

## **Handbook for ECDC Families**

**Early Childhood  
Development Center, Inc**  
Saint Mary's College  
University of Notre Dame

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# **Early Childhood Development Center Inc.**

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## **ECDC MISSION**

The Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC), a not-for-profit organization, provides the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary's College and the South Bend/Mishawaka communities with high quality, NAEYC Accredited early care and education for young children and their families. ECDC implements Best Practices that foster the children's healthy social, emotional, physical, cognitive and creative development. ECDC's active learning environment fosters the development of respect, responsibility, resourcefulness and responsiveness and includes highly qualified teachers, low teacher child ratios, child centered emergent curriculum and collaborations with families. ECDC is a model program for professional development, college student practicum experiences and research for faculty and students.

## **ECDC INTRODUCTION & HISTORY**

The Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) founded in 1971 is a nonprofit, licensed child care center partially funded by Saint Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame. ECDC provides both full and part time programs for children in the Saint Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame community. ECDC at Saint Mary's College enrolls families from the public, if space is available. ECDC at Notre Dame does not enroll families from the public. In the fall of 1994, ECDC began operating two sites, one on the campus of Saint Mary's College (ECDC-SMC) and the other on the campus of the University of Notre Dame (ECDC-ND). Both sites are governed by one Board of Directors and operate with the same philosophy, curriculum, parent involvement, and college student involvement. Teachers educated and experienced in child development and early childhood education staff both sites. A 15 member Board of Directors that includes 2 members appointed by the President of Saint Mary's College and 2 members appointed by the President of University of Notre Dame governs ECDC. The ECDC Board also includes 2 parent representatives elected by the parents from each ECDC program. The remaining 7 board members are general members from the Saint Mary's and Notre Dame communities.

## **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

The 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 the 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 families throughout their ECDC involvement.

ECDC enrolls children with differing social and ethnic backgrounds from the 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 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 Creative Curriculum and is a literature-based program. When children are not engaged in project work, they are focused on in-depth studies. 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 the 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 LEARNING GOALS** – Language development, both expressive and receptive; conceptual knowledge regarding the world around us; emergent literacy skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing; number; math and science awareness; and perceptual skills.

### **CURRICULUM ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The ECDC program provides learning experiences and opportunities that are age and interest appropriate for all children. Staff use several elements from the following programs to meet the needs of the children: *Creative Curriculum, The Project Approach, and Constructivism*. Our goal is to provide a nurturing and safe environment to support learning for the children, families and college students. 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. Each family's culture is respected and family members are encouraged to participate in the program. The physical environment is safe, healthy, and contains a variety of toys and materials that are both stimulating and familiar. Children select activities and materials that interest them, and they learn by being actively involved. Adults show respect for children and interact with them in caring ways. Staff have specialized training in child development and appropriate programming. Curriculum goals and objectives guide staff's ongoing assessment of children's progress, allowing them to individualize learning for each child. The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the children. The schedule provides time and support for transitions; includes both indoor and outdoor experiences; and is responsive to a child's need to rest or be active.

**Curriculum Adaptation and Individual Planning** The benefits of child-centered curriculum planning is easy to see. Children become fully involved in activities, actively explore their environments, feel proud when they can do things for themselves, and enjoy playing and learning with others. Individualizing gives each child the capacity to grow and learn now and in the future. At ECDC, classroom teachers engage in an ongoing cycle of individualization: assessment---planning---

implementation and ongoing assessment. Staff use a variety of strategies to get to know and plan for children, build partnerships with parents, and assess children's progress. Individualizing is most successful when staff and families build strong partnerships and communicate frequently about a child. By combining the information gained from the two perspectives, families and staff can use the curriculum to plan and implement an individualized education.

Child-centered planning is an ongoing process that continues throughout a child's participation in our classrooms. To effectively individualize, teachers a) use multiple sources of information including parent reports/forms, ongoing observations, and results of standardized screening (ASQ) to learn about needs, interests, abilities, culture, home language, and life experiences; b) develop a partnership with each family to share information about a child's culture, life experiences, skills, needs, interests and abilities, and plan how to encourage growth and development at home and in the classroom; c) plan ways to address individual needs through all aspects of the curriculum—the learning environment, daily routine, learning activities and interactions; and d) document children's work using a variety of strategies including observations, developmental milestones, parent reports/forms, learning checklists and examples of children's work.

**Identifying Children's Interests and Needs** ECDC teachers and staff observe children for strengths, interests, and needs on an on-going basis to determine individual curriculum planning and to establish individual goals. Teaching teams meet at least weekly to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of individual children. Individual goals are prepared and planned for every child on an on-going basis. Families have opportunities to share results of observations from home to contribute to the individual planning process. Teachers work closely with families to ensure that the assessments used are sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.

### WHAT SHOULD YOUNG CHILDREN BE LEARNING?

Just because young children can do many things like recite numbers in rote fashion or repeat the days of the week, fill out worksheets or read from flash cards, it is not sufficient justification for requiring them to do so. According to Lilian Katz, from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, "Young children usually do willingly most things adults ask of them. But their willingness is not a reliable indicator of the value of the activity. The developmental question is not, 'What can children do?'. Rather it is, 'What should children do that best serves their learning and development in the long term?'" There are four categories of learning that are of importance in the education of young children:

**Knowledge:** Facts, concepts, ideas, vocabulary, and stories. "A child acquires knowledge from someone's answers to his questions, explanations, descriptions, and accounts of events as well as through observation." Lilian Katz, 1987.

**Skills:** Physical, social, verbal, counting, drawing, cognitive, problem solving. "Skills are small units of action which occur in a relatively short period of time and are easily observed or inferred. Skills can be learned from direct instruction and improved with practice." Lilian Katz, 1987.

**Dispositions:** Curiosity, friendliness/unfriendliness, cooperativeness/bossiness, creativity, respectfulness, and helpfulness. "Dispositions can be thought of as habits of mind or tendencies to respond in certain ways. Dispositions are not learned through instruction or drill. The dispositions that children need to acquire or to strengthen - curiosity, creativity, cooperation, and friendliness - are learned primarily from being around people who exhibit them." Lilian Katz, 1987.

**Feelings:** These are subjective emotional states, many of which are innate. Among those that are learned are feelings of competence, belonging, and security. Feelings about school, teachers, and other children are learned in these early years.

Children are persistent, curious, creative, and active learners and each exhibits a different learning style. Thus, the younger the children are, the greater the variety of teaching methods and opportunities there should be. The learning environment should remain informal and encourage spontaneous play in which children engage in whatever appropriate play activities interest them. The learning environment also provides opportunities for children to interact in small groups as they work together on projects that help them make sense of their experience.

**HOW WE ARE LEARNING:  
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT APPROACH  
(Taken from the book *Young Investigators* by Judy Helm and Lilian Katz)**

**What is the project approach?**

The project approach is a method of teaching in which an in-depth study of a particular topic is conducted by a child or group of children.

**How is it different from other ways of learning?**

Our children study one topic for a long period of time. The topic is selected partly because they were interested in it and it is meaningful to them and their lives. The children will go into great depth and often at a higher level than many adults would expect for this. The teacher integrates content knowledge like math, reading, and science into the project.

**How is a project planned?**

The children make many of their own plans with the teacher's help. Plans usually include an on site visit and/or interviews with experts. An expert is anyone who knows a great deal about the topic of study.

**How will children learn?**

Children use a variety of resources to find answers to their questions. These include traditional resources like books. They also conduct in-depth investigations on site visits. The children plan questions for interviews and have assigned tasks for trips or for interviewing experts. They make field notes and draw or write on site. They make plans for building structures and play environments that will help them sort out what they are learning about the topic. Children do their own problem solving with the teacher structuring problems and assisting in finding solutions and resources. Children will redraw and rewrite as their knowledge grows. Some of the ways that they will record their learning are project books, posters, murals, artwork, graphs, charts, constructions, and journals.

**How does the teacher know if children are learning?**

The teacher collects children's work, observes what they do, and analyzes their work. This is called documentation. The curriculum goals of the center are reviewed and documentation is planned to be sure that children are learning concepts and skills specified in the goals. Often a display will be prepared that shows what children are learning.

**Is this the only way children are learning?**

The project approach is one way among a variety of ways that children learn. The project integrates much of the same knowledge and skills presented in more formal ways in the classroom. Projects

have the added advantage of providing an opportunity for children to apply and use what they are learning as they solve problems and share what they know. It provides opportunities for developing group skills such as working with others and challenges children to think, which supports brain development.

### **How can others help with projects?**

Realize that children have their own questions and are learning to use you and many resources to find answers. Take their questions seriously, and listen to what they have to say. Provide space and opportunities for them to draw or photograph what they are studying. Children learn best when many senses are involved so anything that they can touch, see up close, or hear is helpful. Things that can be borrowed for study in the classroom are valued and appreciated, especially parts of machines, tools, samples of products, and so forth. We hope that you follow up, view our documentation, and find out how children have processed what they have learned from the projects.

### **LITERACY (READING & WRITING SKILLS)**

Language and literacy (reading and writing skills) have become a popular topic in education, government, and the media. Because this is such an important topic, ECDC wants to share our approach as well as some of our strategies. This information is research based and is based on the latest findings as well as what has always been known as best practices in early childhood education for many, many years.

We know that the early childhood years, zero to age eight, are a very critical time for the development of language and literacy skills. We also know that this time period is one in which typical children's development is very individualized and can be uneven. This makes a single approach or "magic formula" difficult to address every child's individual needs and learning style. This also means that a language and literacy curriculum should not just be an isolated subject or taught only at certain times of the day. Language and literacy are most effective when they are part of a curriculum which addresses the whole child's development; social and emotional, creative, physical, and cognitive. There are times for direct teaching: one-on-one, in small groups, and large groups but most importantly they occur throughout the day during daily routines and during hands-on learning in all of the learning centers in the classroom and outside. ECDC is committed to this approach because we know that this is how young children learn best.

### **How is ECDC preparing children to learn how to read?**

#### **Rich Teacher Talk**

- \*Teachers talk to children in large group, small group and one-on-one situations.
- \*Teachers extend children's comments into more descriptive, grammatically mature statements.
- \*Teachers use project work to promote cognitively challenging content.
- \*Teachers use words that children are unlikely to encounter in everyday conversations and help children learn the meaning of new vocabulary words.
- \*Teachers listen and respond to what children have to say.

#### **Storybook Reading**

- \*Children are read to throughout the day, exposing them to stories, poems, and information books.
- \*Conversations and activities before, during, and after reading take place to stimulate children cognitively.
- \*Favorite books are read over and over again to increase the likelihood that children will attempt to read those books on their own.
- \*Books that positively reflect the children's identity and culture are read.

### **Phonological Awareness Activities**

\*Children are provided with activities that increase children's awareness of the sounds of language. These activities include books, poems, and songs that involve rhyme (words which end with the same sound), alliteration (several words that begin with the same sound), and sound matching (matching words which begin with a specific sound).

### **Alphabet Activities**

\*Teachers encourage children to use materials, which promote identification of alphabet letters. These materials include alphabet books, magnetic letters, alphabet blocks, alphabet stamps, and puzzles.

\*Teachers use direct instruction to teach letter names which are meaningful to the children, such as talking about the letters in a child's name or in a word that is of interest to the child.

### **Support for Emergent Reading**

\*Teachers encourage children to attempt to read by providing a large collection of books which children have access to throughout the day, by rereading favorite books, by creating and allowing children to read books created by the children, by creating a print rich environment which is functional to the children (helper charts, labels for toys, labels for cubbies and lockers, etc.), and by including literacy materials in the dramatic play and block learning centers (signs, menus, telephone books, etc.).

### **Support for Emergent Writing**

\*Teachers encourage children to use emergent forms of writing, such as scribble writing, random letter strings, and invented spelling by providing a writing center stocked with various writing materials, paper, and book making materials, play-related writing materials in the dramatic play and block learning centers, and functional writing opportunities connected to class activities (computer sign-up sheet, signs for saving a block structure, etc.).

\*Teachers use shared writing demonstrations in which the teacher writes down text dictated by the children.

\*Teachers create written webs of vocabulary and ideas related to projects.

### **Shared Book Experience**

\*Teachers use big books to point to the print as it is read.

\*Teachers teach basic concepts of print such as the distinction between pictures and print, left to right, top to bottom sequence, and book concepts (cover, title, author, illustrator, etc.).

### **Integrated, Content –Focused Activities**

\*Teachers use the project approach to curriculum and provide children with opportunities to hear topic related information books, gather data using observation, experiments, interviews, etc., use emergent writing to record information, and engage in dramatic play to express what they have learned.

## **LITERACY SUPPORT MATERIALS**

ECDC is pleased to offer families the opportunity to borrow quality early childhood materials to support the development of literacy at home. Literacy bags may be checked out in the office area for families to use. ECDC also has a variety of children's books in our lending library and families are welcome to borrow books at any time.

