy prohibits an official governance or decision-making role for parents, the ECL staff engages in consultation and collaboration with them as much as possible to build trust and enthusiasm for

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

making program improvements. The FCC selects their own officers (Moderator, Secretary, Class Representatives) and sets the agenda to reflect their own interests and needs with respect to those of the school. They prioritize inclusion and work hard to ensure that all adult family caregivers feel welcome to participate.

All adult family caregivers, including those who choose not to become involved in the FCC, are encouraged to participate in the annual family survey of the ECL program. In addition, they are invited to offer verbal feedback to the ECL Director and/or staff members and to share ideas for making program changes. All families receive a summary of the ECL annual report.

Conferences: Twice each year, your child's Lead Teacher and Program Coordinator will meet with you to discuss your child's development and any questions or concerns you may have. In addition, staff members are regularly available to talk with you in person or by phone, Zoom, or email.



Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The ECL staff values the cultural and linguistic diversity present in our school community. We actively attempt to recruit a community of caregivers that mirrors the diversity of our community of children and families. During your family visit, your child's teachers will ask how you would prefer that we support your child's language acquisition, either in your home language or in English, and will support your preferences to the best of our ability. We make every effort to match the language of student caregivers to each child's primary home language. We understand that some families in our community would like to preserve their child's first language in the program setting, while others see this as an opportunity to develop English as an additional language for their children. This can be an ongoing process of evaluation and discussion as each child grows.

If you need assistance in understanding any of the written or verbal information we give to families, please ask any staff member for help. Through our student caregivers and other parents fluent in a variety of languages, we will attempt to provide translation services for you and are happy to do so.

In addition, we strive to develop programming that is sensitive to differences in culture, language, values, and family composition. If you or your child experiences anything here that does not meet this standard, please let the ECL Director know so that we can work with you to correct it. We are committed to learning and doing better! Your knowledge and experience will help us do just that.

Negotiating Differences

A primary goal of the ECL staff is to partner with families in supporting the healthy development of each child. We strive to be a welcoming, comfortable place for all families who enroll their children here. Since we serve an international population of graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, faculty and community members from as many as fifteen countries, on average, each year, this can be challenging at times. We know that cultural values, expectations, and childrearing practices often vary widely even within classroom groups.

Given this diversity, we sometimes do encounter situations where our professional values and practices differ from the values and practices of a family. When this occurs, we have found that the following practices help smooth interactions and relationships between teachers and families and resolve concerns and instances of disagreement or misunderstanding. The goal is to agree on a plan that will serve the best interests of the child.

First, when a concern about a practice, activity or interaction arises, we ask that you please talk with your child's teacher about it as soon as possible. The Lead Teacher or Program Coordinator will be happy to discuss it with you. Program Coordinators or the ECL Director will follow up with an email or phone call if an upsetting or challenging interaction involving your child occurs and you are not available to talk in person.

Sometimes, a fuller explanation of a situation, activity or practice is all that is necessary. At times we are following specific, required regulations, but we are willing to adapt where we can. If you would like translation in order for fuller dialogue to occur, we can employ the services of the adult interpreters available to us. We will also convey information in printed form, which is often preferred by international families, so that other adult family members can read it at home.

When an issue is complex or intractable, a more formal meeting that includes adult family members, the teaching staff, and the ECL Director can be arranged. Please email the ECL Director to request this. We rarely experience severe difficulties in coming to solutions or understandings about ways to partner, but when difficult situations arise, we attempt to use dialogue strategies to resolve differences. Our approach is to be honest, yet sensitive in all our communications with families as well as with any other facilitators or service providers who support them.

Inclusion at the ECL

"Inclusion means . . . always together, always supported, always learning, always welcome." Author Unknown

What is inclusion at the ECL?

Inclusive early care and education is an approach which enables all young children to participate together in a learning community, whether they are typically developing or have a disability or condition that impacts their development. At the ECL we strive to serve each age-eligible child, regardless of their special needs, to the extent that is beneficial to the child and possible within our lab school's facility and staffing structure.

How does inclusion work?

Children with special needs are provided with the support, accommodations, and modifications they need to

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

succeed in the classroom with their typically developing peers.

Why inclusion?

All children:

- acquire more well-developed social intelligence and are more likely to make compassionate, considerate choices in their peer interactions in the inclusion model
- develop a more concrete understanding of human dignity and a richer ability to respect and appreciate diversity in the inclusion model
- benefit from becoming acquainted and comfortable with the children in their community with whom they may continue to interact for the rest of their lives
- gain greater awareness of their own unique areas of strength and areas of need
- recognize that everyone has something valuable to contribute despite their differences

Children with special needs benefit by having typical peers model social and learning skills.

How can I, as a parent, contribute to creating an inclusive classroom community?

- Remember that all children are unique, all children have equal worth, and all children have something valuable to contribute to their learning community.
- Talk about all children and families with respect.
- Talk to your child about his/her own strengths and challenges.
- Think about what you are modeling. Look for positive ways to model awareness, empathy, and inclusion in your family and in your own relationships.
- Reflect on your own school experience and how that might have shaped any ideas you have about children who are differently abled. Think about the ways that you hope your own child's school experience is similar to and different from your own.
- Be welcoming and expand your circle of relationships: invite someone who may be differently abled for a play date, a picnic at the park, or a birthday party.

