

Early Childhood Development Center, Inc.

Volunteers and Practicum Students
Handbook
“Other Adults”

Roles and Responsibilities

Dear Volunteer and Practicum Students,

The teachers, staff, and I would like to welcome you to the Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC). We hope you are as excited about your experiences to come as we are.

ECDC serves local college students by providing volunteer experiences, observation experiences, and practicum placements. We want your time in our program with the children and teachers to be educational and enjoyable. All of the teachers and I have great respect for the children and we strive to convey the same attitude to you during your time with us.

The following pages will provide you with practical information that will help you feel comfortable with the children and our program.

Volunteers and practicum students are invaluable to ECDC. The children and teachers count on and trust in your loyalty and dependability.

The ECDC staff and teachers are here to answer any questions you may have as well as assist you with any professional help or guidance you may need. The teachers will be available to address any concerns or problems you would like to discuss in person or by phone. We will treat you with professional courtesy and expect the same in return from you. Early Childhood Education is more than just a job, it is a passion. We take our responsibilities very seriously and hope you feel the same.

We look forward to sharing our program with you and hope you enjoy it as much as we do.

Enthusiastically,

Terri Kosik

Terri Kosik
Executive Director
tkosik@saintmarys.edu

Kari Alford

Kari Alford
Program Director, ECDC-SMC
284-4693/kalford@saintmarys.edu

Thayer Kramer

Thayer Kramer
Program Director, ECDC-ND
631-3344/thayerkramerecdc@yahoo.com

Jennifer Wray

Jennifer Wray
Assistant Program Director, ECDC-ND
631-3344/jenniferwrayecdc@yahoo.com

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ECDC Basic Foundations

Educational Philosophy

The Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) program seeks to enhance the development of each child. The learning environment, activities, and daily schedule foster social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and creative development through experience-based, hands-on activities and play. A central goal is the promotion of children's self-confidence and love of learning.

ECDC provides a nurturing environment within which young children grow and develop. We view ourselves as an extension of each child's family. As such, we strive to develop supportive relationships with parents throughout their ECDC involvement.

ECDC enrolls children with differing social and ethnic backgrounds from Saint Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame communities. We are committed to providing all children enrolled with a multicultural curriculum and experiences. Each activity room has many multicultural materials, including books, blocks, musical instruments, dolls, baskets, play food, dress up clothes, and art materials. ECDC welcomes students of any race, color, religion, gender, and national origin.

Learning Experiences and Goals

Teachers use a variety of activities including children's literature, indoor and outdoor play, art, music, movement, creative dramatics, and for children ages 4 and older field trips to promote the individual, interpersonal, and cognitive development of each child. ECDC's approach to curriculum is based on the Project Approach to Curriculum and focuses on a literature-based program. When children are not engaged in project work, they are focused on studies/extended themes. Teachers plan literacy, math, science, art, social studies, and physical activities in both projects and studies.

Individual goals- Awareness and control of the body and its movement in space, curiosity, understanding and control of the environment, expressing self verbally, artistically, musically, and dramatically, and self help skills and independence.

Interpersonal goals- Social and emotional development, expressing feelings and understanding feelings of others, learning alternative problem-solving techniques, developing cooperation, developing friendships, learning to lend a helping hand, and learning to take the perspective of others.

Cognitive goals- Language development, both expressive and receptive, conceptual knowledge regarding the world around us, emergent literacy skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing, number and math awareness, and perceptual skills.

Project Based Learning

ECDC staff use several elements from the following programs to meet the needs of the children: Creative Curriculum, The Project Approach, and Constructivism. The ECDC curriculum is based on accepted theories of child development by developmentalists such as Piaget, Vygotsky,

Dewey, Adler, and Erikson. The curriculum is individualized to meet the needs of every child. Curriculum goals and objectives guide staff's ongoing assessment of children's progress, allowing them to individualize learning for each child.

ECDC uses Project Based Learning, which is a method of teaching in which an in-depth investigation of a particular topic is conducted by a child or a group of children. The topic to be studied is determined by the children's interest as well as the relevance/meaning in the child's life. The children will go into great depth and often at a higher level than many adults would expect for this. The teacher incorporates skills and curricular topics, such as math, reading, science, and art into the project. Children use a variety of resources. They also conduct in-depth investigations through in-house presentations by experts or through field trip site visits. Children do their own problem solving with the teacher structuring problems and assisting in finding solutions and resources.

Licensed and Accreditation

Licensing

ECDC is a licensed child care program through the State of Indiana. ECDC-SMC is licensed to care for 90 children between the ages of 3 - 10. ECDC-ND is licensed to care for 165 children between the ages of 2 - 10.