**ASSESSMENT OF CHILD GROWTH AND PROGRESS–  
OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING & SHARING DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

**Developmental Screenings** ECDC uses the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) which parents complete and submit to the office at designated intervals. During the first 6 years of life, your child will achieve very important developmental milestones that set the stage for success in school and later life. It is our goal to ensure that each child is supported in ways that allow her/him to gain the experiences and skills that she/he needs during the early childhood years; therefore, we are interested in working with families to follow your child's growth and development. Families can help us by completing a questionnaire called the ASQ Developmental Screening that will be given to you. You will be asked to answer questions about some things your child can and cannot do, and to bring the questionnaire back to the ECDC office in the envelope provided.

If there are areas of concern, we will contact you directly so that we can further understand the issues and consider resources that may be of help to your child. You may also wish to have your child's doctor or another professional conduct further assessment. All information about your child and your family will be kept confidential. We thank you for completing ASQs when requested and for collaborating with us in supporting your child's growth, development and learning.

**Authentic Assessment Plan** ECDC evaluates and keeps track of each child's development, learning and progress on an ongoing, comprehensive and authentic basis. Authentic Assessment means evaluating children's growth through their daily activities, instead of using something that is not part of their regular routine, such as standardized tests. Teachers and programs choose authentic assessment because they believe that everyday experiences most accurately reflect what children have learned and the progress they have made.

**Individual Authentic Portfolios** are a planned collection of "documentation" about each child's learning and development. Documentation in each child's portfolio is evidence of a child's experiences and learning; and includes 1) photos of the child's experience and photos of the child in action, 2) observations of the child's learning experiences at ECDC and 3) work samples that the child has created. To go along with each photo and work sample, the teacher writes an "anecdote" - a note describing what was happening with the child at the time the photo or the work sample was made. Teachers collect specific pieces of documentation over several months in four categories: favorites, friends, family, and developmental milestones. These four categories show teachers and family members what children's interests and strengths are.

**Developmental Milestones** document children's growth and development in seven areas:

1) Thinking, Reasoning and Problem-Solving; 2) Emotional and Social Competency; 3) Language and Communication; 4) Gross-Motor Development; 5) Fine-Motor Development; 6) Reading and Writing Development; and 7) Creative Development. Documenting developmental milestones helps teachers look at children's performance in relation to age-appropriate expectations and the program's curricular goals. Developmental milestones are included in a child's portfolio.

**Development and Learning Checklist** Two times per year the preschool teachers pull together what they have collected and prepare a report/form entitled the "Creative Curriculum Learning and Development Checklist" that evaluates the child's progress and accomplishments. The kindergarten teachers complete the Kindergarten Progress Report three times per year. The learning and development checklist and the individual child portfolio are shared with the child's family during parent teacher conferences. The teachers and family members conference two times per year to set goals and make plans to support each child's growth both at home and at ECDC.

**Parent Teacher Conferences** Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice per year, once during November/December and once during March/April. These conferences are thirty minutes in length and are held during the day as well as during the evening to accommodate parent schedules. Teachers share with families the child's adjustment to school, overall development and learning including the child's portfolio and the learning and development checklist, peer relationships, school involvement including favorites and friends and will answer parent questions. If parents would like to have a conference at a time other than the scheduled conference times, please make arrangements with your child's teacher or contact the ECDC office. We respectfully request that parents not bring children to Parent Teacher Conferences.

### **TEACHING FACULTY & STAFF CONFIGURATIONS**

**Teaching Teams** Each preschool and kindergarten activity room is staffed with one lead teacher and at least one associate or assistant teacher. The 2's and 2/3's groups include one lead teacher and two associate and/or assistant teachers. Lead teachers have a B.A. in either Early Childhood Education or a related field and experience with young children. Associate Teachers have either a B.A. or A.S. in early childhood or a related field. Assistant Teachers possess a high school degree and a Child Development Associate Certificate that involves 120 clock hours in early childhood education. ECDC implements a team approach to staffing the ECDC groups. Teaching teams plan and implement the curriculum/learning experiences and maintain the prepared learning environment. This team approach is supportive to children, families and to the team as relationships are developed and to provide strategic interactions with children to promote learning and development. All ECDC staff participate in annual continuing professional development including workshops, conferences, and/or participating in early childhood coursework. All staff are current with Pediatric First Aid and CPR certification; this exceeds both licensing and accreditation standards.

**College Student Involvement in the ECDC Program** During the school year, students from area colleges and universities (e.g., Saint Mary's, Notre Dame, Holy Cross, Indiana University South Bend, Bethel and Ivy Tech) are involved in the ECDC program on a weekly basis as practicum students, volunteers or part time employees. Practicum students are typically enrolled in Education, Psychology, Sociology or Nursing college courses that include a "real life" experiential component with children. ECDC also hires college students to work on a part time basis assisting the teaching staff during transitional times of the day and meals, including early morning breakfast, lunchtime, rest time and end of the day. All college students involved with ECDC receive an orientation to ECDC's philosophy, goals, curriculum/learning activities, licensing, accreditation and child guidance/discipline to support consistency for the children. Each activity room typically has at least one college student involved during each day. College students, who are not ECDC employees, always work with ECDC professional teachers while at ECDC; they are not given responsibility for a group of children or for individual children.

**Administration Staff** ECDC-SMC is staffed with a Program Director and an Administrative Assistant. The ECDC-ND administrative team includes a Program Director, an Assistant Program Director and 2 Administrative Assistants due to the size of the ECDC-ND program and the length of the ECDC-ND program day (6:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.). The ECDC administrative team also includes the Executive Director and an Accountant. The Executive Director works with the ECDC Board of Directors with governance and leadership issues including compliance with regulatory organizations, financial issues, the hiring of teachers and strategic planning. The Program Directors and the Executive Director all possess advanced degrees in education (master's degrees and Ph.D.) and are available to teachers and families as a resource regarding child development, learning and early childhood education.

**Family Resource Specialist** ECDC employs a licensed clinical social worker in the role of Family Resource Specialist (FRS) to assist teachers and families with issues related to child guidance, classroom management, and social and emotional development fostering independent, responsible and cooperative behavior. The ECDC Family Resource Specialist is available to ECDC families free of charge for short-term consultation. You may reach her by obtaining her phone number or email address from the ECDC office. The ECDC FRS also facilitates topical small group meetings entitled “Conversations about Everyday Life with Children” at ECDC. Parents are informed of these meetings through postings, newsletters and through email messages.

### **RESEARCH PARTICIPATION**

Notre Dame and Saint Mary’s faculty and college students conduct research at ECDC occasionally. All research projects carried out at ECDC will be cleared first through ND or SMC’s Human Subjects Review Committee and the ECDC Research Committee, an ECDC board committee. If your child is a potential subject to be included in a research project you will be fully informed in advance of the purpose and procedures involved in the planned study, and your written consent will be obtained before the study begins. You may choose to keep your child from participating in any study without consequences to you or your child’s participation at ECDC. Children also have the right of refusal. From time to time you will encounter students observing at the Center as well as participating at the Center. Field experience students and practicum students in the classroom are always under the visual supervision of one of our staff members. All visitors to the Center, including observers, must check in with the office/front desk before being allowed access to the classrooms.

### **ECDC’S APPROACH TO CHILD GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE**

ECDC’s approach to child guidance is based on the work of Rudolf Dreikurs. His work was based on Alfred Adler, the founder of Individual Psychology. Dreikur’s teachings emphasize the importance of the preparation of the child for future citizenship in a participatory, democratic society. He believed the child, at the earliest age, should experience his/her own strength and a feeling of belonging, so the opportunity for achieving the fullest feeling of responsibility is possible. More recent books based on this approach are the Positive Discipline series by Jane Nelson. This series of books focuses on raising children who are responsible, respectful, responsive, and resourceful.

The ECDC curriculum and teacher/child interactions support each child’s development of the 4 R’s, which are respect, responsibility, responsiveness, and resourcefulness. The 4 R’s are the foundation of community building. The 4 R’s are supported and strengthened as teachers recognize children’s rights to their feelings, ideas, and opinions and as teachers model the 4 R’s through their interactions with the children, team members, learning environment, and curriculum. Discipline is viewed as a process of guiding and teaching rather than as a control mechanism. The activity room is a positive, accepting, and encouraging environment promoting independence in all aspects of the child’s daily school involvement.

**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

All ECDC teachers and college students are trained in this approach. Family Enrichment Presentations and Seminars, based on this approach, are offered each year.

**Teachers communicate with children using positive statements.** Teachers support and encourage children to use their own words to express their feelings and resolve their own conflicts whenever possible. Teachers communicate with children at eye level, speaking to them in a calm manner about the situation. Physical punishment of any kind, humiliation, shaming or belittlement is **never** used at ECDC. When the teacher sees a conflict situation arising, he/she tries to identify causes, and then responds by stating an alternative for the child. For example, "You can put the block here," instead of "Don't throw the block on the floor." If the inappropriate behavior continues, the teacher tells the child the rule, and the consequences of the behavior if it continues. For example, "Throwing blocks may hurt someone, so we don't throw blocks at ECDC. If you throw blocks, you will need to make another choice." The teacher is careful to emphasize that it is the behavior that is unacceptable, not the child. Recurring disciplinary problems are discussed with families and documented in the child's record. (Please see Addendum 1 – Biting Procedures)

**Anti Violence Approach** We believe that all children and families have the right to enjoy a safe and protected environment. We prohibit the bringing of certain items to ECDC such as weapon facsimiles, or other toys that suggest or promote these activities. A primary focus of all curriculum activities across all ages is to model and teach positive, non-hurtful conflict resolution skills. Such curriculum planning includes teacher class meetings, play activities to demonstrate problem-solving scenarios, and encouraging children to "use their words" and "use gentle touches." Because young children are fascinated with power and power materials, thematic play does occur. Pretend behavior that suggests hurting or frightening is handled with the use of situation- and age-specific strategies. Because we interpret many of these activities as children's attempts to experience being powerful, we actively seek out alternate ways for children to experience being influential and powerful. Being the teacher's helper, having special jobs (carrying the clipboard to the next activity, showing younger children how to do things, etc.), or redirecting a potentially fear-producing activity (such as gunplay) to stimulate a powerful helping activity, such as being a firefighter, offer alternate opportunities.

**Communication Regarding Discipline** According to state regulations, disciplinary action taken will be communicated to the parents and noted in the child's record. Examples of disciplinary action that would be shared with the family include a child removed from the classroom due to behavior issues, incidents of biting, aggressive behavior that hurts others or attempts to hurt others, or a child excluded from a field trip due to behavior concerns. ECDC will notify families of all significant occurrences or problems that could affect your child. This includes, but is not limited to, notices regarding behavior concerns, accidents, injuries, first aid, possible exposure to communicable diseases and prior notification regarding field trips.

### **ENCOURAGEMENT**

Encouragement is key to our approach to child guidance and discipline; it implies faith in the child and communicates belief in his/her strength and ability. Praise may or may not be encouraging. Lavish praise usually seems insincere. The child may feel s/he is not worthy of it. Praise may actually discourage a child if s/he fears that next time s/he may not be able to live up to it. One praises when a job is well done. However, when a child does poorly, s/he needs encouragement much more than when s/he does well.

### **HOW TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PRAISE AND ENCOURAGEMENT**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Praise is given to the doer: "You are a good girl/boy for drawing such a nice picture for me." | 1. Encouragement is given for the deed: "I'm sure you enjoyed drawing your picture."                                 |
| 2. Praise is given for work well done: "What good grades you have brought home!"                  | 2. Encouragement is also given when work is done poorly: "We all make mistakes I'm sure you'll do better next time." |

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 3. Praise implies a demand for continued high performance. | 3. Encouragement makes no demands.    |
| 4. Praise often seems phony.                               | 4. Encouragement is sincere.          |
| 5. Praise may not increase self-esteem.                    | 5. Encouragement fosters self-esteem. |

### **NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES (Rudolf Dreikurs)**

Natural and logical consequences coupled with encouragement are the tools utilized in this approach to support the 4 R's. Punishment is replaced by a sense of mutual respect and cooperation. If we allow children to experience the consequences of their actions, we provide an honest and real learning situation. We should not assume the responsibilities of our children, nor do we have the right to take the consequences of their acts. These belong to them.

#### **I. Natural Consequences**

- A. Denote the natural results of ill-advised acts.
- B. Example: "If a man is walking along the street and he trips on a raised edge in the sidewalk, the next time he passes that same spot he will usually be more cautious and step over."  
(Taken from the book Logical Consequences, Dreikurs and Grey)

#### **II. Logical Consequences**

- A. Logical consequences express the reality of the social order, not of the person. Punishment expresses the power of a personal authority.
- B. The logical consequence is logically related to the misbehavior; punishment is rarely related.
- C. Logical consequences involve no element of moral judgment; punishment inevitably does.
- D. Logical consequences are concerned only with what will happen now; punishments are concerned with the past.
- E. The voice is friendly when consequences are invoked; there is anger in punishment, either open or concealed.
- F. Choice is inherent in the nature of every logical consequence. The child should be asked to choose between behaving in the correct manner or continuing the misbehavior. If the child decides to continue the misbehavior, the consequence should immediately follow, without being given another choice.