Adapted from documents created by UCNS and DJUSD.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The ECL is an indoor/outdoor smoke-free facility. We appreciate your cooperation.

Safety is a top priority to be considered with respect to the program's environment, activities, and interactions. Good arrangement of the indoor and outdoor space and attentive supervision of children during program sessions will minimize unsafe situations.

Appropriate staff-child **ratios are maintained at all times:**

Infant (Birth-15 months) 1:4

Toddler (12-36 months) 1:6

Preschool (1:10)

Teaching staff position themselves to see as many children as possible. Teaching staff supervise infants and toddlers/twos by **sight and sound** at all times. They supervise preschool children primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., those who can use the toilet independently or who are looking at books in the Quiet Area). At every outdoor/indoor transition time, the teaching staff should intentionally account for every child using specified forms.

For everyone's safety and protection, **student caregivers do not work alone with children**. They are supervised by regularly scheduled teaching staff (i.e. CDDLs, LTs, or TAs) at all times. This includes taking children inside the classroom for toileting/diapering routines or to retrieve items from individual cubbies.

Handwashing Procedure

All adults and children must wash hands upon arrival for the day; after diapering or using the toilet; after handling bodily fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or touching mucus, blood, or vomit); before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving food, and after handling raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry); after playing in water that is shared by two or more people; after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals; and when moving from one group to another (e.g., visiting) when it involves contact with infants, toddlers, and twos.



Adults also wash their hands before and after feeding a child, before and after administering medication

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

(ECL Professional Staff ONLY), after assisting a child with toileting, and after handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing technique is followed by adults and children and includes:

- Using liquid soap and running water
- Rubbing vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails
- Rinsing well
- Drying hands with a paper towel
- Avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., using a paper towel to turn off water for all non-water saving faucets)

Staff will assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task. You can assist staff by teaching your child the handwashing steps at home and ensuring that they practice rubbing vigorously for at least 20 seconds.

Health Checks

Daily health checks seek to identify potential concerns about a child's health including recent illness or injury in the child and the family. Health checks may serve to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases in child care settings by identifying children who should be excluded, and enable the caregivers/teachers to plan for necessary care while the child is in care at the facility.

Every day, a professional staff member will conduct a health check of your child. This health check will be conducted as soon as possible after the child enters the child care facility and whenever a change in the child's behavior or appearance is noted while that child is in care. The **daily health check is performed in a relaxed and comfortable manner that respects the family's culture as well as the child's body and feelings.**

The **health check should address:**

- Reported or observed illness or injury affecting the child or family members since the last date of attendance;
- Reported or observed changes in behavior of the child (such as lethargy or irritability) or in the appearance (e.g., sad) of the child from the previous day at home or the previous day's attendance at child care;
- Skin rashes, impetigo, itching or scratching of the skin, itching or scratching of the scalp, or the presence of one or more live crawling lice;
- A temperature check to confirm healthy temperature (97.9°F to 99.9°F);
- Other signs or symptoms of illness and injury (such as drainage from eyes, vomiting, diarrhea, cuts/lacerations, pain, or feeling ill).
- The caregiver/teacher should gain information necessary to complete the daily health check by direct observation of the child, by querying the parent/guardian, and, where applicable, by conversation with the child.

If a child is deemed unfit to be at school after parent/family caregiver departure, staff will contact parents/family caregivers or approved emergency pick-up designees (as necessary) to come get their child as soon as possible. The child will be isolated away from other children and made comfortable while awaiting pick up. Staff will complete a Sent Home Sick Report, photocopy a record for the parent, and submit the original form to the ECL Director.

Health Policy

NO	YES A child may be at the ECL if his or her condition is as follows:
ENERGY LEVEL RELATED TO ILLNESS Child needs to be held constantly, needs to sleep the entire time, or is too miserable or uncomfortable to participate in the activities of the program.	ENERGY LEVEL RELATED TO ILLNESS Child is able to participate in the activities of the program.
FEVER Has a fever of 100 degrees or above. Had a fever within the last 48 hours.	FEVER Has a normal temperature. If recovering from a fever, has had no fever for a full 48 hours.
COLDS Has any of the following symptoms: a profusely runny nose, severe congestion, lethargy, general irritability, or fever of 100 degrees or higher.	RUNNY NOSE Has a clear runny nose not accompanied by cough or sore throat, or a doctor's note stating that it is an allergic condition.
COUGH Has a wet, wheezy cough, which through mucus could spread viral or bacterial infection.	COUGH A child with a dry-sounding cough will usually be admitted if the cough is not related to other illness, or with a doctor's note stating that it is an allergic condition.
EYES Recurring discharge (green, white or clear) from the eyes, usually accompanied by redness and itching. Will not be admitted until discharge is cleared. EVEN IF ON MEDICATION.	EYES No signs of fresh discharge from the eyes and doctor's note certifying lack of contagion.
DIARRHEA Recurring diarrhea (loose watery stools) when not food-related or medication related, when associated with other symptoms of illness.	DIARRHEA Recovery of normal bowel for a full 48 hours or doctor's note stating condition is food or medicine related.
VOMITING Vomiting or accompanying symptoms (e.g., nausea).	VOMITING No vomiting or accompanying symptoms for a full 48 hours.
LICE Intense scratching of scalp.	LICE Treatment with pyriminated shampoo or a prescribed treatment. REMOVAL OF ALL LIVE LICE.
SCABIES Raised red spots or lines on skin caused by microscopic mite. Intense itching.	SCABIES Treatment with scabicide and doctor's note certifying lack of contagion.
SKIN Presence of impetigo, draining poison oak, cold sores, canker sores or fever blisters. A rash characteristic of a vaccine-preventable disease on an under-immunized child.	SKIN Absence of symptoms. Children with heat, allergy (with a note from doctor) or diaper rashes may attend the Center.