Accreditation

ECDC has voluntarily chosen to seek re-accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC is the largest early childhood professional organization. 10% of early childhood programs in the United States are NAEYC accredited. ECDC first became accredited in 2003. The accreditation process consists of an internal self-study and a request for an external professional to review and verify our compliance with the NAEYC criteria for High-Quality Early Childhood Programs. Once ECDC was found to be in compliance with these criteria we were awarded accreditation.

Caring for Children

Interactions with Children

Adult student interactions are positive, supportive, and encouraging. The teachers ask thought provoking questions to enhance the children's learning. Teachers also participate in the children's play in a supportive manner. Teachers allow children to move independently and only pick them up to provide nurturing or to enhance a one-on-one conversation. During physical play, such as basketball, the teachers follow the children's lead in terms of speed and allowing them to continue building on developmental skills. Children often try to play in a competitive nature; it is the teacher's and volunteer's responsibility to monitor this play and to ensure the safety of all the children involved.

Continuity of Care

Research suggests that continuity of care allows children and teachers to develop closer

relationships. Hence, ECDC strives to schedule volunteers for the same 1.5 to 2-hour time block a week in the same room. There are however times when a 1.5 to 2 hour time block is not possible, we will then attempt to schedule the volunteer for two separate hours in the same activity room. When scheduling practicum students the same logic is applied. In order for the children and you to benefit from your time with us, we know that the more consistent your presence in the activity room, the stronger the relationships you will build.

Child Guidance

ECDC wants all of the children it serves to feel a sense of belonging and responsibility to their activity room community. The four R's: respect, responsibility, resourcefulness, and responsiveness are the foundations of this community.

Respect includes respect for self, others, materials, environment, and community

Responsibility is reflected through choices, actions, daily care of environment, and initiation of ideas

Resourcefulness includes learning to be creative and inventive; to be problem solvers and to use skills effectively

Responsiveness embraces children as contributors, thinkers, participators, and caring friends; altruism

Child guidance is done by guiding the children's behaviors and helping them incorporate the 4 R's into their daily routine. Children learn through their experiences and interactions with others and the environment. The teachers and college students often help to facilitate these concepts by modeling, asking questions, and assisting in the communication process.

There are a variety of strategies that teachers use during Child Guidance:

Teachers **encourage** the children verbally and with body language. Our encouragement lets the child know that we believe in him/her and what he/she is doing. We however do not praise the children. Praise places the focus of our attention on the outcome of the situation. If children are praised they will begin to work for the praise and will feel that they have failed if they do not receive the praise. Instead we encourage children by having conversations with the children about the process the children took to get to the outcome. Showing interest in what the child is doing or has done will show the child that you care about him/her.

ECDC avoids using praise with the children, instead we use encouragement. "I can tell you have been working hard on your picture, can you tell me about it?" or "I see you have chosen the color red, why did you decide on that color?". ECDC teachers stay away from saying "Good Job" or "Nicely Done". It may not seem like there is anything wrong with you telling them how much you enjoy their work, but what happens if the next time you don't tell them how great it is? They may not think that it is any good. We want to help the children find intrinsic motivation, the desire to do something because they want to and the way they want it to look, not how someone else likes it.

ECDC also implements **Natural and Logical Consequences**. When children learn through their own decision it has a greater impact. A natural consequence would be, "If you choose not to eat

now, you may be hungry later.” A logical consequence would be, “If you choose to throw the blocks, you will have to find something new to play with until you are ready to find a safer way to play with the blocks.”

A child who may be having a problem or difficulty in one area may be **redirected** to play in another area or with different materials. Redirection involves refocusing children back to the appropriate action (“What enthusiasm! Tell me about your building.”)

At no time do the teachers at ECDC yell or scream at the children. They also do not humiliate or belittle the children. Corporal punishment is not allowed. Teachers will also not withhold food or liquids from the children. ECDC also does not use time outs. We know that children do not learn an appropriate message by sitting by themselves with nothing to do. There are times when children do need to have some time by themselves however, they are always given something to do and can return to the group activity when they are ready.

Communication

When you are working with the children it is important to keep a positive and supportive attitude. The children will watch and learn from you to see how you handle difficult situations. Ask them questions and help them find ways to express their feelings. There are times when children do not have the right words and need the teachers to help them verbalize their emotions. Ask questions like “I can tell something is bothering you, can you tell me about it?”, “How did it make you feel when that happened?”, or “Is there anything that will help you feel better?”. Occasionally you will need to offer suggestions, “I know that it upset you when Jon ripped your paper, what will help you feel better? Can Jon do anything to help? Can he help you make a new one?”. These are just some examples of wording you can use when communicating with children and assisting them to solve a difficult situation.