#### **III. Practical Examples of Choices and Logical Consequences**

- A. "Henry was a finicky eater. At breakfast he picked at his food and complained because the cereal was not to his liking. At lunch he ate only a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and at dinner potatoes and dessert. Trying everything else, I finally hit upon the idea of merely putting the food provided on the table and taking it off whether he had finished or not. Though he complained bitterly the first two days, it was not long until he was eating most of the regular foods that were presented to him."
- B. "Joseph, age two, stepped in the mud puddle and got his shoes wet; he came in the house for dry clothes. When he asked to go out again his shoes were not dry yet, and therefore he was unable to go outside. In a matter-of-fact way he was told by his mother, "I'm sorry, but your shoes are wet." If more parents would talk as little and act as much as this one did, parent-child relationships would be infinitely better.

The above examples were taken from the book: Logical Consequences, Dreikurs and Grey

### **Recommended Readings for Parents**

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

### **Recommended Readings for Stepfamilies**

Stepfamilies: A Cooperative Responsibility. Capaldi, F. and MacRae B., New York:

Viewpoints Vision (1979).

Children: The Challenge. Dreikurs, R. and Soltz, V. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce (1964).

The Stepfamily: Living, Loving and Learning. Einstein, E., New York: MacMillan (1982).

Stepparenting by Jeannette Lofas,

### **ECDC HOURS OF OPERATION**

**ECDC-SMC: 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.**

**ECDC-ND: 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.**

### **ECDC-SMC ARRIVAL TIMES**

**MORNINGS:** 7:30-8:45 is arrival time. It is helpful if all children arrive by 8:45 a.m.

**AFTERNOONS:** 11:45-12:00 is arrival time if your child is enrolled for lunch.  
12:45-1:00 is arrival time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.

### **ECDC-SMC DEPARTURE TIMES**

**MORNINGS:** 11:30-11:45 is departure time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.  
12:30-12:45 is departure time if your child is enrolled for lunch.

**AFTERNOONS:** 4:30-5:30 is departure time for children enrolled for the afternoon only.  
Children enrolled all day may leave at any time in the afternoon. All children  
must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. sharp. A \$15.00 service charge, per each 15-  
minute increment, is assessed for each child who is picked up after the  
program closes.

### **ECDC-ND ARRIVAL TIMES**

**MORNINGS:** 6:30-8:45 is arrival time. Kindergarten children should arrive prior to 8:30

**AFTERNOONS:** 11:45-12:00 is arrival time if your child is enrolled for lunch.  
12:45-1:00 is arrival time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.

### **ECDC-ND DEPARTURE TIMES**

**MORNINGS:** 11:30-11:45 is departure time if your child is not enrolled for lunch.  
12:30-12:45 is departure time if your child is enrolled for lunch.

**AFTERNOONS:** 4:30-5:30 is departure time for children enrolled for the afternoon only. Children enrolled all day may leave at any time in the afternoon. All children must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. sharp. A \$15.00 service charge, per each 15-minute increment, is assessed for each child who is picked up after the program closes.

ECDC requires that every child be escorted into and out of the building every day. For the safety of your child and to follow state licensing requirements, children must be signed in and out each day and a teacher should be made aware that your child has arrived or is leaving for the day. The sign-in sheets are used to account for all children present in the event of fire, storm, etc.

### **LICENSING: INDIANA DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN: BUREAU OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

The Indiana Bureau of Child Development licenses early care and education programs/child care centers in Indiana and requires that ECDC inform families of the following information. Families and community members can contact the Bureau of Child Development at 317-232-4521 or 877-511-1144, please ask for the northwest region. Also, the internet site: [www.childcarefinder.in.gov](http://www.childcarefinder.in.gov) contains information regarding the current status of ECDC's license, any complaints filed with the division concerning the ECDC program and violations of the licensing status. A copy of the Indiana Licensing Regulations for Child Care Centers is available at both ECDC programs in the offices and also in the ECDC activity rooms. The Saint Joseph County's Child Care Resource and Referral program can be reached at 574-289-7815.

### **NAEYC ACCREDITATION**

ECDC has been accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and is currently pursuing reaccreditation with NAEYC. NAEYC accreditation is a national, voluntary system to measure the quality of early childhood programs, preschools and kindergartens, and to help these programs improve. There are more than 11,000 NAEYC accredited programs serving approximately one million children. NAEYC accreditation includes 10 standards of excellence in early childhood education with 400+ criteria to prove a program meets NAEYC standards. Programs must achieve 80% of the criteria to meet NAEYC standards. The accreditation term is 5 years and requires annual reports submitted yearly. The 10 standards of excellence include: positive relationships with all children, curriculum, effective teaching approaches, on-going assessment, nutrition and health, teaching staff qualifications, collaborative relationships with families, community involvement and support, healthy and safe learning environments and supportive and high-quality experiences for staff. NAEYC accreditation has become the mark of quality, helping families find the best quality early childhood experience. For more information regarding accreditation please visit [www.naeyc.org/accreditation](http://www.naeyc.org/accreditation).

### **ECDC SCHOOL YEAR, SUMMER, AND EXTENDED PROGRAMS**

**School Year Program** ECDC offers both part-time and full-time schedules for all age groups, with priority given only in Kindergarten to those families needing full time. During the school year, we offer a variety of preschool schedules (M - F A.M. or P.M., MWF A.M. or P.M., MWF All Day, TTH A.M. or P.M., TTH All Day). If children are enrolled all day during the school year, they receive two preschool programs each day - an A.M. and a P.M. Activities are varied to ensure that there is not repetition for children as well as to ensure that all children experience the different learning activities.

**Summer Day Camp Program** ECDC offers a recreational nine-week summer day camp program during the months of June and July for children ages two and one-half through nine at ECDC-ND and ages three through nine at ECDC-SMC. The summer activities are many and varied, depending on the age group of the children. Many activities take place outside, including creating, discovering, running, jumping, building, painting, digging, exploring, singing, listening, pretending, and learning about ourselves and the world we live in. The Summer Day Camp program is based upon children learning through moving, experiencing, and doing. Arts and crafts emphasizing creativity, exploration, and expression are daily activities. Many field trips are planned for children enrolled in the 4/5's, 5/6's, 6/7's, and 8/9's age groups. In-house activities and presentations are scheduled for children in the 2/3's, 3's and 3/4's.

**Extended School Year and Extended Summer Programs** ECDC offers two optional programs at the ECDC-ND site for families at ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND who need year round programs. The Extended School Year Program (ESY) is during the month of May/June and typically lasts 3 weeks. The Extended Summer Program (ESU) is typically one week and occurs during the month of August after the summer program concludes. All families, regardless of affiliation, are eligible to register for these two programs.

**ECDC-ND Program Closings** ECDC-ND is closed the following days: Thanksgiving Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 weeks in December (around Christmas and New Year's Day), Good Friday, and Easter Monday, Memorial Day, the Friday before the first day of the summer program, 4th of July, and one week in mid-August for professional development.

**ECDC-SMC Program Closings** ECDC-SMC is closed the following days: Thanksgiving Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 2 weeks in December (around Christmas and New Year's Day), Good Friday and Easter Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 3 weeks in May/June and 2 weeks in August.

**Early Registration for Currently Enrolled ECDC Families** In early December, currently enrolled ECDC families will be provided with the opportunity to enroll in upcoming programs: Optional Extended School Year Program, Summer Program, Optional Extended Summer Program and the next School Year. Current families receive a "current priority in enrollment" if the required early registration form is completed and submitted by the due date of February 1.

**Registration for Non-Current Families** Summer registration materials are distributed in February with a March 1 due date. School Year registration materials are distributed in early March with an April 1 due date.

**Open Houses and Family Information Sessions for Families interested in Future ECDC Enrollment** During spring semester, ECDC-SMC hosts 3 Sunday afternoon 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Family Open Houses that provide families an opportunity to get acquainted with the ECDC program. Family Open Houses are scheduled in January, February and March prior to SY registration due on April 1. At ECDC-ND, 3 Parent Information Meetings are held in January, February and March to provide parents an opportunity to visit ECDC-ND and learn about the program. Notification about ECDC-SMC Family Open Houses and ECDC-ND Parent Information Meetings are distributed in early January.

### **AUTHORIZATION FOR CHILD'S RELEASE**

If someone other than the parent is to pick up a child from ECDC, written parental consent must be provided prior to the pick up. This may be done by including the name of the person on the Authorized Pick Up portion of the Emergency Information Form during the enrollment process or by completing a temporary Authorization for Pick Up Form which can be obtained at the ECDC office/front desk. Anyone picking up a child must be 18 years of age and will be required to show identification. No child will be released without written authorization from the parent. Parents may revise their permanent Authorized Pick Up information/form at the ECDC office. Parents are required to sign children in and out by name including the time of arrival and departure.

If an authorized person, who the ECDC staff suspects is intoxicated or impaired, insists on removing a child from the center, the staff will immediately report the incident to the local police agency.

If a parent or legal guardian is denied permission to pick up a child, the parent's name must be included on the emergency form and a copy of the court order is required to be on file at ECDC.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips have been a vital part of the ECDC program for age groups four and older during the past thirty years. We believe field trips are important because children learn by doing and experiencing. In June of 2006, ECDC purchased a new Bluebird School Bus for field trip transportation. This new special activities bus is equipped with seat belts for school age children and harness child restraints for preschool age children. Kindergarten and school age children also use a 66 passenger yellow regular school bus for some field trips. ECDC hires professional bus drivers, who drive for local school districts and/or Saint Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame. To ensure safety, teachers and staff obtain group counts 1) before leaving ECDC, 2) frequently during the field trip, 3) before leaving the field trip site and 4) upon return to ECDC following the field trip. An ECDC teacher is always the last person to get off the bus and visually checks all seats to ensure that all children have departed the bus. ECDC teachers are trained in pediatric first aid and CPR and take equipped first aid kits, water and cell phones on all field trips. Field trips include Stover's Pumpkin Patch and Apple Orchard, The Patch at Bertrand Farm, Healthworks Kids Museum, South Bend Regional Art Museum, Clay Park, Love Creek, Potawatomi Zoo, Fernwood Botanical Gardens, and local libraries, etc. Parents are invited to accompany class groups on trips. We respectfully request that siblings not attend the field trip due to safety, supervision and insurance issues.

### **IN-HOUSE PRESENTATIONS AT ECDC**

ECDC children have several in-house presentations each semester during the school year. Some of the in-house presentations include storytellers, naturalists, zookeeper, dental hygienist, South Bend Symphony, Sweet Adeline Singers, fire fighters, artists and musicians.

### **CLOTHES TO WEAR TO ECDC**

Please dress children in clothing that is child manageable and will not be a hindrance in play activities. We encourage exploration, discovery and sensory play (such as paints, clays, and other messy items), and ask that you dress your child in easily washed items that they don't need to worry about staining. Children do wear paint smocks during art/sensory activities, however sometimes clothing still gets dirty. Children should wear tennis shoes, please no sandals, clogs, or thongs, so they are not hindered when climbing or running outside.

## **WEATHER, OUTSIDE PLAYTIME & WARM OUTSIDE CLOTHING**

Children's outside playtime should not be seasonal; young children need to run, jump, hop, swing, slide and yell all year long. ECDC children have daily opportunities for outdoor play when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk.

**Cold Weather/Wind Chill** The children will play outside daily unless the temperature falls below 25 degrees (including wind chill factor) or unless it is raining or muddy outside. When remaining inside due to weather, the children are provided with similar large motor activities inside. Indoor equipment for large-motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

**Warm Outside Clothing** It is important for children to play outside all year long, even during the colder weather if the weather permits. We find that the children enjoy playing outside in the colder weather as long as they are dressed warmly and remain dry. If the temperature is 25 degrees or warmer, the children will go outside to play. We request that parents dress children in warm, waterproof outer clothing to avoid injury from the cold. Attaching mittens to coat sleeves and an extra pair of mittens kept on the top shelf of the locker is helpful during winter. Please label all outside clothing so it can be easily found if it is lost.

**Heat Index** Living in Indiana, we all know that our summer weather can be hot and humid. On days when the temperature or the heat index is 90 degrees or higher we will have inside days and will cancel active outdoor activities and field trips. When outdoor opportunities for large-motor activities are not possible because of conditions, ECDC provides similar activities inside. Indoor equipment for large-motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

**Ozone Action Days** Over the past few summers, we have been experiencing Ozone Action Days. These are days when young children, children and adults with breathing difficulties, and elderly people should not spend prolonged time outside, particularly when engaged in physical activity. It is at its peak intensity during the hours of 11:00 – 3:00. On Ozone Action Days, we will have limited outside playtime before 11:00 and after 3:00. Children may go outside for quiet group time activities such as reading books or other "quiet" activities on these days.

**Large Motor Development on Inclement Days** On days that children are unable to go outside due to weather conditions, the program provides activities that foster large-motor development, such as group games, parachute activities, ribbon dancing and movement activities, and obstacle course activities. During indoor large-motor activities, the equipment used (e.g., parachutes, scooter boards, tumbling mats) meets national safety standards and is supervised and supported by the teachers at the same level as outdoor equipment and activities.