The ECL notifies parents/family caregivers when their child has been exposed to any serious illness or condition requiring medical attention.

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

Medication

Since the ECL provides only a three-hour program the staff does not usually administer medication to children except on an emergency basis (e.g. “Epipen” for life-threatening allergic reactions, asthma inhaler to ease sudden asthma symptoms). Parents are asked to administer other necessary medications either before or after their child’s program session. Staff members are trained by a medical professional in correct procedures for the proper administration of medication. A Medication Permission Form and further instructions for emergency medication administration may be obtained in the West House office. Medications are stored in the child’s classroom in a locked container which is easily accessible to staff but out of reach of children. Every time a medication is administered, the teaching staff member who administers it will complete and sign a Daily Medication Form and will provide a copy of the completed form to the child’s parent or guardian.



Injuries

Despite our best efforts, occasionally a child will become injured. When safety permits, student caregivers may take the child to the CDDL/Program Coordinator or Lead Teacher. ECL staff will assess the severity of the injury and follow through with the proper procedures. If a staff member is not nearby or the caregiver cannot take the child to them, student caregivers are to send someone for help and comfort the child until an ECL staff member can arrive. **The ECL staff handles all the first aid care.**

If an emergency medical situation arises, the staff will call an ambulance to transport the child to the nearest appropriate emergency medical facility, and will then contact the parent/guardian to meet the child at the hospital. The child’s Lead Teacher and/or Program Coordinator will accompany the child in the ambulance. The signed Medical Consent card gives the ECL permission to pursue necessary medical or dental treatment until the

child’s parent/guardian or physician arrives.

For all injuries that leave any type of mark, staff complete an Injury Report Form (IRF). Completed forms are signed by a parent/guardian and submitted to the ECL Director. Significant injuries are problem-solved to prevent any future mishaps.

Health Examination and Immunizations

The State of California regulations require that each child have an annual health examination, reported on the *Physician’s Report* form. Children new to the program must have had a health examination and TB screening test or documented exemption within 12 months before program begins. Documentation of exam, TB test (or waiver) and up-to-date immunizations is due before child attends school.

Please bring all immunization records to the CCFS administrative assistant or request that the doctor’s office fax them to CCFS at (530) 752-9547. Please bring/send updates whenever additional immunizations are administered. A copy of your records will be made so the CCFS staff can complete the California School Immunization Record.

IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTIONS: As of January 1, 2016, parents of guardians of students in any school or child-care facility, whether public or private, are no longer allowed to submit a personal beliefs exemption to a

currently-required vaccine for a child newly enrolling in a program. An already-enrolled child will be required to be up-to-date on all required immunizations at the next school transition time (i.e., kindergarten entry). If a child cannot receive an immunization because of a medical condition, California State law requires that the CCFS office have on file a separate document from the child's physician documenting the medical reason for not having up-to-date immunizations as well as an alternative planned schedule. Information about medical exemptions is available at: <http://www.shotsforschool.org/laws/exemptions/>

Healthy Schools Act Compliance

On the lab school site, both UC Davis Grounds and Facilities crew members and ECL staff members are trained in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and safe pesticide use techniques approved by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation to comply with the 2015 Healthy Schools Act. Personnel use biological, cultural and physical methods to prevent and reduce pest infestations, and apply reduced-risk pesticides approved by the UC Davis Certified Pest Control Coordinator only when deemed absolutely necessary. We provide notification, post warning signs, and maintain records of use for four years. The CCFS IPM plan can be found at <http://ccfs.ucdavis.edu/ECLforms.html>. More information can be found at: www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm.

Safety and Security

The ECL has developed a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan (including evacuation, shelter, and contact arrangements) to be implemented in the event of a major emergency (e.g. flood, hazardous material spill, fire, other natural disaster). The full emergency procedures manual is available in the West House office.

In the event of an emergency situation that requires an evacuation of our lab school facility one of the following plans will be used. The ECL staff will make every attempt to contact you promptly in such an event. Please be sure to supply us with up-to-date emergency contact information, including email and out of state contact information when traveling. Keep information with you so that you will know how to contact and find us in the event of an evacuation. Please take the time to implement your own Family Plan.