Family Communication

Parents will often ask teachers how their child’s day was. If a parent were to ask you for information regarding their child’s day, please escort them to a teacher from their child’s activity room. These teachers will have a great deal of information about the child in question because they have been with him/her all day.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance

Please remember that ECDC is a professional early childhood program and is planning on your involvement each week. If for some reason you are unable to make your scheduled time, please call ECDC-ND at 631-3344 or email jenniferwrayecdc@yahoo.com and ECDC-SMC at 284-4693 or email kalford@saintmarys.edu and let us know you will be unable to attend. Both ECDC locations have voice mail service that is operational day and night. You may leave a message at anytime.

Signing In and Out

Volunteers and practicum students are required by licensing to sign in and out each time they

attend ECDC. Not only does this allow us to track visitors in and out of the building, but also provides documentation of the amount of volunteer hours you have completed. We ask that each student only sign in for himself/herself and for the time they are at ECDC. If you need a letter documenting your attendance, please request one at least one week in advance.

Hand Washing

State Licensing requires that all individuals working with or volunteering with the children wash their hands upon arriving at the child care program and before leaving.

Wash your hands with warm soapy water for 30 seconds making sure to clean the backs of the hands as well as in-between the fingers and underneath the nails. Next, dry your hands with a clean paper towel, turn off the faucet with the paper towel, and dispose of the paper towel. If you need to further dry your hands please use a new paper towel. This avoids touching the faucet (which has germs on it) with your clean hands or drying your hands with a dirty paper towel.

Dress Code

ECDC asks that you wear clothing that is comfortable and will allow you to get up and down off the floor easily. Please ensure that your clothing does not have any holes, rips, wording or pictures that are not appropriate for an early childhood program (adult sayings, tobacco, or alcohol advertisements). We also ask that you avoid halter-tops, midribs or low riding pants. Shoes that are comfortable and can be easily worn on the playground with woodchips and pea gravel are recommended.

Purses, Backpacks, & Coats

When personal items are brought to ECDC, at ECDC-SMC please use any empty lockers (those without any names or children's pictures on them) to store your items and at ECDC-ND please use the locked teacher cabinet in the activity room where you are assigned. If your bag is too large to fit into a locker or teacher cabinet, you may store it on the floor in the Program Director's office at ECDC-SMC or in the planning room at ECDC-ND. We strongly encourage all college students to not bring any items of value (purse, money, etc.) to ECDC. If you do bring anything of value, please bring your own lock to ECDC-SMC to place on the locker you use. At ECDC-ND, please place your items of value in the locked teacher cabinet. **ECDC is not responsible for personal items (coat, purse, keys, etc.).**

Professional Behavior

Professional behavior is expected at all times. Children are always listening; please make sure that your language is appropriate for children's ears.

Because your focus should be on the children during your time with us, we ask that you keep social conversations to a minimum while at ECDC and wait until you are away from the children to have these conversations.

Confidentiality

All teachers, staff, college students and volunteers/practicum college students are asked to

maintain confidentiality when talking about children, families, or experiences that they had at ECDC. Information about a specific child should only be shared with that child's parents/guardians and teachers. If you have questions concerning a child please seek the assistance of the classroom teachers or program director. Practicum students may also choose to seek advice or ask questions regarding a child(ren) of their college professor overseeing their placement.

It is possible to share your experiences with individuals outside of ECDC so long as you are careful not to reveal a child's name, age, classroom, and you are conscious of your surroundings and those who may be able to overhear.

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

ECDC has worked with children with special needs since the summer of 1976. In collaboration with the South Bend Community School Corporation (SBCSC) Special Needs and Abilities Preschool (SNAP) program and First Steps, ECDC serves children with a variety of special needs including ,but not limited to, children with autism, down syndrome, brittle bone disease, spina bifida, developmental delays, mental retardation, etc. These children receive special services from the SNAP program specialists. A child may receive support services during the school year through the SNAP program, while attending ECDC, depending upon what is stated and agreed upon in the IEP. Children who are two, who have special needs, are served by First Steps and receive similar services.

As an active member of a particular activity room, you will receive any special knowledge or training you need to assist a child with special needs to be successful in the environment or with the materials.

Diapering and Children Using the Rest Room

Diapering children is the responsibility of the core staff of ECDC. If you notice that a child needs a diaper change, please let one of the teachers know. Do not assume the diapering responsibility yourself. If a child tells you that he/she needs to use the rest room, please let one of the teachers know.