During the fall, the ECDC playgrounds can be dry, dusty and dirty. We do realize that many children may go home dirty after a day at school. The children wash their hands regularly throughout their day, always after coming inside after outside play, always before eating snacks and lunch and always after using the bathroom. Even though they are washing up regularly, by the end of the day we often have soiled, but happy children. We appreciate your understanding the importance of outside play to young children's growth and development.

**Safety and Fall Zones** Both ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND have climbing structures on their playgrounds as well as shade to support outside play on sunny days. The climbing structures provide opportunities for gross motor development. To ensure safety, at least 12" of pea gravel is

underneath the climbing structures. This noncompactible ground surface is recommended to cushion falls and jumping to the ground. These structures are designed for young children. Children ages ten and older and adults are asked to refrain from playing on the structures.

### **SNACKS AND MEALS**

ECDC is concerned about the food children eat and adheres to a food program that consists of snacks and lunches that are low in sugar, contain whole grains, and contain limited preservatives and additives. The Licensing Consultant from the Indiana Department of Child Development reviews and approves the ECDC food program, including menus. The ECDC food program and menus are consistent with the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA CACFP) and were developed in consultation with a licensed nutritionist. Breakfast, snacks and lunch are scheduled so that they are no more than three hours apart or closer than two hours apart.

**Breakfast** Optional breakfast consisting of juice, milk and cold cereal is served at ECDC-ND to children arriving between 6:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Optional breakfast is served at ECDC-SMC for children arriving between 7:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m.

**Snacks** All juices served for morning snacks are unsweetened, 100% fruit juices. Milk is the daily beverage for lunch and afternoon snack. A wide variety of crackers, bread, and cereal products are served for morning and afternoon snacks. Children are welcome to bring a commercially prepared, sealed, nutritious snack to share with their entire class. Examples of appropriate snacks include natural cheese, fresh fruit, granola bars, 100% fruit juice popsicles, yogurt, applesauce cups, string cheese, raisins, etc. Please note that pudding cups and frozen yogurt should only be served as occasional treats due to high level of added sugars. There are an increasing number of children with serious peanut allergies, therefore, we request that food items that contain peanuts or tree nuts not be brought to ECDC. We also request that candy and gum not be brought to ECDC. (Please see Addendum 2 – Healthy Snacks)

**Lunch** The ECDC food program is licensed by the State of Indiana and is catered by the Saint Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame Food Service Programs. Each lunch consists of a main dish, salad, vegetable, bread and butter, and a piece of fresh fruit (apple, oranges, bananas, or pears). Multicultural lunch entrees, such as Chicken Stir Fry, Beef Tacos, Sweet and Sour Chicken, and Chicken Fajitas, are served at least once per week. Menus are distributed at the beginning of each semester and are available on the ECDC website ([www.nd.edu/~ecdncnd](http://www.nd.edu/~ecdncnd)).

**Vegetarian Entrée at ECDC-ND** Due to the number of children eating vegetarian lunches, ECDC-ND offers a vegetarian entrée (garden chicken grill patty, homemade baked vegetarian manicotti, vegetarian sloppy joe, etc.) each day. If you would like your child to eat the vegetarian entree, please complete a vegetarian lunch option form, which is included in your enrollment forms. Your child will receive the vegetarian entrée until a parent informs ECDC otherwise.

**Food Substitutions Provided by Families for Meals or Snacks** The Indiana state licensing regulations require a doctor's note for any food substitutions. All food substitutions must be commercially prepared and sealed. Homemade food items are not allowed per Indiana State Licensing Regulations and NAEYC Accreditation Standards. Parents providing food substitutions are required to sign a *Safe Food Transportation Form that is available at the front desk/office*. ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND have food service rooms, however, do not have kitchens. Therefore, ECDC is unable to prepare or cook foods to serve children. ECDC staff take steps to ensure the safety of food brought from home in the following ways: They work with families to ensure that foods brought from home meet the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. More information about the USDA CACFP

program can be found at [www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/CACFP/aboutcacfp.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/CACFP/aboutcacfp.htm). All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child's name and date. Staff make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. If your child requires food substitutions for meals or snacks due to medical or religious reasons, please speak with the ECDC Program Director.

**Food Supplements Provided by Families for Meals or Snacks** Occasionally, families request to supplement meals and/or snacks with additional foods. Food supplements are food items served to the child in addition to the scheduled snack or meal food items served. All food supplements must be healthy and commercially prepared and sealed. Homemade food items are not allowed per Indiana State Licensing Regulations and NAEYC Accreditation Standards. Examples of acceptable and healthy food supplements include yogurt, hummus, fruit, fruit cup, and string cheese. Supplements that are not acceptable include Twinkies, cakes, donuts, and candy. Parents providing food supplements are required to sign a *Safe Food Transportation Form that is available at the front desk/office*. ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND have food service rooms, however, do not have kitchens. Therefore, ECDC is unable to prepare or cook foods to serve children. ECDC staff take steps to ensure the safety of food brought from home in the following ways: They work with families to ensure that foods brought from home meet the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. More information about the USDA CACFP program can be found at [www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/CACFP/aboutcacfp.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/CACFP/aboutcacfp.htm). All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child's name and date. Staff make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served. If your child requires food supplements for meals or snacks due to medical or religious reasons, please speak with the ECDC Program Director.

**Food Considered Choking Hazards Are Not Served at ECDC** To prevent possible choking, ECDC does not offer children the following foods: hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Popcorn is only served to children four and older and is served infrequently. As needed, ECDC teachers and staff cut meat entrees and other solid foods for children younger than four to prevent choking.

**Encouragement of Eating Various Foods Items** Through spontaneous conversation at the lunch tables, children are encouraged to taste all the food on their plates. The teachers encourage food exploration and remind the children of the Dr. Seuss book GREEN EGGS AND HAM. Often the children discover they do indeed like something that they had thought they would not like. We do not force the children to clean their plates or count how many bites children eat; rather, through a positive approach, we encourage children to taste foods that are unfamiliar to them. Teachers also use snack and meal times to talk about good nutrition and why we need to eat certain foods. At least once per year, each activity room has a project/study focused on food and nutrition.

**Parents Visiting for Lunch** Parents of children who eat lunch at ECDC are welcome to come and join their children for lunch any day throughout the year. Lunch is served promptly at noon; all a parent needs to do is bring his or her own sack lunch. For those children enrolled all day, parents should also feel free to take their children out to lunch any time during the hours of 11:30 - 1:00. In the past, parents have found this to be extremely pleasant and successful after their child has adjusted to school and the daily routine and is not upset by separations.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

Arrival and departure times at ECDC are very important times of the day for children and families as they separate and come back together over the course of the day. Arrival and departure times also provide the opportunity for parents and teachers to share information about the child and the child's day. You and your child will be warmly greeted and welcomed upon arrival each day and will be given a warm good-bye at departure time.

> **Arrival:** Parents are required to sign-in their child each day upon arrival in order to transfer responsibility of care from parent to authorized ECDC staff member. Signing your child in and out is extremely important. Teachers use the sign-in sheets to keep track of the children who are present. ECDC staff members will assist with your child's involvement in the group and facilitate the parent's departure. ECDC-SMC opens at 7:30 a.m., parents are welcome to arrive at 7:25 a.m., help their child wash their hands, hang up coat, sign-in and then join the opening teacher at 7:30 am.)

> **Departure:** Upon departure, parents are required to sign-out their child and let the teacher know he or she is departing. Once the child is signed out, he or she is no longer the responsibility of ECDC staff. Children are not permitted to run in the hallways due to safety concerns; parents are expected to enforce this rule. All children must be picked up at ECDC by 5:30 p.m. If you will be late picking up your child, it is helpful if you call before 5:30 p.m. to let teachers and your child know. A late fee of \$15 per every 15 minute increment will be charged to families who arrive after 5:30 p.m. Chronic lateness is defined as arriving after 5:30 p.m. more than four times during a semester and is cause for termination of child care services.

**Important Information for you to share with ECDC Office Staff** If you will be away from your office or regular schedule, be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached in case you are needed for a medical emergency.

## ADJUSTING TO ECDC

It is very typical for children to have some hesitations about school/summer day camp during the first few days, even if it isn't their first group experience. A close analogy to these feelings might be an adult beginning and adjusting to a new job. One way parents can help their child during this time is by being very positive and reassuring about the day, activities, friends and teachers. Also, establishing a daily routine when arriving at school/day camp is extremely helpful. This routine might include the following:

1. Hanging up any coat or jacket in the locker.
2. Child washes hands (at ECDC-SMC in the bathroom at ECDC-ND in the classroom child sink)
3. Together signing in the attendance book/sheet; child and parent greeting the teacher.
4. A positive comment for a good day: "I am sure you'll have a good morning/afternoon. I will be excited to hear all about it when I pick you up."
5. A reminder of when you will be back to pick up the child and a hug and kiss goodbye.

This type of a predictable daily routine is helpful and reassuring, but will not always alleviate tears at separation time. The teacher will be very helpful at this time by comforting and reassuring your child that you will be back and that they will have a good time with all of the planned activities. The teacher will also give you feedback as to the involvement of your child during the morning/afternoon/day. If there were tears at separation time, do not hesitate to call the office to find out how your child is doing. If ever a child would not calm down, we would call the parent. This is best not shared with your child. Another helpful hint is to kiss your child's palm and tell her/him that if during the day s/he needs a kiss from mom or dad s/he has it in her/his hand.

As the newness of the school environment wears off, children will feel more and more comfortable with their teachers, classrooms, and friends. Friendships are being formed every day and in most cases children will enjoy sharing their school experiences with you. Some children, however, will keep the new experiences to themselves and that, too, must be respected. Other children will answer your inquiring questions with a simple “nothing” or “played”. Feel free to talk with your child’s teacher specifically about friends and those activities your child finds most enjoyable. Most parents discover that as the school year/summer develops, their children initiate more and more conversation about the day’s activities and their playmates. (Please see Addendum 3)

The following children’s books might be helpful in preparing your child for their school experience. These books are available at local libraries. Your community children’s librarian will also have helpful suggestions.

Bourgeois, Paulette. **Franklin Goes to School**  
Cole, Joanna. **When Mommy and Daddy Go to Work**  
Day, Alexandra. **Carl Goes to Day Care.**

Cohen, Miriam. **Will I Have a Friend?**  
Hill, Eric. **Spot Goes to School**  
Steiner, C. **I’d Rather Stay With You.**

### **REST TIME**

Each preschool child enrolled in the afternoon is provided with his or her own labeled cot and sheet for a quiet rest time during the early part of the afternoon. Families are asked to provide a small crib size pillow and small crib size blanket labeled with their child’s name. Resting items are sent home for laundering once per month. Toddler and preschool children are helped to remain quietly on their cots for a minimum 30-minute rest period during the required daily group rest times. Kindergarten children rest for 30 minutes on their resting rug. Some kindergarten age children still benefit from afternoon sleep and will be provided with a cot and sheet. After 30 minutes, if the child does not fall asleep, he or she will be provided with quiet activities and books at tables or on the rug for another 30 minutes. If a child has rested quietly for 30 minutes and is almost asleep, he or she will be allowed to continue to lie on their cot and sleep. If the child does fall asleep, he or she will be allowed to sleep without adult interruption until the end of the group’s rest time. When a child falls asleep during our quiet rest period it is because his or her body is tired and needs to sleep. If the child’s parent(s) are concerned their child is sleeping too much at ECDC, we will help the child wake up gently after 30 minutes of sleep and only if the child awakens to a gentle approach of awakening by the teacher. Staff will not forcibly awaken a sleeping child. Between 2:30 and 2:45 p.m., sleeping children are awakened gently by the sound of the voices of teachers and other children, by lights being turned on, by music, and by the gentle rubbing of backs by the teachers. Children remain on their cots until they are awake enough to get up on their own.

### **HANDWASHING TO STAY HEALTHY**

All ECDC staff members, volunteers, 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 assists 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, 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.

**Cleaning and Sanitizing Toys helps keep children healthy.** A toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion is washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, and sanitized before another child can use it.

#### **WATER PLAY**

Water play for young children is an enjoyable activity that promotes learning and development. Children practice pouring, learn concepts such as quantity, full, empty, overflowing, and enjoy the calming element water exploration and play provides. ECDC complies with licensing regulations and accreditation standards for water play that includes the following procedures. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. No child drinks the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh potable water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity. A 3 parts per million bleach solution is used in the water table to prevent the spread of germs. When the activity period is completed with each group of children, the water is drained and the table sanitized in preparation for the next time.

#### **DAILY HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND SICK CHILD POLICIES**

Every day, an ECDC staff member will conduct a health check of each child upon arrival. This visual health check shall be conducted as soon as possible after the child enters and whenever a change occurs while that child is in attendance. The health assessment shall address: 1) changes in behavior or appearance from behaviors observed during the previous day's attendance; 2) skin rashes, itchy skin, itchy scalp; 3) elevated body temperature, if behavior indicates; 4) complaints of pain or of not feeling well. ECDC shall keep a written record of health concerns it identifies for each child.

**Sick Child Policies** If a child's health is in doubt, he or she will not be admitted. Any of the following symptoms will result in the child being isolated and the parent notified to pick up the child **promptly within one hour**:

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher using an ear thermometer (parents or ECDC staff may not administer fever reducer to lower a child's temperature with the purpose of keeping the child at ECDC).
- Vomiting illness (two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours).