If the emergency environment is confined to the immediate area of the lab school facility, (e.g. fire or toxic fumes on the premises) the children will be brought to Voorhies Hall (1st and A streets), by foot or car where they will remain with staff while family/guardian/emergency contacts are notified of the situation and arrangements are made for either transportation home or care for the remainder of the emergency. In the event of exposure to toxic materials or gases, when a physical examination is recommended, children will be transported by any means available to Sutter Davis Hospital or UCD Health Center where they will be examined by a health provider and family/guardian/ emergency contacts will be notified.

If the emergency encompasses a larger area due to a non-confined environmental threat, (e.g. toxic fumes from a spill, flood waters, fires, etc., and the children cannot remain in the area, the children will be brought to Voorhies Hall (1st and A streets), by foot or car, where they will remain accompanied by staff while family/guardian/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements for their transportation home or a continued care are made.

In the event of a major environmental hazard that necessitates a larger area evacuation such as several neighborhoods, a city/town or geographical area, due to a large non-confined hazard, (e.g. earthquake, etc.) children will be transported to a Red Cross designated mass shelter by car or taxi where they will remain with staff while family/guardian/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made for their pick-up.

Staff will remain with and care for the children at all times during an event. Attendance will be checked whenever children are moved. Staff will bring any necessary medications, supplies, and emergency records.

In the event that we receive different instructions from emergency personnel, every attempt will be made to inform you of the alternate plans.

The ECL has in place a regular schedule of opportunities for the staff and children to practice routine safety procedures including fire drills, earthquake response, and other “listen and follow” directives.

Parking Lot and Gate Safety

Please pay attention to two **critical safety issues**:

Parking Lot Safety: To keep your children safe in the parking lot, please:

- look both ways before walking into the parking lot;
- hold your child’s hand until you get into the car or enter the CCFS;
- walk between the cars and the fence rather than behind parked cars;
- when backing up a car, look carefully and go slowly.

Gate Safety: Pay particular attention to all gate latches.

You must securely latch them as you enter and exit. Gates are congested areas and our experience has been that when adults stop to engage in conversation near a gate, they sometimes do not notice the child who pulls away from them and slips out through the gate. We urge you not to let go of your child’s hand until you are safely inside the CCFS or your car. To keep everyone safe, please check to make sure that the only children who exit a gate with you are those for whom you have responsibility.

Use of Outdoor Classrooms

For safety and liability reasons, we are unable to allow children to play with or on ECL equipment without the supervision of an ECL staff member, whether it is before, during or after program time. In addition, we cannot allow children to be present anywhere on the ECL grounds inside or out without supervision.

We understand that you may have to wait for a child’s program to end, and we would like to provide a pleasant place for you to do that.* If arriving early to pick up or drop off a child, parents/family caregivers may wait in the concrete breezeway area between preschool classrooms. Parents and children may also picnic in the adjacent Arboretum. In order to maintain safety standards we ask that you never leave children unattended when they are not in program. Follow all safety signs and keep noise to a minimum while programs are still in session.

Security Procedures for Protecting Children

Protecting children from harm is of top priority to families and teachers. To ensure children’s safety in this college campus setting, staff members, students, and parents/guardians are asked to be vigilant about the

following practices and procedures:

- **Gates leading to children’s areas are to remain closed and latched at all times** except when an adult opens, and then closes them to allow passage.
- **All observers, visitors, and non-parent/guardian adult guests must sign in at the West House office** counter and obtain a VISITOR nametag in order to visit the children’s programs. Non-enrolled children **MUST** remain with their responsible adult at all times while on site.*
- **All staff members, including student caregivers and program assistants, must wear ECL nametags** at all times while on site during children’s program sessions.
- **Enrolled children are released ONLY to parents/guardians and the other adults they authorize on their Identification and Emergency Information form.** They will be asked to show photo identification to the Lead Teacher or Program Coordinator before being allowed to sign out with the child. If an emergency substitution must be made, the parent or guardian may send an email to the ECL Office (mloganj@ucdavis.edu or ccfs@ucdavis.edu) naming and authorizing the designated substitute.
- If the adult arriving to pick up a child appears to be impaired by alcohol or another substance, OR is a person whose presence violates legal custody arrangements, the teacher will ask another ECL staff member to call an alternative available adult listed on the child’s Emergency Information form and will wait with the child until that person arrives.
- Any staff member, student, or parent/guardian who observes an unfamiliar, unaccompanied adult not wearing a VISITOR nametag **MUST** notify a teacher or administrator.
- The ECL staff, in consultation with UC Davis Police Department security personnel, has developed and been trained on a detailed security threat response protocol for extreme incident response that is rehearsed regularly and can be implemented quickly by program adults.

The ECL is licensed and routinely inspected by the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division. The CCLD’s Policies and Procedures Manual states that, in order to protect children:

“(b) The Department has the authority to interview children or staff without prior consent.

(1) The licensee shall ensure that provisions are made for private interviews with any children or staff members.

(c) The Department has the authority to inspect, audit, and copy child or child care center records upon demand during normal business hours. Records may be removed if necessary for copying. Removal of records shall be subject to the requirements in Sections 101217(c) and 101221(d).