Medication

The administrative assistant or the program director dispense medication to the children. Medication that needs to be administered to the children is signed in by the child's parents/guardians.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All ECDC staff, teachers, volunteers, and college students are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. If you see suspicious marks on a child or if a child says something to you that is concerning, please report this information to the Lead Teacher or Program Director right away. The Program Director in collaboration with the Executive Director, will take the appropriate steps to gather information and/or report the allegations to the proper agencies if they need to be called.

Food Handling

During snacks and meals we ask that volunteers/practicum college students allow the teachers to set the tables and pass out snack or lunch items. We know that you would like to be helpful, however the teachers have completed health and licensing requirements and training on food handling. Staff wear food handling gloves when serving food or assisting children with food. We do encourage you to sit with children and talk to them about what they are eating, colors of the food, as well as activities they have been doing or would like to do later. Please feel free to eat snack with the children. At lunch, after all of the children are served, please check with a teacher if you are interested in eating a lunch with the children.

Universal Precautions and First Aid Training

All teachers, staff, and volunteers/practicum college students will be trained in universal precautions. This training will allow you to know the appropriate ways to protect yourself from coming into contact with bodily fluids. Because we do not train our volunteers/practicum college students in First Aid or CPR you will not be asked to treat a child or to clean up any bodily fluids. This is just a protective measure for you. Please escort any child needing First Aid assistance to the nearest teacher.

Symptoms of Illness

ECDC tries to prevent the spread of illness as much as possible. One way that we accomplish this is by monitoring the children's health. If we notice that a child is not feeling or looking well, we attempt to determine if he/she is ill. If we find that a child is ill or we are unsure, we call the family to pick up their child. Once the child is better or is determined to be well enough to return to ECDC, they may.

We also ask that any teacher or volunteer/practicum college student who is ill not attend ECDC. Illness refers to a temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, or any communicable disease (e.g., strep throat, conjunctivitis – pink eye).

Hand Washing to Stay Healthy

All ECDC staff members, volunteers/practicum college students, visitors and children, who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene, are taught important and effective hand washing procedures to promote cleanliness and reduce the transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and others. Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully accomplish the task. *Children wash their hands* upon arrival at ECDC every day, as well as, after playing outside, after using the bathroom, after cleaning their nose, before and after water play in the sensory table, before snacks and meals, after feeding the classroom pet (e.g., fish, guinea pig, hamster) and when moving from one group to another that involves two year olds.

All ECDC staff wash their hands upon arrival at ECDC every day, as well as, after using the bathroom, after cleaning their nose, before snacks and meals, before administration of medicine, after assisting a child with toileting or diapering, after handling trash/garbage, after feeding or cleaning the classroom pet (e.g., fish, guinea pig, hamster), after handling body fluids, after cleaning the water table and when moving from one group to another that involves two year olds.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults (staff members, volunteers/practicum college students, visitors) and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water,
- Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, a single-use towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands. Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any required hand-washing situation listed above.
- Staff wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material.
- In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

Please note - wet wipes, hand sanitizer, or dipping hands in a bucket of water NEVER take the place of handwashing with running water and are not acceptable means of handwashing - these methods do not adequately kill germs.

We also ask that you assist the children in this process of hand washing.

Emergency Evacuation

In case of an emergency evacuation, please listen to the teachers' directions and help them move the children quickly and safely.

What to Expect During a Typical Day at ECDC

The activity rooms at ECDC are filled with active learning, social conversations, and topic related discussions. ECDC strives to provide the children with a setting that allows them the freedom to explore in an environment that expects them to make mistakes and encourages them to keep trying. The teachers plan hands-on activities that allow the children to get into the materials and to make discoveries. We know that children learn by doing, not by watching. We also know that children are sometimes hesitant about trying something new; the teachers make adaptations to activities so that all children have to opportunity to learn from a new activity.

The experiences that college students have at ECDC are vast. You will participate in activities such as creative art, music experiences, reading stories, and outside play. While these are fun activities, you will not be limited to only these activities; you may also assist the teachers in preparing the activities, cleaning them up, and a few other teacher tasks. The teachers at ECDC will not ask you to take charge of a group of children or leave you alone with them, however they may ask you to work one-on-one with a child or facilitate a small group activity. We want you to feel as much a part of the ECDC community as we do. Please take the time to get to know the children and their interests, and make a place for you.

Daily Schedules and Transitions

Each activity room has a daily schedule and planned transitions. Once you have located the activity room that you will be working in, please locate the daily schedule to determine the activities that you will be a part of during your time with us.