- Diarrhea (more than one episode in an hour), children whose stools remain loose but otherwise, seem well and whose stool cultures are negative, need not be excluded.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye).
- Unexplained rash.
- Other communicable disease systems as defined by The National Health and Safety Performance Standards.
- Behavior changes that result in the inability to participate in regular activities or that requires one-on-one attention from adults.

**Illness at ECDC** Parents are notified immediately if a child becomes sick while at ECDC. Children must be picked up within one hour. If you cannot be reached, someone from your emergency contacts will be contacted. If you are a student at Notre Dame or Saint Mary's, please provide the ECDC office each semester with a schedule of your classes and where you usually study between classes.

If a child is too sick to participate in outside play activities while at school the child is too sick to attend school that day. ECDC does not have the means to supervise children inside and outside at the same time. Programs offering care for sick children are available in the community for those occasions when parents are unable to stay home with a sick child. Please contact the office for referrals. Parents are asked to notify ECDC when their child is absent from school due to illness.

**Returning after Illness** The child may return to ECDC after he or she has been free of fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication), vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours or until he or she has been on medication for 24 hours. A certificate of health signed by a doctor may be required before a child may re-enter after any communicable disease or illness. Such a certificate should address the child's inability to infect other children as well as his or her capacity to tolerate the day's activities.

**Exposure to Disease** If a child is exposed to or contracts a communicable disease; it is essential that this information be reported to the ECDC staff. Information of possible exposure to a communicable disease will be posted in the classroom. If a child will be absent from ECDC because of illness, the staff should be notified. Staff will provide information to families verbally and/or in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at ECDC and that families should implement at home. ECDC has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

If children have special considerations, health concerns or recognizable patterns of symptoms for teething, nosebleeds, predisposition to retch, above-average body temperature, etc. parents should notify teachers and provide documentation from their physician.

**Cleaning and Sanitization** One of the most important steps in reducing the spread of infectious diseases among children and center staff is cleaning and sanitizing surfaces that could possibly pose a risk to children or staff. We now use the quaternary solution for cleaning tables and the End-Bac aerosol spray when blood or body fluids are present. Bleach is used in water tables for water play at a 3 parts per million and to wash dishes in the kitchen.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

Parents are urged to give as many doses of medication at home as possible. If it is necessary for medication to be given at ECDC, we will follow the procedure for medication administration as required by the Indiana Licensing Regulations. Prescription medications will be given only with *written* parent consent and *written* approval from the child's physician, which is the prescription label. Please complete the MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM located at the front desk/office if your child needs a medication while in our care. It is our goal to administer medication at the time requested by the family. If medication needs to be administered more than 30 minutes before or after the requested time, the parent will be notified by administration staff to confirm that the medicine should be given. Medications must be in their original container and may be given only to the child for whom they are prescribed and in the prescribed dose. Outdated/expired medications will not be given. **Over-the counter** medications require *written* parent consent and *written* approval from the child's health care provider with the exception of diaper rash products, moisturizing lotion, A&D ointment, insect repellents, and sunscreens that only require written parent consent. Written physician approval for **over the counter medications** must include the following: reason for the medication, specific name of the medication, child's name, dosage amount, frequency/interval to be given, the doctor's name with signature and date the order was written. If a physician gives you sample medication for your child, we cannot administer it without the written authorization from your health care provider that includes the child's name, the dosage amount and the times it is to be administered. Any staff who administers medication has a) specified training and b) a written performance evaluation updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the six right practices of medication administration: 1) verifying that the **right** child receives the 2) **right** medication 3) the **right** dose 4) at the **right** time and 5) by the **right** method and 6) with the **right** documentation of each time the medication is given. Medication not requiring refrigeration shall be kept locked in a cabinet or container that is in a well-lit area, and shall not be stored in the kitchen or in a bathroom. Medication labeled "refrigerated" shall be stored in tightly lidded, washable containers marked "medication" in a refrigerator.

## **ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING**

Accidents or incidents resulting in injury to a child shall be reported on the day of the incident, in writing, to the parent or person authorized to pick up the child. The written report shall be prepared by the staff member who observed the incident or accident, and will include a general description of the incident and of the action taken, if any, including first aid, by the ECDC staff. The family receives a copy of the accident or incident report. A copy of the report will be kept in the child's file.

## **DIAPERS, PULL-UPS AND DIAPERING**

Children enrolled in the ECDC-ND 2's, 2/3's, 3's and 3/4's groups may still be wearing diapers or pull-ups. Due to licensing and accreditation, ECDC staff can only use commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medically documented reason that does not permit the use of disposable diapers or pull-ups. Parents provide diapers in unopened, sealed packages for their child's use at ECDC. Children wearing diapers or pull-ups are changed every two hours or when wet or dirty. More information is provided to families with children in the 2's, 2/3's, 3's and 3/4's regarding diapering, pull-ups and the ECDC diapering procedures. Please see Addendum 4 - pages 44 - 47 for a helpful article on toilet training.

## **CARPOOLS AND BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

At the beginning of each school year, ECDC distributes a Directory of Children enrolled in the ECDC program. This directory should be helpful in organizing carpools, play dates and birthday parties. When planning a birthday party, please do not hang invitations on children's lockers or distribute

invitations at school. In most cases birthday parties do not include every child in the class. Mailing invitations will alleviate hurt feelings at school.

### **REQUIRED ENROLLMENT FORMS & INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD**

To meet licensing requirements and accreditation standards, it is necessary that the following forms be completed by the first day of school: Registration Form, Physical Examination (new to ECDC children and K children), Medical Release, Permission for Field Trips, Emergency Contact Information, General Information Form, Consent to Report Form, Permission for Photography, Permission for the application of sunscreen and insect repellent and a copy of the Birth Certificate. Children must be current for all routine screening and immunizations according to the schedule recommended by the State of Indiana, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). If a child is currently under immunized due to medical reasons or family beliefs, she/he will be excluded promptly, if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program. Parents receive all required enrollment forms upon enrollment. The completed enrollment forms are due on August 1st for the school year program and on May 15<sup>th</sup> for the summer program. Enrollment forms are required by the child's first day of school. The physical form with immunizations is required no later than 30 days after the child's first day in the program; this is an Indiana licensing requirement. *Note: Termination of enrollment may result if failure to submit the required forms or information continues beyond the third request.*

### **ITEMS TO BRING ON THE FIRST DAY**

Please send the following items in a grocery-size bag on the first day of school. PRINT YOUR CHILD'S NAME clearly on each article and on the sack.

- 1 Close-up snapshot of your child to be put on his/her locker.
- 1 Adult-size old shirt to serve as paint smock. If shirt has long sleeves, please cut them to allow for movement during painting and other messy art activities.
- 1 Complete change of clothing, including underwear, socks, shirt and pants. Most children are more comfortable changing into their own clothing when paint, mud, water or bathroom accidents occur. If your child occasionally experiences bathroom accidents, more than one pair of underwear, socks, and pants should be included. Please keep your child's extra clothing seasonal.
- 1 Small crib size pillow and blanket for children enrolled in the afternoon program. All children (except 6-9 year olds during the summer) enrolled in the afternoon have a short rest time before an active afternoon.

Art Supplies: 1 Pkg. of 8 color watercolor markers (Crayola, or Draws-A-Lot)  
1 8 oz. bottle of School Glue (not all purpose glue)  
1 Box of 8 color Jumbo Crayons; 5-9 year olds may bring crayons of their choice  
Children should bring art supplies at the beginning of each summer and school year.

**Lovies** What is a lovie? It might be a blanket, a stuffed animal or something else a child likes to have close by. These lovies help children to feel comfortable during the time they spend apart from their families, and can be a healthy and typical part of growing up. We encourage children to bring their lovies to school. We use the Lovie Basket to help keep track of the lovies, because children often forget it until they need it. When a child drops his/her lovie on the floor and forgets it while playing, we ask that child to put it away in this basket until they want it again. Please remember to check the lovie basket before you leave each day so your child can take his/her lovie home. If you have any questions, please speak with your child's teachers.

**Family Photos can** be very supportive to children while they are at ECDC. All ECDC classrooms have an area where family photos can be displayed in reach so children can easily access as needed or wanted throughout the day.

During the cold weather and to protect against cold injury, all children should be dressed daily in or bring waterproof boots, snow pants, hat, coat for outside winter/cold play and waterproof mittens. An extra pair of waterproof mittens in the locker is helpful. One way to keep track of mittens during the winter is to sew them to a long strand of elastic and put them through the sleeves of the winter coat or to use clips. During the summer, all children enrolled should have a bathing suit and towel in their locker for popular “sprinkler days” and swimming lessons and free swims.

### **SUNSCREEN/SUNBLOCK AND INSECT REPELLANT**

To protect the children from sun-injury, ECDC staff applies sunscreen/sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher with written parental permission to do such. Parents provide the sunscreen/sunblock. Please label the sunscreen/sunblock container with your child’s name. Due to safety concerns, all sunscreen/sunblock and insect repellent will be stored out of the reach of children.

When recommended by public health authorities due to high risk of insect borne diseases, ECDC applies insect repellent for outside activities and field trips (e.g., Bendix Woods, Love Creek, Spicer Lake, Potato Creek, Clay Park, etc.) to protect the children from insect-borne diseases. Parents complete a permission form to authorize ECDC to apply insect repellent. Only insect repellent containing deet is used, ECDC supplies the insect repellent, it is applied only once per day and only with parent permission for such.

### **CELEBRATIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS AT ECDC**

The ECDC program embraces and celebrates the seasons, families and special events in life (e.g., birthdays, grandparents and extended family members, friendships, the arrival of a new baby in a family). Each year, October and November are such exciting months for children and families, including the changes in the weather, piles of leaves to jump in, apples and pumpkins galore and of course Halloween and Thanksgiving. During the months of October/November, ECDC will focus on the beautiful changing seasons and harvest (pumpkins, gourds, apples). Even though we will not be celebrating Halloween with parties at ECDC, we encourage children to share their Halloween plans and to bring their costumes and/or any photos of their Halloween activities to show and share.

ECDC will celebrate Friends and Friendship around Valentine’s Day because friends are such an important part of our program and our lives. Families will be asked to provide paper products, special snacks, and juice for the class friendship parties. Individual activity rooms will also have celebrations associated with their studies/projects and parent letters and signs will notify you as they occur (e.g. “Muffins for Moms”, “Donuts for Dads”, “Garden Party”, “Potlatch”, Family Picnics, Special Readers, Tea Parties, and “Art Exhibit for Families”). Individual activity rooms may focus on “Families” during the month of December and share the many family traditions of the children in the group. Information about these events will be shared in November/December parent letters.

ECDC is a secular program, committed to serving children of many different religious and ethnic backgrounds (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh) respectfully. ECDC strives to be sensitive and respectful to all ethnic/religious groups. While teachers won’t teach the religious aspect of a holiday, we will discuss religious holidays, in developmentally appropriate ways, when children share their families’ holidays and celebrations. The ECDC staff has a limited background regarding many of the religious holidays our families celebrate. We will always suggest that children ask their families for the more in-depth explanation about the religious aspects of holidays.

For example, we will explain that some people celebrate Christmas and that it is a time for giving and sharing and Easter is a celebration of new life. We do recognize that holidays have a profound meaning as they bring together experiences that touch the core of many people's lives, including family, friends, values, and religion. These holidays will still be discussed as the children bring them up, however, the curriculum will not be devoted to one or more religious holiday topics (Christmas, Hanukkah, Passover, Easter, Ramadan, Kwanzaa, etc.). Instead, the children will continue to focus on the curricular projects and studies already in progress.

### **PARENT AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION**

The ECDC program views itself as an extension of each child's family. We feel it is vital to communicate regularly with parents and involve parents/families in our school and summer program. We communicate and involve families in the program through monthly newsletters, four parents (two from each site) serve as parent representatives on the ECDC Board of Directors, Parent Teacher Conferences two times per year, Parent Helper Days, Parent Meetings, Family Picnic Lunches and an Open Door Policy. Parents are also invited to help in the activity rooms as special guest readers, parent helpers on field trips, and to help wash toys. All ECDC activity rooms have dry-erase boards posted daily, which list the day's events. Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to spend time in their child's room. **Please remember** ~ Should your child or your family be experiencing changes at home, please let the teachers know so we can be sensitive and more fully meet the needs of your child and family.

**ECDC Parent Representatives are a direct link for parents to the ECDC board.** Two Parent Representatives from each ECDC program are elected by the families in the fall each year at the Curriculum Night Parent Meeting to serve on the ECDC governance Board of Directors. Parent Representatives are available to answer questions, hear new ideas and concerns, or address unresolved issues families might have with ECDC. The Parent Representatives are voting members of the 15 member ECDC Board of Directors and participate on several board committees, including but not limited to the Parent Committee.