(1) The licensee shall ensure that provisions are made for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the child care center.

(d) The Department has the authority to observe the physical condition of the children, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement.

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

UC Davis Student Parents (<https://studentparents.ucdavis.edu/>)

- [Academic Support and Leave Options](#)
- [Childcare and Activities](#)
- [Communities and Events](#)
- [Crisis Support Services](#)
- [Expecting and New Parents](#)
- [Financial Support and Scholarships](#)
- [Student Housing](#)

UC Davis Staff, Faculty, and Other Affiliates (<https://hr.ucdavis.edu/departments/worklife-wellness/family-care>)

- [Parental Leave](#)
- [Infants and Children](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [School-age and Teens](#)
- [Adults and Elders](#)

Community (<https://www.chs-ca.org/for-families>)

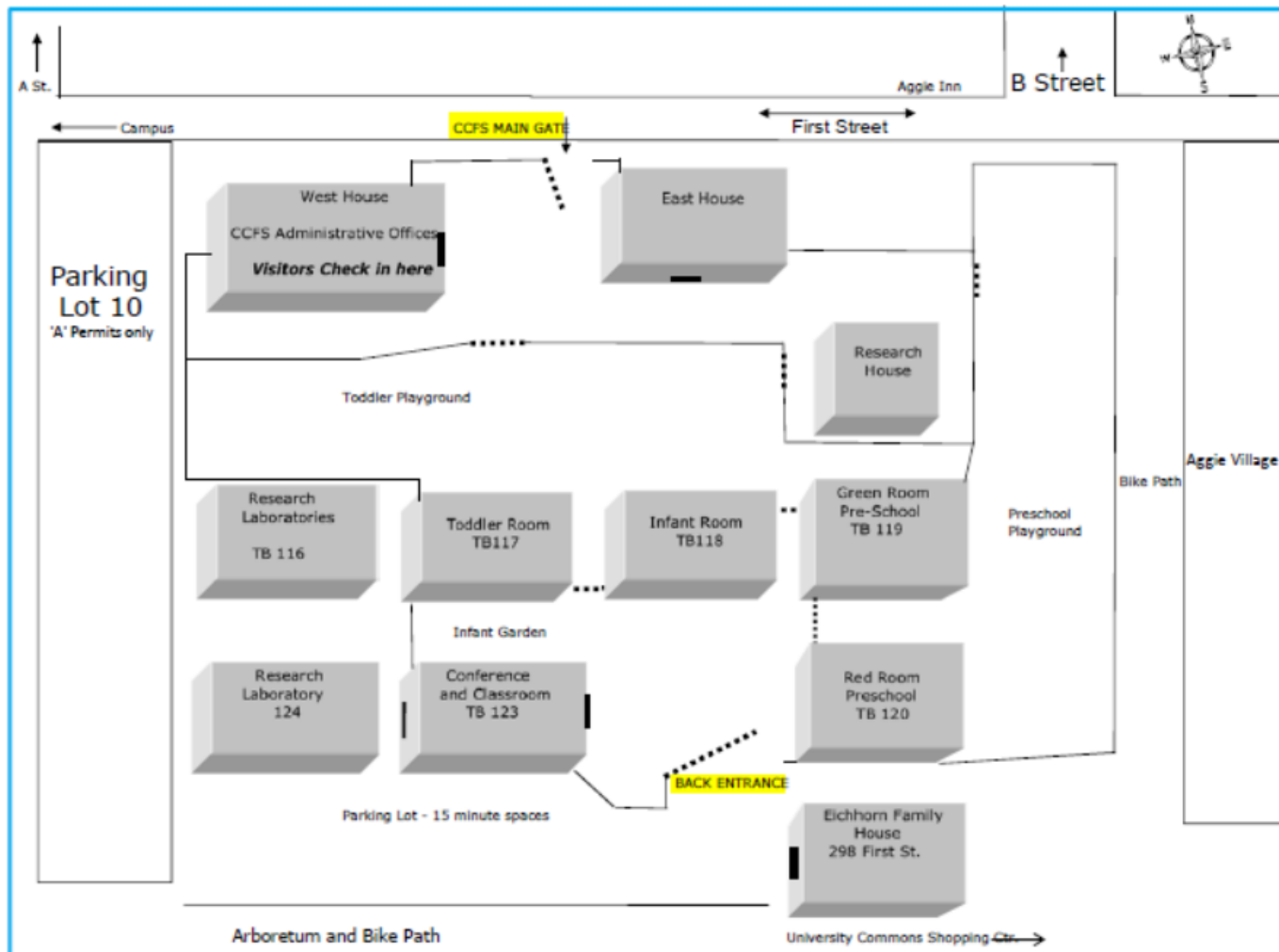
- Child Care Payment Program
- Child Care Referrals
- CHS Blog
- Parent Newsletter
- Program Forms & Documents
- Workshops & Events
- TrustLine Background Checks
- Family Child Care Home Education Network
- Family Education Program
- CHS Podcasts
- Resource Lending Library
- Community Resources
- Pay Family Fees

Help Me Grow Yolo County (<https://helpmegrowyolo.org/parenting-tools>)

Help Me Grow empowers parents by connecting them with the resources they need. Whatever your situation, whatever your question, Help Me Grow can help provide answers!