Transitions from one activity to another and from the activity room to another location are very

important parts of the day. These transitions guide the children smoothly to the next activity. Planned transition activities give the children something to focus on while in the transition. Please ask the teachers that you work with about how they handle transitions in their room and how you can be of assistance. Each room has different activities that they do during transitions.

Guidelines for Outside Play

Outside, volunteers/practicum college students will be asked to help supervise areas on the playground. It is important that teachers and volunteers/practicum college students spread themselves out to cover as many areas as possible. Adults should not group together to converse when supervising children. Volunteers/practicum college students should not sit down on the playground equipment (except the side of the sandbox). We are outside to help children play safely, problem solve when the need arises, initiate group games, and encourage children to be active and involved. Any illness, bathroom request, or injury should be reported immediately to the nearest teacher for them to address and assist the child.

We go outside every day, weather permitting, between 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.- 5:30 p.m. When the temperature is above 25 degrees and below 90 degrees, we dress the children appropriately and go outside to enjoy the fresh air and exercise. On Ozone Action Days we will stay inside after 11:00a.m. Please make sure to dress warmly on cold days when you may be spending time outdoors with the children. We depend on volunteers/practicum college students to help supervise the playground when they are scheduled during outside time. Dressing appropriately will allow you to focus on the children, stay warm, and enjoy your time here at ECDC.

Smoking

ECDC is a non-smoking facility. If you need to smoke, please do so before you arrive or after you leave.

Alcohol, Illegal Substances, and Fire Arms

ECDC does not allow the use or possession of alcohol or illegal substances on site. We also do not allow firearms on the premises.

Equal Opportunity

ECDC is an “Equal Opportunity Employer” whose Personnel Policies and Procedures are designed and administered based upon education, experience and job performance without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex or disability.

Sexual Harassment

A. ECDC’s policy is to maintain a discrimination-free work environment for all its volunteers/practicum college students that includes freedom from harassment based upon race, religion or national origin, as well as freedom from unwelcome sexual advances. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

(1) submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment; or

(2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or

(3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of personally interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

B. ECDC volunteers/practicum college students have a right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment that may include, but is not limited to the following:

(1) threatening, intimidating or suggestive language having sexual overtones;

(2) use of offensive or demeaning terms with sexual connotations;

(3) deliberate or careless creation of an atmosphere of sexual harassment or intimidation by actions, words, pictures, objects or gestures; and

(4) uninvited physical closeness or unwanted physical contact (e.g., touching, hugging, patting and/or pinching).

C. ECDC will not tolerate or condone sexual harassment in the work place from any employee, volunteer/college student or from third parties (e.g., invitees, guests, vendors, sales representatives, maintenance representatives, etc.) in or on ECDC's facilities or premises. Any incident of harassment will be investigated and responded to with appropriate action.

D. A violation of this Policy will subject the ECDC volunteer/college student to disciplinary action up to and including the termination of participation with ECDC.

E. An ECDC volunteer/college student who believes she or he is being or has been subjected to sexual harassment or has knowledge of conduct constituting sexual harassment shall, as promptly as possible, contact their Program Director or the Executive Director or the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee of ECDC's Board of Directors. An investigation of alleged harassment will be initiated promptly.

Grievance Procedure

An ECDC volunteer/college student who does not agree or is not satisfied with a decision or action made or taken by the volunteer's/practicum college student's Primary Supervisor, the Program Director, or the Executive Director may file a Grievance in writing with the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee of ECDC's Board of Directors. The Grievance should set forth the facts upon which the Grievance is based and the reason or reasons why the volunteer/practicum college student/college student disagrees or is dissatisfied with the decision or action. The Personnel Committee shall investigate and evaluate the Grievance and render a decision. A decision by the Personnel Committee may be appealed to the Board of Directors whose decision will be final and binding.

Termination/Resignation

The volunteer/practicum college student whose performance does not comply with the role and responsibilities outlined in the Volunteer and Practicum Student Handbook, as well as with the training provided during orientation and in the classroom, will be terminated from participation at ECDC. When appropriate and possible, opportunity will be provided to the volunteer/practicum college student to correct his/her performance at ECDC.

Any volunteer/practicum college student who wishes to terminate their volunteer/practicum college student participation at ECDC, for any reason, should inform the Program Director of such and provide two weeks notification, if possible.

Evaluation of Performance

Each spring, the classroom lead teacher completes individual evaluations for volunteers/practicum college students who have spent time in their room. These evaluations are shared with the volunteer/college student and are used to determine the volunteers/practicum college students continued participation at ECDC.