**Parent Helper Days** ECDC remains open during the Saint Mary's and Notre Dame vacation weeks in October and March. During these weeks, the activity rooms are in need of parent helpers to replace the college students on break. We ask parents (mom or dad or both, or grandma or grandpa) to help in their child's activity room, either one morning or one afternoon at least once per year. This is a great time to be involved with your child at school, her/his friends, and the various developmental activities. Parents who have a special hobby, interest or talent are encouraged to share their talent or interest with their child's class during their visit. Casual clothing is recommended, and we request that siblings do not accompany parents on these days.

**Family Evaluations of the ECDC Programs and Special Events** We value your opinions and thoughts about the ECDC program and ask that you provide feedback several times per year. Near the end of the school year and summer programs, families are asked to complete electronic evaluation surveys regarding the ECDC programs. Families are asked to provide confidential comments and feedback regarding what works well within the ECDC programs and to also share ideas for future program improvements. These evaluations are critically important to ECDC's strategic planning and overall quality. The summary results of the family surveys are shared with ECDC families, teachers and board of directors. Families are also asked to provide feedback about special events, such as fall semester Curriculum Night. This feedback is collected through an electronic survey process that is distributed through an email link to all families attending. Thank you for helping us improve the ECDC program by sharing your ideas and comments.

## COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES

Teachers are available for on-going communication during arrival and departure times, and by telephone. Parents are welcome at any time and at all times to observe in our program. Unscheduled visits by a custodial parent or guardian shall be permitted at any time. As required by Indiana Rules and Regulations for licensed child care programs, parents are notified of all significant occurrences or problems that affect their child. This includes, but is not limited to, notices regarding field trips, changes in the daily routine, presence of substitute teachers in the activity rooms, accidents, injuries, first aid, disciplinary action taken and possible exposure to communicable diseases (e.g. chicken pox, strep throat). ECDC will forward to families information provided by the licensing division regarding inclusion, rules and other child care/early childhood information.

**Letters to Families** Monthly letters written by teachers and program staff are a primary form of communication about what is going on in the classroom with curriculum and special activities. Monthly letters also include suggestions regarding supporting children's learning at home. Letters to families are distributed by email attachment unless a family has arranged to receive hard copies. Also distributed to families is a monthly newsletter entitled "Parent Pages" that includes information regarding child development, health and nutrition, suggestions to promote learning at home and other helpful tips for families. The monthly "Parent Pages" are posted on the ECDC website: [www.nd.edu/~eccdncd/parentsinfo.html](http://www.nd.edu/~eccdncd/parentsinfo.html)

**Website** The ECDC website [www.nd.edu/~eccdncd](http://www.nd.edu/~eccdncd) contains registration materials, enrollment forms, monthly newsletters, menus, handbooks, links to community activities and events and links to relevant websites for families and young children.

## ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

ECDC provides families with information regarding community events that are designed for families with young children. This includes activities with the library, area schools, park districts, community organizations and agencies. ECDC teachers often attend these activities sharing in the enrichment opportunity. ECDC is actively involved in the early childhood community and is a sponsor of the regional Early Childhood Conference at IUSB each spring, where more than 700 early childhood professionals come to participate in professional development.

**CREATIVE MOVEMENT AND DANCE CLASSES** For the past few decades ECDC has offered an enrichment program of creative movement/dance classes for preschool and kindergarten age children. The classes are structured once a week for thirty minutes for three year olds and forty-five minutes for four year olds and older, at a cost substantially less than is available in the wider community. Our dance instructors are typically professional dance instructors from the community. Children register for dance classes each semester.

**GYMNASTS IN MOTION** During the school year, we offer a thirty-minute gymnasts program each week. This program is available for all children ages 2 and older and alternates on two days per week each semester, allowing all children regardless of their schedule to take part in Gymnastics for at least one semester. The Gymnastics Bus comes to our site and features gymnastics, motor development, coordination, and language building skills along with other development aspects. Registration, with weekly Gymnastics fee information, occurs at the beginning of each semester. As space permits, children may add anytime during the semester.

## **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, ACCESS AND REFERRALS TO SPECIAL SERVICES**

**Speech, Language and Hearing Screenings** During the course of each school year during fall semester, ECDC provides Speech, Language and Hearing Screenings. This service is provided at a nominal charge by professional specialists with the Hearing and Speech Center of St. Joseph County and is available during school hours to children whose parents have indicated a desire for such. Parents are notified of these screenings by parent permission letters. A child will not be screened without written permission from the parent.

**Special Services to Support Development and Learning** ECDC works in partnership with First Steps and the South Bend Community School Corporation (SBCSC) to meet the needs of children with special learning or development needs. Preschool age children who reside in the SBCSC, if deemed appropriate during the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Conference, can receive therapies at ECDC through SBCSC, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Children who live in Mishawaka or Penn Harris Madison (PHM) School Corporation receive therapies at their specific school with a program entitled Joint Services. Children who are younger than age three who are eligible for special services may receive such services through First Steps at ECDC. If a child's development suggests that an evaluation would be helpful to determine if special services would be beneficial, ECDC teachers and/or program administrator meet with the individual child's family to discuss concerns. Then, if the family agrees to an evaluation, a referral for such will be made to First Steps, SBCSC, or Joint Services.

**Family Resource Specialist** ECDC employs a part time licensed clinical social worker/Family Resource Specialist (FRS) to assist teachers and families as needed. If you would like to speak or meet with the social worker, please contact the ECDC Program Director.

**"Conversations about Every Day Life with Children"** ECDC sponsors monthly small group discussions for families facilitated by the Family Resource Specialist entitled "Conversations about Every Day Life with Children" at each ECDC program. The topics include "Adjusting to School and Avoiding Difficult Drop-offs"; "Ending the Morning Mad Dash & Reclaiming Peaceful Evenings at Home"; "Preparing for Parent Teacher Conferences: Making the Most of the Opportunity to Talk about your Child's Learning"; "Mealtime Struggles and Healthy Eating Habits"; "Reducing Sibling Rivalry and Aggression"; "Helping Children who are Extraordinarily Active: Strategies for Helping Children who Struggle to Focus and Stay on Task"; "Creative Force: Understanding Birth Order and How Children Create their Personalities"; and "Facts and Myths of Self Esteem". Information about these small group conversations is provided to families monthly throughout the school year.

**Family Life Series** ECDC sponsors monthly presentations addressing the multitude of topics related to families and young children. Family Life Series topics include the importance of routines, encouragement, sibling rivalry, and family meetings. Information about these presentations is distributed to families throughout the school year.

**Raising Responsible Children Seminars** Positive Discipline Seminars are held each semester for families interested in understanding more clearly the purposes of their child's behaviors, the encouragement process, effective communication, logical consequences and the benefits of the family meetings. Registration for these classes is distributed to all families when they occur.

**Individual and Class Pictures** Each fall a photographer visits our program to take both group and individual pictures if parents request such. These pictures are usually taken during September or early October. The children especially enjoy having the class group picture that includes their friends and teachers.

**Community Resources** The program staff maintains a list of community resources as an ongoing effort to provide families with information to better meet their needs and enhance the services provided by the ECDC program.

**Health (Oral Health, Nutrition, Health)**

Pediatrician- Dr. John Rice, MD (ECDC consulting physician)	574-234-9555
Dentist-Dr. Michael Johns, R DDS (ECDC consulting dentist)	574-288-4400
Children’s Dispensary (Resource Center for children with special needs)	574-234-1169
Ansari Regional Center for Autism	574-289-4831
Logan Center (Resource for people with disabilities)	574-289-4831
IN Source (Indiana resource center for families with special needs)	574-234-7101
Hearing and Speech Center at United Health Services	574-234-3136

**Mental Health (Parenting Programs)**

Sharon Bain, LCSW – ECDC Family Resource Specialist	574-631-3344
Dr. John Petersen, Psy.D. (Clinical psychologist)	574-280-8199
SOPHIA Group (Parent workshops, counseling services)	574-280-8199
Oaklawn (Residential and out-patient mental health services)	574-533-1234
Samaritan Counseling Center (family and individual counseling)	574-277-0274

**Basic Needs (Child Welfare, Early Intervention-Special-Education Screening & Assessment, Child Care Subsidy)**

Child Protective Services	574-236-5322
Community Coordinated Child Care (Child care referrals, food program)	574-289-7815
Housing Authority of the City of South Bend (Public housing)	574-235-9346
KV Voucher Office (Child care voucher)	574-233-7985
First Steps of North East Indiana	574-293-2813
(Serving Children with special needs ages 0-3)	1-866-725-2398
Joint Services (Penn-Harris Madison & Mishawaka Public Schools)	574- 259-7941
Hearing and Speech Center at United Health Services	574-234-3136
SNAP-South Bend Community Schools	574-283-8130
(Serving children with special needs ages 3 & older)	

**PHOTOGRAPHY at ECDC BY TEACHERS,  
COLLEGE STUDENTS AND VISITORS**

On occasion, SMC and/or ND students request permission to photograph children involved in the ECDC program for various academic and/or photography projects. Occasionally, local newspapers (e.g., South Bend Tribune, Notre Dame/Saint Mary’s Observer, Elkhart Truth) and/or television stations (e.g., WNDU, WSBT, WSJV) seek permission to photograph children involved in the ECDC program in promotion of early childhood community initiatives and/or the ECDC program. ECDC teachers also photograph children involved in various ECDC program activities to share with parents and to document learning. The General Information Form that each family completes annually requests permission for the child(ren) to be photographed at ECDC. If a family does not provide permission their child will not be photographed for college student projects or for local newspaper and/or television station use. Teachers will request to take photographs of children for their individual portfolios to document activities, learning growth, and development.

**ANIMAL AND PET POLICY**

All interactions between children and animals must be respectful and staff must instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. The staff make sure that classroom pets and visiting animals appear to be in good health. These animals have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. The teaching staff supervise all children and know who is allergic

to which type of animals and is not exposed to the animals. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk of salmonella infection.

### **ECDC TUITION POLICY**

Tuition is billed monthly. A student activity fee is assessed each semester in August/September, in January and in June for the summer program. Parents may elect to pay their tuition once per month on the first day of the month or may elect to pay their tuition two times per month - the first half on the 1st day of the month and the second half on the 15th day of the month. Tuition may be paid on a weekly or every two-week basis; however, it must be paid in advance. Please call the ECDC office should you have tuition questions.

Parents may, from time to time, have difficulty making monthly tuition payments due to unforeseen financial circumstances. If a parent(s) finds that he/she is unable to remit monthly tuition payments when due, the parent(s) must promptly notify ECDC's Accountant so that an agreement for the payment of past due tuition can be arranged. Failure to so notify ECDC's Accountant or to comply with the payment agreement within one month of the date a tuition payment was due will jeopardize a child's continued enrollment at ECDC.

ECDC (i.e., the Executive Director and/or the Board of Directors) shall refuse enrollment applications for subsequent enrollment periods (i.e., School Year, Extended School Year and Summer Programs, etc.) if the parent(s) refuses to enter into, or fails to comply with, an agreement to resolve past due tuition obligations. Please note: ECDC is an Indiana Nonprofit Corporation completely separate from the University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College. ECDC is dependent upon tuition to meet its financial obligations (e.g., payroll, food costs, etc.).

### **ECDC SCHOLARSHIPS**

The University of Notre Dame provides tuition remission scholarships to graduate and undergraduate student families with qualifying financial need who are enrolled in the ECDC-SMC program. Families with documented financial need, not affiliated in one of the three categories listed above, may apply for limited scholarship assistance through the ECDC Board of Directors. If you are interested in further information regarding scholarships or need an application for one of the scholarships described above, please contact Terri Kosik, Executive Director, at 631-3344 or [tkosik@saintmarys.edu](mailto:tkosik@saintmarys.edu).

### **ECDC-ND SCHOLARSHIPS**

ECDC-ND operates with a tuition scholarship structure based upon gross family income. The registration brochure contains the current tuition scholarship program for ND and SMC staff, students, administration and faculty. The ND and SMC Alumni(ae) and Holy Cross Order employees are not eligible for the ECDC-ND tuition scholarship program. Documentation of income is required to participate in the ECDC-ND scholarship program.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information regarding children or families of the Early Childhood Development Center is regarded as confidential and the property of ECDC and the family involved, including individual child assessment information. Requests for release of information to other agencies will be honored only if made in writing and with the permission from the parent.

### **REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

ECDC is required by law to report any case of suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. All ECDC staff receive annual training regarding the signs of child abuse and neglect.

### **SMOKING & OTHER PROHIBITIONS**

Smoking is not allowed at ECDC. The ECDC program buildings and grounds are posted as smoke-free. Weapons, illegal drugs and alcohol are prohibited from the ECDC building and grounds.

### **FIRE DRILLS , STORM DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

ECDC practices monthly fire drills and monthly storm drills. We follow routine evacuation procedures as instructed by the University and College.

### **CLOSURE DUE TO EMERGENCY**

ECDC strives to remain open during all regularly scheduled times (despite weather or facility emergencies). Typically, ECDC will only close for inclement weather when ND and/or SMC also closes for weather. In the event of an emergency closing, you will be notified by an email message to families, announcements on WNDU radio and television, signs on ECDC's front door (when possible) and the outgoing message on ECDC's primary voicemail systems (ECDC-SMC: 284-4693; ECDC-ND: 631-3344). When the Center is closed due to an emergency, tuition is not refunded or credited because of ongoing expenses. We appreciate parents' understanding and patience when emergencies occur.