Call Help Me Grow toll free at: 1 (844) 410-GROW (4769) or email at information@helpmegrowyolo.org

Appendix A: Site Map



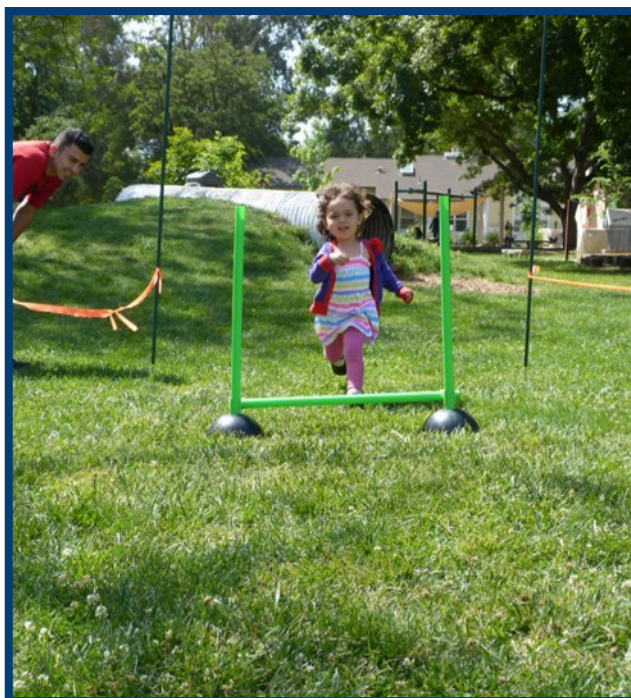
*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

Appendix B: Child Assessment Plan and Confidentiality Policies

Assessment Tools and Their Purposes

The ECL developmental screening and assessment program is comprised of **two formal published instruments** as well as a **variety of ongoing informal observations** that are integrated into the course of each day.

Shortly before the school year begins, the Program Coordinator and Lead Teacher conduct a **family visit** with each child and family. This establishes an initial home/school connection and fosters a strong reciprocal relationship with the family. During the visit, the staff becomes acquainted with the child's family and learns from them about their family structure, their preferred child-rearing practices, and information families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. By completing the **Child and Family Information Form** in the annual enrollment packet, parents/family caregivers may provide supplementary information, as they choose, about significant events or circumstances, specific concerns, and individual goals they have for their child's program experience. The staff uses all this information to adapt the program's environment, curriculum, and teaching methods to the families they serve.



A blank copy of the formal developmental screening instrument, **The Ages & Stages Questionnaire: A Parent-completed, Child-Monitoring System (ASQ - 3)**, appropriate for the child's age, is given and explained to each family and

parents are asked to complete it before each new school year begins. We use the ASQ as a brief assessment procedure to help us identify children who, because they might have a learning delay or disability, should receive more extensive diagnostic assessment by qualified professionals. It briefly surveys a young child's abilities in language, reasoning, gross motor, fine motor, and personal/social development. Each child's family is also required to submit a copy of a comprehensive medical examination performed during the previous six months.

The formal instrument used to assess each child's progress toward learning goals in all developmental domains and age-appropriate content areas during the duration of program participation is the **Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)**, created and tested by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division, and revised regularly. This requires Program Coordinators and Lead Teachers to systematically observe each child and record **anecdotal observations that accurately describe skills, understandings, and growth within a comprehensive array of developmental domains**. These include cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, and physical development. Its descriptive

rating scale allows the teaching staff to gauge the child's developmental progress and note areas of strength and areas on which to focus further attention or implement different strategies to support growth. The descriptive rating scale and anecdotes are formally compiled in November-December and in May, and are **summarized in a written Family Report, which the child's teaching staff and parents/family caregivers discuss and add to during the December/January and May/June conferences, and which the family retains.** Dialogue during conferences strengthens our understanding of each child's developmental profile and often leads to ideas for individualizing both staff and parent support of children's learning, as well as plans for smooth transitions into the next level of the program or into kindergarten.

Upon purchase of these screening and assessment instruments and during periodic refresher trainings on their use, the ECL Director and teaching staff examine their average developmental ratings against those of our own child population to ensure comparability of interpretation. Our staff remains aware of the demographic factors that are likely to affect the performance of the program's child population on these norm-referenced instruments. Both published instruments are highly-regarded and their validity and reliability have been proven in a wide variety of settings over time. The detailed materials that accompany each instrument are available for perusal by parents/family caregivers who want additional information about either assessment tool. The Director and Program Coordinators are also available to answer questions about the

choice, use, scoring, and interpretation of screening and assessment methods.



The ECL Director and Program Coordinators have received in-depth training on the use of the ASQ with families and the interpretation of its results. They, in turn, train the Lead Teachers on its components and teaching teams review and discuss each child's ASQ assessment together at the beginning of the program year. The same process occurs with the Desired Results Developmental Profile assessment system. Online trainings about using the DRDP, made available by the California Department of Education, augment our in-person training. The entire staff also meets periodically to review the purposes, values, and uses of assessment in general, and how to dialogue with families about it.