Opportunity for Promotion/Employment

Every semester ECDC hires college students as temporary employees. These temporary employee positions are considered “other” by NAEYC Accreditation. It is always ECDC’s goal to hire volunteers/practicum college students who have participated in the program previously in a volunteer or practicum position and who exhibit a knowledge and understanding of appropriate, responsible, and trustworthy involvement with the children and teachers. Volunteer/practicum college student individual evaluations are used to determine future employment with ECDC.

Supervision of Volunteers/Practicum College Students

An ECDC teacher or staff member always supervises volunteers/practicum college students. The primary supervisor for volunteers/practicum college students is the classroom lead teacher. When the classroom lead teacher is absent from the room, volunteers/practicum college students are supervised by the associate and assistant teachers in the room. ECDC’s Program Directors also supervise volunteers/practicum college students. The ECDC Program Directors provide initial orientation and training to volunteers/practicum college students. Classroom teachers provide ‘hands-on’ training and guidance once the volunteer/practicum college student is assigned to a classroom.

Length of Volunteer Participation

Volunteer/college student participation is scheduled one semester at a time.

Volunteers/practicum college students are encouraged to participate for numerous semesters, as schedules permit.

THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER/PRACTICUM COLLEGE STUDENT AT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The following outline is a general overview of the volunteer's/practicum college student's participation at the Center with both children and teachers. This outline does not include the requirements each respective professor outlines from the specifics of his or her class.

I. Assisting the teachers and children in all aspects of the daily schedule and activities.

- * Assisting children to put on paint smocks, etc. in preparing for the art activity.
- * Assisting the teachers and children in cleaning up after art activities and free-choice activities.
- * Assisting the teachers during snack by sitting at the tables with the children and engaging the children in conversation (e.g., discussing what is being eaten, such as colors, shapes, type of food; discussing what activities they have enjoyed doing or what they plan to do).
- * Working with individual and small groups of children in the quiet, learning area with books, games, and puzzles during free choice periods.
- * Reading stories to the children during free choice time.
- * Participating with the children in the dramatic play area.
- * Participating in all structured activities with the children and teachers, (e.g., children's literature, creative dramatics, music, games, etc.).
- * Assisting children at the computers.
- * Assisting children at the listening center.
- * Hanging artwork on the children's lockers.
- * Outside Playground: Involving children in outside group games, playing ball/basketball, helping children learn to pedal bikes, pushing swings (gently), assisting children with outdoor art (e.g., chalk, watercolors).
- * Assisting groups on field trips in the community (e.g., zoo, parks, farmer's market, plays, etc.)
- * Assisting children in cleaning out art boxes.
- * Supporting children during clean-up times.
- * Assisting teachers with book repair and minimal toy repair.
- * Assisting children in putting on winter outside clothing.
- * Gathering needed extra clothing from the planning room for children.

II. General Suggestions and Guidelines.

- * If you do not understand certain situations, ask the teachers you work with before discussing it with others.
- * Please do not discuss the children in front of them.
- * Keep yourself in the background as much as possible allowing the children to take the initiative.
- * Please watch the teachers and their rapport with the children and model your

interactions with the children from their example.

- * State suggestions or directions in a positive form; “Please give me the ball while you’re climbing.” rather than “Don’t climb with that ball in your hand.”.
- * Use a normal, pleasant voice; be genuine and friendly.
- * Use verbal directions and assistance to encourage independence. Expect children to take off or put on their things, even though you may be able to do it faster.
- * Encourage self-help skills (I.e. putting on own coat, putting on shoes, throwing away lunch plate).
- * When encouraging the children, direct the attention toward the child's behavior or activity (i.e. You finished cleaning up the blocks). Avoid praising the child personally (i.e. You are a good boy. or You are a bad girl.).
- * Avoid motivating a child by making comparisons between one child and another or encouraging competition.
- * Give a child a choice only when you intend to leave the situation up to him. When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and consistently enforced.
- * **Due to Indiana State licensing regulations: volunteer/practicum college students may not take children to the bathroom without a teacher or paid college student’s assistance, nor serve food to the children (snack/lunch).**
- * Use “please” or “thank you”, “you’re welcome”, or “excuse me” when interacting with children. We want to model good manners for the children at all times
- * Encourage conflict resolution when a problem between two children occurs. Avoid telling the children how to solve the problem or making any one apologize.