### **DONATIONS AND FUND RAISERS**

ECDC eagerly accepts and appreciates greatly any and all donations to the program (monetary or educational equipment/supplies). Please remember ECDC when you clean out closets. ECDC is always in particular need of quality children's books and children's clothing including children's underwear, bathing suits, snow pants, hats, mittens, boots, and shoes. The extra clothing allows us to have back up for children who may not have extra clothes in their locker or who forget their outside clothing. All donations to ECDC are tax deductible.

**Holiday Wish Lists** During the December holiday season, children and parents often give their teachers a holiday gift. We would like to suggest an alternative. Instead of a gift for your child's teacher, we would like to suggest a gift for your child's activity room in the form of an educational item (e.g. book, puzzle, game, CD, etc.). During November, a Wish List of items that the teachers would like to add to the activity room will be distributed to parents. All donations are tax deductible. We do not want any family to feel an obligation, but do want to suggest this alternative as a way we can further increase and enrich the educational environment your child enjoys.

**Book Fair** During November, ECDC sponsors a children's book fair. A wide variety of quality children's books, including Blue Ribbon and Caldecott Award winning selections, are available for parents to purchase as holiday gifts. Proceeds from the Book Fair are used to enhance each activity room's selection of educational materials. Information regarding the book fair will be distributed during the fall.

**Annual Appeal** ECDC conducts an Annual Appeal each December to assist with capital improvements to the program that couldn't be accomplished without fund development. A recent example of our Annual Appeal projects include the purchasing of a new 28 passenger Bluebird School Bus with child safety seats that is used for field trips in the community during both the school year with children in the 4's, 4/5's and kindergarten groups as well as during the summer day camp program for children in the 4's through school age groups (7/8/9's). Other Annual Appeals have addressed playground renovations for ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND. Donations of all sizes are of great assistance to the ECDC programs as we continually make improvements and renovations to enhance the children's early childhood experiences.

**Community Shopping Days at Ten Thousand Villages** During the first week of December, ECDC & Third World Artisans benefit from community shopping days at Ten Thousand Villages. 20% of all purchases made with an ECDC coupon during the first week of December will support the ECDC's program – specifically educational materials. Coupons will be distributed in November. The store is located at Centennial Place 214 W. Cleveland Road between Grape and Main, between Victorian Pantry and Chico's. Store Hours: Mon-Sat 10 a.m.- 8 p.m. during ECDC's Community Shopping Week in Dec.

**Spring Flowers** During early spring, families have the opportunity to purchase flower baskets, flower bulbs and seeds through "Art in Nature." Flowers arrive in plenty of time for Mother's Day! A flower brochure and order form will be distributed to families in late February or early March. ECDC receives 40% of the "Art in Nature" flower sales. Thank you for your support!

**Football Parking to Raise Funds for ECDC** An annual fall ECDC fundraiser is ND Football Parking in the ECDC-ND parking lot. Our 24 season parking patrons appreciate the reserved, close to the stadium parking our lot provides. The ECDC families help by volunteering to serve as hosts/hostesses in the parking lot each game day. This fundraiser provides the ECDC programs with approximately \$12,000 per year, which helps fund educational materials. Please watch for game day parking lot host information distributed in August of each year.

#### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

When absenteeism occurs, parents are charged for the day(s) due to the slot being reserved for their child. If a child is absent because of illness, documented by a physician, for a period of more than ten scheduled consecutive school days for which the child is enrolled, the parent may request that the obligation to pay for subsequent consecutive days of absence be suspended. This suspension period shall not exceed a maximum of 15 school days in any one school year. This suspension period shall terminate upon the child's return to school, and shall not recommence unless the child is again absent for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days because of documented illness.

#### **WITHDRAWING OR REDUCING A CHILD'S ENROLLMENT SCHEDULE**

Parents withdrawing or reducing a child's enrollment schedule after August 1st (June 1st for Kindergarten) are responsible and liable for the payment of the full tuition of their original enrollment schedule through the month of December of that respective school year or until another child is enrolled to fill the vacated or reduced enrollment schedule. After January 1 of that respective school year, two weeks notice is required when withdrawing or reducing a child's schedule. When two weeks notification is not received, two weeks tuition will be assessed.

#### **DISENROLLMENT (TERMINATION) OF A CHILD FROM ECDC**

As a child development program, we value ongoing communication and building strong relationships with families. Parents are encouraged to initiate conversations with staff (teachers and/or administration) about their child's experiences and to consult with staff about their child's needs. Also, staff will communicate with families if the program is experiencing challenges meeting their child's need. Some of the behaviors that might create concern about a child include: 1) the child repeatedly displays hurtful and/or unsafe behavior; 2) the child's behavior is consistently disruptive; 3) the child's needs exceed the program's resources. If the program staff determine that the behavior is not developmentally appropriate for the child and/or that the child often behaves in such a manner, the following steps will be thoughtfully and considerately followed:

1. Staff observes the child and observations are documented; observation focus includes the environment, curriculum, schedule, and teaching strategies.

2. Center staff will meet with the family to discuss and document observations and concerns. The observations are discussed with the family and further information is gathered.
3. A plan is written with family input to support the child and the program, including the strategies that will be implemented in the program.
4. The plan is implemented.
5. The plan is reviewed after a determined amount of time.
  - a. If the plan is working, review and revise periodically as needed.
  - b. If plan is not working, seek additional support or make a referral to other professionals with permission from the family.
6. If following an evaluation by the team of ECDC teachers, administrators and Family Resource Specialist, a more suitable environment is determined necessary; a transition plan will be developed and implemented. ECDC staff will communicate with the family to assist the family in finding a more suitable program or setting, if possible.

Note: It is a very rare and unusual situation that would cause the program to choose to transition a child out of the ECDC program. This would not be done unless the program believes and documents that the needs of the child exceeds the ability of the program to meet the child's needs.

#### **ADDITIONAL REASONS FOR TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

The following are reasons for termination of services to a family.

- Failure to submit required forms and/or information including the required physical with immunizations after three reminders.
- Chronic lateness, which is defined as arriving after 5:30 p.m., more than four times during a semester.
- Outstanding tuition of 4 weeks or more without the establishment of and adherence to a payment plan with ECDC.

#### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

A cornerstone of our philosophy is building relationships among families and teachers. There are times however when differing opinions or questions may arise. If this occurs families need to meet with the staff to discuss the issue and try to resolve difficulties together. If there is no resolution, parents and/or teachers should contact the Executive Director for additional assistance. If the Executive Director is unable to resolve the issue, then families may forward the grievance to the ECDC Board of Directors. The Parent Representatives who are elected to the ECDC Board of Directors serve as a liaison for families to the ECDC Board of Directors.

#### **MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES**

Although ECDC has never lost a child in all its years of operation, the following procedures will be followed in the unlikely circumstance that a child is discovered to be missing. The Program Director and/or Executive Director will be notified immediately upon the discovery that the child is missing.

A staff person from each classroom, appointed by the Program Director or Executive Director will be assigned to search their classroom and other rooms throughout the building as an appointed second group of staff members cover the ECDC grounds. If the child is still missing after these immediate searches, the University Police or College Security and the child's parents will be contacted. While waiting for the police/security, the Program Director or Executive Director will assign staff members to widen the search beyond the immediate ECDC building and grounds. The ECDC staff will spread out and will begin to systematically search the surrounding sidewalks/streets in the following manner.

**ECDC-SMC:** Staff members will spread out in 4 directions as follows – to the west towards Angela Athletic Facility and Library, to the south towards the science building and the new SU class building, to the north towards Opus Dorm and volleyball court and to the east towards the parking lot and the Hilton Garden Hotel.

**ECDC-ND:** Staff members will spread out in 4 directions as follows – to the north across Bulla to O’Hara Grace Residences, to the south on Leahy and another person to the south on Palmer Street (directly east of the ECDC-ND building), to the east down Bulla towards Twyckenham and to the west down Bulla towards campus.

#### **SERVICE FEES**

Additional charges ECDC will assess are as follows:

- Late pick-up charge—\$15 per each fifteen minutes
- A check returned for insufficient funds—\$20

**ECDC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.** The program offers a non-sexist, non-racist, multi-cultural, anti-bias curriculum and does not discriminate against staff, parents, or children on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, national origin, or physical or mental disabilities.

We hope this handbook provides you with helpful information. Please feel free to contact Terri Kosik, Executive Director (e-mail: [tkosik@saintmarys.edu](mailto:tkosik@saintmarys.edu) phone: 631-3344) should you have any questions or concerns not addressed in this handbook. We look forward to growing in a positive relationship with you and your child, and hope to provide a stimulating and enjoyable School Year/Summer Day Camp Program experience.

#### **ECDC Contact Information**

**ECDC Website:** [www.nd.edu/~ecdncd](http://www.nd.edu/~ecdncd)

#### **Primary ECDC Telephone Numbers**

ECDC-SMC – Phone: 574-284-4693 Fax: 574-284-5344

ECDC-ND – Phone: 574-631-3344 Fax: 574-631-7808

#### **ECDC Administrative Staff**

**ECDC Executive Director:** Terri Kosik, 574-631-3344 / [tkosik@saintmarys.edu](mailto:tkosik@saintmarys.edu)

#### **ECDC-SMC**

Program Director: Kari Alford – 574-284-4693 / [kalford@saintmarys.edu](mailto:kalford@saintmarys.edu)

#### **ECDC-ND**

Program Director: Thayer Kramer, 574-631-3344 / [thayerkramerecdc@yahoo.com](mailto:thayerkramerecdc@yahoo.com)

Assistant Program Director: Jennifer Wray, 574-631-3344 / [jenniferwrayecdc@yahoo.com](mailto:jenniferwrayecdc@yahoo.com)

## **ECDC Biting Procedures**

**September 2008**

**Program Philosophy** Biting is a natural, developmental behavior in which many young children engage, especially during their second and third years of life. We recognize that biting is a distressing activity for parents, staff, and the child who has been bitten. Because biting is so distressing, everyone involved would like to eliminate it quickly. Unfortunately, a “quick fix” is not usually available. However, biting does require immediate action by staff to comfort the child, who has been bitten, express disapproval to the biter, and to attempt to find the cause of the biting. Sometimes the child who has bitten is unable to express the reason for the bite. The staff member supporting the biting situation should not persist with questioning of the child, if she/he is unable to articulate the reason for biting.

Children bite for a variety of reasons (e.g., conflict strategy, oral need/teething, communication attempt) so it's important for adults to get to the cause of the behavior. Most of the reasons for biting are not related to behavior problems nor does biting make the biter a “bad child”. Since biting is developmentally related, it is more common for toddlers to bite than for older preschool age children.

### **How Staff Respond**

Staff members respond to biting as they would to other aggressive behavior – by:

- > calmly, yet firmly telling the biter that biting hurts our friends and is not allowed
- > comforting the victim immediately and providing first aid if needed; the biter is involved in comforting the victim by assisting in getting ice for the victim
- > washing the bite with soap and water
- > applying ice to reduce swelling
- > if the skin is broken, universal precautions are followed
- > writing an injury report
- > documenting the biting in an atypical incident behavior report

The teaching staff member supporting the biting situation informs an ECDC program director of the bite as soon as possible, after the child who has been bitten has received first aid.

When a particular child bites on a regular basis, the center staff will attempt to find the cause of the biting and take action to prevent future incidents. The staff consider:

- > the precipitating factors such as time of day, area of the classroom, the activity, other children involved, language development, etc.
- > changes in the child's life such as health problems, teething, the absence of a family member, the birth of a sibling, transitions, etc.

The staff then develop strategies to help prevent further biting. These might include:

- > ensuring that there are enough materials, including duplicates, for the children to use
  
- > ensuring that there is enough space in the classroom and that there are quiet times in the schedule

- > shadowing a biter in situations and times when the child has bitten before
- > providing teething toys or opportunities (eating crunchy carrots for snack) for children who are getting new teeth
- > showing disapproval of biting
- > working collaboratively with parents to reduce or eliminate biting

### **How Parents Are Informed**

The parents of a bitten child are notified of the incident the day the incident occurs. An injury report is also completed providing written documentation. Confidentiality prohibits the staff from divulging the name of the biter. The parents of the biter are informed personally and privately the same day. Typically a program director calls the parents to share the information shortly after the biting incident instead of waiting until the end of the day.

### **How Biting is Documented**

All biting incidents are documented by the teacher(s) in an atypical incident report, which is reviewed and approved by the center director. Copies are placed in each child's admin and teacher files. Another copy is kept in the center's incident report file.

## Healthy Snacks

Serving healthy snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and helping to prevent costly and potentially-disabling diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity. Snacks play a major and growing role in children's diets. Between 1977 and 1996, the number of calories that children consumed from snacks increased by 120 calories per day.

Below are ideas for teachers, caregivers, program directors, and parents for serving healthy snacks and beverages to children in the classroom, in after-school programs, at soccer games, and elsewhere. Some ideas may be practical for large groups of children, while other ideas may only work for small groups, depending on the work and cost involved.