Sometimes, based on ongoing observation, assessment, and discussion, staff and/or parents/family caregivers identify

the need for additional screening and referral for professional diagnostic assessment. In these cases, Program Coordinators and, at times, the Director determine the appropriate resources available for diagnostic assessment and family support, as needed or requested, and assist families through the process of referral, diagnosis, and therapeutic and/or educational intervention. We currently have a close collaboration with Help Me Grow Yolo County (California First 5-funded) that provides our families with additional free screening services and facilitates the process of obtaining diagnosis and intervention necessary to obtain appropriate, free or

*See COVID-19 ECL Family Handbook Updates

affordable services. Many resources (see Community Resources section of handbook and CCFS website) for diagnosis, intervention, support, and collaboration exist within our university and community.

When county or school district specialists determine that an ECL-enrolled child is eligible for IEP/IFSP planning, the child's ECL teaching staff always collaborates with the planning and intervention team to ensure smooth transitions and consistent, helpful approaches with the child. Regional Center, Northern California Children's Therapy Center and/or school district therapists periodically meet with teachers and observe children during program time as part of the effort to coordinate intervention strategies. The ECL staff follows the instructions and suggestions of these outside specialists, as well as the results of their own assessments, in individualizing program strategies and designing goals to assist development in targeted areas. The staff provides information and support to the family and continues to provide a nurturing, inclusive, and appropriate educational experience for the child to the best of our ability. We consult with specialists, as needed, to determine appropriate modifications to the educational environment and strategies.

Both our infant-toddler and preschool curriculum approaches are built around children's active engagement with and choice-based exploration of their physical and social environment. The DRDP is designed for use with this approach. It assesses children's progress toward learning goals in all developmental domains and across all age-appropriate content areas in ways consistent with the desired outcomes for children that guide our program. The combination of DRDP-related child observations, informal teacher observations of group dynamics, interests, and challenges, and personal interactions with the children and their families effectively guide an emergent curriculum in each classroom. The information obtained through developmental assessments is used as a basis for modification and individualization of curriculum plans. Teachers maintain elements of the physical environment and interaction strategies that are familiar and comfortable to the children while modifying and adding new elements based on emerging interests and needs. They collaborate in weekly teaching team meetings to review the week and discuss ways to elaborate on children's ideas and support their explorations.

At the end of each ten-week quarter, the ECL schedules three to six staff work and development days. These include time for additional training and collaboration on topics of interest and need. They also allow each teaching team time to evaluate the term's successes and weaknesses, based on assessments of child progress as well as results of program evaluation tools (e.g., POEMS, CLASS) and their own professional experience. Teams then plan any substantive changes to the classroom environment, routines, or teaching strategies that they determine will improve the program. They consult with the Director about any major structural changes. As part of the staff's annual program evaluation, the Director and Program Coordinators, with input from Lead Teachers and parent/family caregiver feedback, decide whether our formal and informal assessment tools are functioning well. When specific elements are not providing enough useful information, we may decide to modify practices or substitute others.

Assessment Procedures

Most ECL assessment is accomplished informally, through day-to-day observations by teachers and caregiv-

ers. They document observations by recording anecdotes, taking photographs, and collecting samples of children's work. Almost all the items in the DRDP comprehensive assessment can be readily observed during typical activities. At times, teachers plan small group activities, engage in individual interactions, or introduce new elements into the classroom environment in order to be able to assess children's skills and responses. The preschool teachers sometimes use the Small Group period of the daily routine to engage children in work with fine motor manipulatives, gross motor equipment, or science and math materials that not all of them may have chosen to use during other times. This can provide an opportunity to more accurately observe areas in which individual children may need additional support.

The ECL does not conduct any norm-referenced or standardized assessments of children for comparison purposes. A combination of the parent/guardian-completed ASQ, the DRDP rating scale/checklist system, results of the Help Me Grow Yolo County screenings, informal observation and professional judgment, together with parents/family caregiver expression of concerns determine whether we recommend that further professional screening and diagnosis should be initiated. Eligibility for special services is determined by diagnostic assessments conducted by professionals after recommendation by staff and community consultants and request by parent/guardian, with staff support as needed.

All assessments and conference reports are sensitive to diversity in the following ways. Assessments involve only activities that are familiar to the children, and every effort is made to eliminate verbal instructions that might not be understood by a child with a language disability or limited English proficiency. Attempts are made to assess specific language-dependent knowledge and skills in each child's home language by involving knowledgeable teachers, teacher aides or undergraduate practicum students fluent in the child's language. In some cases, staff members ask parents/family caregivers to participate in specific classroom activities with their children in order to translate for them. College students and volunteer interpreters are also available to provide translation services during conferences and conversations, if needed. The DRDP Family Report Form translates the rating scale/checklist format into a narrative description for families. This makes them family-friendly and appropriate for children with special needs and challenges. Progress toward individual goals (whether in a formal IEP/IFSP or a home/school action plan) is emphasized in written reports and conference discussions. Family goals and values (e.g., for independence, relationships with adults) differ widely within our school population, and the teaching staff respects and supports each family.