GUIDES TO SPEECH AND ACTION FOR TEACHERS & VOLUNTEER/PRACTICUM COLLEGE STUDENTS

In Speech:

1. State suggestions or directions in a positive rather than negative form.
2. Give the child a choice only when you intend to leave the choice up to him/her.
3. Your voice is a teaching tool. Use words and a tone of voice that will help the child feel confident and reassured.
4. Never depend on changing behavior by using words that may make the child feel less respect for himself/herself such as by blaming or shaming him or making him feel guilty.
5. Avoid motivating a child by making comparisons between one child and another or encouraging competition.
6. Redirect the child in a way that is related to his/her own motives or interests whenever possible.

In Action:

7. **Avoid making models in any art medium for the children to copy. This includes drawing and clay/playdough.**
8. Give the child the minimum of help in order that he may have the maximum chance to

- grow in independence, but give help when needed.
9. Make your suggestions effective by reinforcing them when necessary.
 10. Foreseeing is the most effective way of handling problems. Learn to foresee and prevent rather than mop-up after a difficulty.
 11. When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and consistently maintained.
 12. Be alert to the total situation. Use the most strategic positions for supervising (e.g. able to see several areas of the room).
 13. The health and safety of the children are a primary concern at all times.

These are useful books in learning how to work with preschool and primary age children. Most are available in the South Bend Library.

Recommended Readings

Positive Discipline for Preschoolers, Jane Nelson, Cheryl Erwin, Roslyn Duffy

Positive Discipline The First Three Years, Jane Nelson, Cheryl Erwin, Rosalyn Duffy

Raising Respectful Children in a Rude World, Gary McKay, Joyce McKay, Daniel Eckstein,

Children the Challenge, Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D.

Raising Kids Who Can by Betty Lou Bettner and Amy Lew

Breaking the Good Mom Myth: Every Modern Mom's Guide to Getting Past Perfection.

Regaining Sanity and Raising Great Kids by Alyson Schafer

Your Two Year Old, Ames & Ilg

Your Three Year Old, Ames & Ilg

Your Four Year Old, Ames & Ilg

Your Five Year Old, Ames & Ilg

CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT

Don't expect all the children to participate in a group activity like "together time" or "game time". Some children are not ready for this much organized activity; it will come with time and maturity. Children at this age should not be expected to conform to rigid group participation as in public schools. He/she is still learning much about himself/herself and he/she is experimenting with group behavior. However, there are times he/she should be able to conform:

- a. During rest time all should participate (e.g. quietly looking at books on cot, listening to music).
- b. Each child should be strongly encouraged to take part in "circle time/large group time" (4's, 4/5's, and Kindergarten).

Sit with the children during large group activities, such as "circle time/large group time" and participate in the activities. You can support the teachers by redirecting children's attention back

to the activity when they are distracted. Remind them that they should listen and join in the activity. Do not be afraid to sing along if you know the words to the songs. Children do not care if you can sing or not, they just love hearing you participate with them.

Let the teachers be in charge. Listen to their words and approach. Summon them if necessary. However, most of the problems you can handle effectively, so feel free to step in and smooth over minor hurts or settle small disagreements if you are the closest teacher. Remind the child of the rules or limitations and then redirect and channel his/her interests and energy. There is more than one good way to handle any situation.

There are several responsibilities the children can undertake: Hang up coats, put away toys, water plants, feed fish or other pets, have him/her count, use bathroom independently.

We seldom “show a child how to use any material”. (We may make suggestions if a child is frustrated.) He may use it in any way he chooses as long as it is safe (except clay or paste on the floor, etc.) If he becomes frustrated, only then do we direct or tell him “how” to put in the puzzle piece or build the tower. Instead of asking, “What are you making?” ask “Would you like to tell me about it?”

GUIDES FOR HELPING WITH SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES PAINTING:

It is very important that children be allowed to express themselves freely in this area. Adults do not need to show them how to paint. Each child should be helped to wear a smock and shown that each brush goes back in the same jar. The child’s name should be printed in LOWER CASE LETTERS (Billy, not BILLY). When a child is finished, you should not ask “What is it?” This makes the child feel pressured to try to produce what adults want to see. You may say, “Would you like to tell me about your picture?” A child is the only one who knows when his/her picture is finished. He/she may paint until he/she is through. You can offer another sheet of paper if the paper starts to tear due to the amount of paint. If the child tells you about his/her painting, ask permission to jot down what he/she says on the back of the picture or on a sticky note that you can attach to the picture. Help children wipe up spills as soon as they occur.

PLAY DOUGH OR CLAY, ETC:

Children love sensory activities such as play dough or clay. Feel free to sit at the table with the children or near them. Please don’t direct their play and **AVOID MAKING MODELS IN ANY ART FORM.** It is okay to roll balls, make flat pancakes and snakes. Children learn by doing, not by adults making things for them. The material should stay on the table assigned for it. Encourage the children to keep the material off the floor. Talk with the children about what they are doing. Discuss how it feels, looks, smells. At clean-up time they may assist you in forming the materials into large “globs” to put away and then to scrape off and wash the tables.