Uses of Assessment Results

Results of ECL assessments are used to inform each teaching team's emergent curriculum planning, guide environmental design and interaction strategies, and contribute to evaluation of program effectiveness. They also provide a format within which to discuss individual children's development and learning with parents/family caregivers so that we can work together to best support each child's growth. Overall trends in child progress contribute to the ECL's annual program evaluation and inform decisions about program practices as we plan for overall program improvements. As parents/family caregivers begin to plan for their children's transition to kindergarten or to other early childhood programs, the teaching staff is able to use both formal and informal assessments of the child's development to offer input about the types of programs that may be

a good match for the child's needs, interests, and abilities. Upon parent/guardian request and with their written consent, the ECL staff may provide or discuss assessment results with educational or medical intervention specialists or a child's new school.

Confidentiality

The ECL staff collaborates as a team and improves our practices by sharing expertise. Within the context of this collaborative model, information about observations and other assessment data, special needs and pertinent family situations may be shared with the Director, Program Coordinators, and Lead Teachers on an as needed basis. Student staff members and other adults working within the school are only informed of such sensitive issues when they are a part of keeping the child safe or supporting the child's daily care and inclusion—again, only with the parents' written permission. All adults working at the ECL sign the following confidentiality agreement:

“As an adult working, completing coursework, conducting research, and/or regularly volunteering at the UC Davis Early Childhood Laboratory, I may become privy to confidential information regarding children and families. It is of the utmost importance that I realize that all such information is strictly personal and confidential and can only be shared within the confines of the ECL. I will discuss children's behavior, health issues, family circumstances and other personal information out of the hearing distance of the children and other families, and I will discuss the families, children, and staff for professional purposes only. When I encounter families, children or staff outside the school, I will be courteous but use discretion. I understand that written authorization is required before disclosing any information regarding a child to an outside agency or individual, and that only the ECL Director, Program Coordinators, and Lead Teachers are authorized to do this. I understand that all ECL staff members, students and other adult participants are prohibited from sharing photos, names, stories or information about ECL children and families on social media. I know that confidentiality is an ethical obligation and that it is a requirement for my continued involvement at the ECL. By signing this statement I agree to abide by the ECL confidentiality policy at all times”.

In accordance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) guidelines, each child's health, safety and personal information file is confidential and is kept in locked files maintained by the CCFS main office Administrative Assistant. It is immediately available upon request to the child's parents or legal guardians, to program administrators and teaching staff who have written consent from a parents or legal guardians, or to regulatory authorities. These files include application and enrollment forms, final conference reports, health assessments provided by medical professionals, incident reports, reports of diagnostic assessments released to the school by parents, individual education plans, and related documents.

Staff documentation of children's behavior and development, including specialized records for children whose special circumstances require extra classroom documentation are kept in classroom locations accessible to teachers but out of the reach of children and out of sight of classroom visitors. This information may also be kept in the locked office of the Program Coordinators or Director. In addition, researchers follow ethical standards with respect to confidentiality of individual data as described above.

When discussing behavior incidents with families (e.g., a child is hit or bitten by another child), staff members use discretion regarding revealing the identity of the other child (e.g., writing separate incident reports for each child involved). In many cases, the child reports identity information to the parent, so the parent may add that information to conversations with the teachers, particularly in cases of repeated aggression or conflict. The teachers' responsibility is to focus any discussion with parents on their child only, to avoid violating confidentiality or engaging in gossip.

Appendix C: NAEYC Accreditation Standards

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has created ten standards that measure the quality of early childhood programs. The standards were created by a blue-ribbon panel of early childhood experts and are based on the latest early childhood research.

An NAEYC-accredited program must meet a variety of specific criteria under each of the following ten areas:

1. Promoting **positive relationships** for all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth.
2. Implementing a **curriculum** that fosters all areas of child development: cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.
3. Using developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate **effective teaching approaches**.
4. Providing **ongoing assessments** of a child's learning and development and communicating the child's progress to the family.
5. Promoting the **nutrition and health** of children and protecting children and staff from injury and illness.
6. Employing a **teaching staff** that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
7. Establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with each child's **family**.
8. Establishing relationships with and using the resources of the **community** to support the achievement of program goals.
9. Providing a safe and healthy **physical environment**.
10. Implementing strong personnel, fiscal, and program management policies so that all children, families, and staff have **high-quality experiences** (leadership and management standard).

Each ECL staff member is responsible for engaging fully in all professional practices related to maintaining the program's status as a high-quality NAEYC Accredited program, as well as the NAEYC self-assessment process leading to re-accreditation every 5 years. Staff members are also responsible for knowing and complying with state licensing regulations for a childcare center. The Director, Administrative Assistant, and Program Coordinators collaborate to guide the documentation procedures and complete the required paperwork for initial accreditation, annual reporting, and re-accreditation, as well as the basic State of California Department of Social Services Division of Community Care Licensing regulations required for the program's continued operation.