CUTTING:

Safety rules need to be carefully observed. Children should not walk around with scissors in their hand. Encourage him/her to pick up small scraps of paper and put them in the waste paper basket. Show the child the proper way to hold the scissors.

BLOCK BUILDING:

Children usually work independently in this area. Blocks are for building, not for throwing. Children may play in a variety of ways in this area: enjoy merely piling the blocks, others may build bridges, houses, roads, etc. This is an area especially interesting to observe. Building may go as high as the child's shoulder. We dismantle the building by taking it down--not knocking it down. If a child's building is knocked down, encourage all to help build it up again.

CLEAN UP:

Adults can keep the job from looking too big by cleaning off a table (or enlisting a child who isn't otherwise occupied) before clean-up time especially if the table isn't in use any more. We always tell the children a few minutes before a change of activity, it helps to circulate the room and tell each group or to sing a "clean-up" song rather than speaking loudly to the whole group. Expect them to help. Say, "Here is a truck to put in the garage.", rather than asking. Sometimes it is good to give them a choice, but then see that they carry it out perhaps with your help. Children enjoy washing the paintbrushes, wiping up spills on the floor, and cleaning tables. Help them to feel that they are really needed to help during clean-up time.

DRAMATIC PLAY:

Dramatic play and pretend play is such fun and often serious business for children. The children may wish to have you join in the meals and all the ramifications of "homemaking." Do join in, but again do not direct or take over the play.

SENSORY/WATER PLAY:

Water play is not only tolerated, but also encouraged. Other materials may be added to sensory tables such as rice, snow, sand, etc. This area frequently needs a glance in case "measuring" doesn't turn out as expected, and the children need an adult to help. Encourage children to mop up or sweep up spills as they occur. Children are asked to wash their hands before and after playing in a water table.

Whatever activity you supervise, the most important contribution you can make is to show interest in the children and the materials used by them.

REMEMBER TO --

- Be willing for the child to "act his/her age."
- Be consistent in routines.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Plan ahead -- be aware of the next activity.
- Be pleasant and interested in the children's activities.
- Laugh with the child, but avoid teasing or laughing at the child.
- Keep a calm, unruffled approach.
- Speak in low clear tones.
- Stoop down often in helping the child.
- Give help instead of disapproval.
- Be flexible.

REMEMBER THAT THE CHILD --

Is an individual in his/her own right.

Is eager, active and curious.

Goes at his/her own speed.

Needs as much freedom as the environment permits.

Responds to suggestions/choices rather than commands.

Needs to know what behavior is inconsiderate and harmful to others.

Needs to know that limitations exist in terms of equipment & materials.

Needs to know that you are a friend at all times.

Thank You

All of us at ECDC would like to extend our deepest appreciation for your willingness to be a dedicated and responsible volunteer/practicum college student. The children at ECDC learn so much from the volunteer/practicum college students that we strive to make the experience a pleasant one for you and the children. There are many talents and skills that volunteers and practicum college students bring to ECDC. We encourage you to share your talents with your activity room teachers to find the best ways to integrate your talents into the environment. We all look forward to working with and getting to know you.

Thank you!

The Entire ECDC Staff

A Hundred Years From Now

...it will not matter what my bank account was,
the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove...

...but the world may be different because I was
important in the life of a *Child* -author unknown

ECDC Volunteer/Practicum College Student Orientation

Date of Orientation: _____

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received an orientation for the position of Volunteer/practicum college student/Practicum Student with the following materials:

- ECDC Philosophy
- Accreditation
- Indiana state licensing requirements
- Confidentiality
- Child Guidance Techniques
- Meals and food handling policies
- Emergency Evacuation
- Hand washing
- Universal Precautions
- Dispensing Medications
- Daily Schedules, Routines, and Transitions
- Parent Communication
- Child abuse detection, prevention, and reporting responsibilities
- Recognizing symptoms of illness
- Cleaning, sanitization, and disinfection procedures
- Special needs inclusion policies/Children with special needs currently enrolled
- Dress Code
- Parking
- Documentation of Hours

By signing below I am indicating that I have read and understand all the information contained in this Volunteer/practicum college student and Practicum Student Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for abiding by all the information contained. I also understand that the information in this handbook can be changed, added to or updated at anytime and that I am responsible for implementing the new changes.

Signature of Volunteer/ Practicum College Student

Date

Signature of Trainer

Date