### Fruits and Vegetables

**Most of the snacks served to children should be fruits and vegetables**, since most kids do not eat the recommended five to thirteen servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Eating fruits and vegetables lowers the risk of heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure. Fruits and vegetables also contain important nutrients like vitamins A and C and fiber. Serving fresh fruits and vegetables can seem challenging. However, good planning and the growing number of shelf-stable fruits and vegetable products on the market make it easier. Though some think fruits and vegetables are costly snacks, they are actually less costly than many other less-healthy snacks on a per-serving basis. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average cost of a serving of fruit or vegetable (all types – fresh, frozen, and canned) is 25 cents per serving. This is a good deal compared with a 69-cent single-serve bag of potato chips or an 80-cent candy bar. **Try lots of different fruits and vegetables and prepare them in various ways to find out what your kids like best.**

**Healthy Eating Tip: serve snacks with fun plates, napkins, cups, or straws or have a tasting party where children can vote for their favorite healthy snacks.**

**Fruit is naturally sweet, so most kids love it. Fruit can be served whole, sliced, cut in half, cubed, or in wedges. Canned, frozen, and dried fruits often need little preparation.**

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| > Apples (it can be helpful to use an apple corer) | > Apricots         |
| > Bananas  | > Blackberries     |
| > Blueberries                                      | > Cantaloupe       |
| > Cherries   | > Grapefruit       |
| > Grapes (red, green, or purple)                   | > Honeydew Melon   |
| > Kiwis (cut in half & give each child a spoon)    | > Mandarin Oranges |
| > Mangoes  | > Nectarines       |
| > Oranges  | > Peaches          |
| > Pears  | > Pineapple        |
| > Plums  | > Raspberries      |
| > Strawberries                                     | > Tangerines       |
| > Watermelon                                       |                    |

**Applesauce (Unsweetened), Fruit Cups, and Canned Fruit** – These have a long shelf life and are low-cost, easy, and healthy if canned in juice or light syrup. Examples of unsweetened applesauce include Mott's Natural Style and Mott's Healthy Harvest line. Dole and Del Monte offer a variety of single-serve fruit bowls.

**Dried Fruit** - Try raisins, apricots, apples, cranberries, pineapple, papaya, and others with little or no added sugars.

**Frozen Fruit** – Try freezing grapes or buy frozen blueberries, strawberries, peaches, mangoes, and melon.

**Fruit Leathers** – Some brands of fruit snacks are more like candy than fruit, and should be avoided due to their high content of added sugars and lack of fruit. Brands to *avoid* include Fruit Rollups, Farley’s Fruit Snacks, Sunkist Fruit Gems, Starburst Fruit Chews, Mamba Fruit Chews, Jolly Rancher Fruit Chews, Original Fruit Skittles, and Amazin’ Fruit Gummy Bears. Try Natural Value Fruit Leathers and Stretch Island Fruit Leathers, which come in a variety of flavors and don’t have added sugars.

**Fruit Salad** – Get kids to help make a fruit salad. Use a variety of colored fruits to add to the appeal.

**Popsicles** – Most so-called “fruit” popsicles have added sugars and should be reserved for an occasional treat. Look for popsicles made from 100% fruit juice with no added caloric sweeteners, such as Breyers or Dole “No Sugar Added” fruit bars.

**Smoothies** – Blend fruit with juice, yogurt or milk, and ice. Many store-made smoothies have added sugars and are not healthy choices.

**Deliveries** – Deliveries of fresh fruit or platters of cut-up fruit are a convenient option offered by some local grocery stores.

**Vegetables can be served raw with dip or salad dressing:**

- > Broccoli
- > Cauliflower
- > Cucumber
- > Snap Peas
- > String Beans
- > Yellow Summer Squash slices
- > Carrot sticks or Baby Carrots
- > Celery Sticks
- > Peppers (green, red, or yellow)
- > Snow Peas
- > Tomato slices or grape or cherry
- > Zucchini slices

**Dips** – Try low-fat salad dressings, like fat-free Ranch or Thousand Island, store-bought light dips, bean dips, guacamole, hummus (which comes in dozens of flavors), salsa, or peanut butter.

**Salad** – Make a salad or set out veggies like a salad bar and let the kids build their own salads.

**Soy** - Edamame (pronounced “eh-dah-MAH-may”) are fun to eat and easy to serve. (Heat frozen edamame in the microwave for about 2-3 minutes).

**Veggie Pockets** – Cut whole wheat pitas in half and let kids add veggies with dressing or hummus.

**Ants on a Log** – Let kids spread peanut butter on celery (with a plastic knife) and add raisins.

**Healthy Grains (bread, crackers, cereals, etc.)** Though most kids eat plenty of grain products, too many of those grains are cookies, snack cakes, sugary cereals, Rice Krispy treats, and other refined grains that are high in sugars or fat. Try to serve mostly whole grains, which provide more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. In addition, try to keep the added sugars to less than 35% by weight<sup>1,2</sup> and the saturated and trans fat low (*i.e.*, less than 10% of calories, or about one gram or less per serving).

**Note:** Cookies, snack cakes, and chips should be saved for occasional treats, given their poor nutritional quality.

1) If a food manufacturer fails to provide the *added* sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from *total* sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from *added* sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.

2) To calculate % sugars by weight for a food item, look at the Nutrition Facts label and divide the grams of sugars by the gram weight of one serving of the product and multiply this number by 100.

**Whole Wheat English Muffins, Pita, or Tortillas** – Stuff them with veggies or dip them in hummus or bean dip.

**Breakfast Cereal** – Either dry or with low-fat milk, *whole* grain cereals like Cheerios, Grape-Nuts, Raisin Bran, Frosted Mini Wheats, and Wheaties make good snacks. Look for cereals with no more than 35% added sugars by weight<sup>1</sup> (or roughly 8 grams of sugar per serving).

**Crackers** – Whole-grain crackers like Triscuits, which come in different flavors or thin crisps (or similar woven wheat crackers), Kalwi Rye crackers, or whole wheat Matzos can be served alone or with toppings, like low-fat cheese, peanut butter, or low-fat, reduced-sodium luncheon meat.

**Rice Cakes** - Look for rice cakes made from brown (whole grain) rice. They come in many flavors, and can be served with or without toppings.

**Popcorn** – Look for low-fat popcorn in a bag or microwave popcorn. Or you can air pop the popcorn and season it, *e.g.*, by spraying it with vegetable oil spray and adding parmesan cheese, garlic powder, or other non-salt spices.

**Baked Tortilla Chips** - Baked tortilla chips are usually low in fat, and taste great with salsa and/or bean dip. Look for brands with less sodium.

**Granola and Cereal Bars** - Look for whole grain granola bars that are low in fat and sugars, like Barbara's Granola Bars (cinnamon raisin, oats and honey, and carob chip flavors), Nature Valley Crunchy Granola Bars (cinnamon, oats 'n honey, maple brown sugar, and peanut butter flavors), Nature Valley Chewy Trail Mix Bars (fruit and nut flavor), and Quaker Chewy Granola Bar (peanut butter and chocolate chunk flavor).

**Pretzels, Breadsticks, and Flatbreads** - These low-fat items can be offered as snacks now and then. However, most of these snacks are not whole grain and most pretzels are high in salt.

**WARNING:** A small but growing number of kids have severe **peanut and/or tree nut allergies**. Before bringing in peanuts, peanut butter, or other nuts as a snack, check to make sure none of the children has an allergy.

**Low-Fat Dairy Foods** Dairy foods are a great source of calcium, which can help to build strong bones. However, dairy products also are the biggest sources of artery-clogging saturated fat in kids' diets. To protect children's bones and hearts, make sure all dairy foods served are low-fat or fat-free.

**Yogurt** – Look for brands that are low-fat or fat-free, moderate in sugars (no more than about 30 grams of sugars in a 6-oz. cup), and high in calcium (at least 25% of daily value [DV] for calcium in a 6-oz. cup). Examples include Danimals Drinkable Low-Fat Yogurt, Go-Gurt by Yoplait, or cups of low-fat or non-fat yogurt from Stonyfield Farm, Dannon, Horizon, and similar store brands. Low-fat or non-fat yogurt also can be served with fresh or frozen fruit or low-fat granola.

**Low-Fat Cheese** - Cheese provides calcium, but often its saturated fat price tag is too high. Cheese is the number two source of heart-damaging saturated fat in children's diets. Even with low-fat and reduced-fat cheese, be sure to serve with other foods like fruit, vegetables, or whole grain crackers. Choose reduced-fat cheeses like Trader Joe's Armenian Style Braided; Borden or Sargento Light Mozzarella string cheese; Frigo Light Cheese Heads; Kraft Twist-Ums; Polly-O Twisterellas; the Laughing Cow's Light Original Mini Babybel; or Cabot 50% Light Vermont Cheddar.

**Low-Fat Pudding and Frozen Yogurt** - Low-fat or fat-free pudding and frozen yogurt should be served only as occasional treats, because they are high in added sugars.

## Other Snack Ideas

**Nuts** - Since nuts are high in calories, it is best to serve them along with another snack such as fruit. A small handful of nuts is a reasonable serving size. Examples include peanuts, pistachios, almonds, walnuts, cashews, or soy nuts. Look for nuts that are unsalted.

**Trail Mix** - Trail mixes are easy to make and store well in a sealed container. Items to include: low-fat granola, whole grain cereals, peanuts, cashews, almonds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, and dried fruits like raisins, apricots, apples, pineapple, or cranberries.

**Luncheon Meat** – Choose lower-fat, reduced-sodium brands of turkey, ham, and roast beef and serve with whole wheat bread, pita, tortillas (as a wrap sandwich), or crackers. Cut sandwiches in half to make snack-sized portions.

## Healthy Beverages

**Water** – **Water should be the main drink served to kids at snack times.**

Water satisfies thirst and does not have sugar or calories. (Plus, it is low-cost for care-givers!) If kids are used to getting sweetened beverages at snack times, it may take a little time for them to get used to drinking water.

**Seltzer** - Carbonated drinks like seltzer, sparkling water, and club soda are healthy options. They do not contain the sugars, calories, and caffeine of sodas. Serve them alone or try making “healthy sodas” by mixing them with equal amounts of 100% fruit juice.

**Low-Fat Milk** - Milk provides key nutrients, such as calcium and vitamin D. Choose low-fat (2%) milk to avoid the heart-damaging saturated fat found in whole milk. It is best to serve fat-free versions of chocolate, strawberry, or other flavored milks to help balance the extra calories coming from added sugars. Single-serve containers of chocolate or other flavored whole or 2% milk drinks can be too high in calories (400-550 calories) and saturated fat (1/3 of a day’s worth) to be a healthy beverage for kids.

**Soy and Rice Drinks** - For children who prefer not to drink cow’s milk, calcium fortified soy and rice drinks are good choices.

**Fruit Juice** - Try to buy 100% fruit juice and avoid the added sugars of juice drinks, punches, fruit cocktail drinks, or lemonade. Drinks that contain at least 50% juice and no additional caloric sweeteners are also healthful options. To find 100% juice, look at beverage nutrition labels for the percentage of the beverage that is juice. Orange, grapefruit, and pineapple juices are more nutrient-dense and are healthier than apple, grape, and pear juices. Many beverages like Capri Sun, V8-Splash, Tropicana Twisters, Sunny Delight, Kool Aid Jammers, Hi-C, or juice drinks from Very Fine, Welch’s or Snapple are easily mistaken for juice. However, those beverages are more like soda than juice -- they are merely sugar water with a few tablespoons of added juice. Fruit juice can be rich in vitamins, minerals, and cancer-fighting compounds. However, it is high in calories. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages 1-6 years old drink no more than 6 ounces (one serving) of juice a day and children ages 7-18 years old drink no more than 12 ounces (two servings) of juice a day.

## **A note about sugary soft drinks (soda, sweetened tea, lemonade, and juice**

**drinks):** Children who drink more sweetened drinks consume more calories and are more likely to be overweight than kids who drink fewer soft drinks. Soft drinks also displace healthful foods in kids’ diets like milk, which can help prevent osteoporosis, and 100% juice, which can help prevent heart disease and cancer. In addition, soda pop can cause dental cavities and tooth decay.

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For more information, contact Dr. Margo Wootan or Joy Johanson at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 300; Washington, DC 20009.

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## Please Don't Go!

### Separation Anxiety and Children

*It is often hard for a parent or other loved one to leave a young child who cries and clings. The child is experiencing separation anxiety. Children may not understand when loved ones will be back. These situations can be upsetting to the loved ones who have to leave—as well as to the child. Here are some things to remember about separation anxiety.*

**A little separation anxiety is normal.** The child's behavior can be a positive sign. It shows that he recognizes and has formed important attachments with loved ones. (A child who never shows distress at a parent's leaving or never shows a preference for one caregiver over another may be a greater cause for concern.)

**Anxiety tends to follow a predictable pattern.** Fear of less familiar people and places often begins when a child is about 8 months old, although it can begin as early as 5 months of age. Separation anxiety usually peaks between 10 and 18 months and fades by the age of 2 years. This anxiety may become greater at any age or may return in an older child when there is a change in environment or when other changes occur, such as the birth of a new baby in the family.

**You can help make partings easier for your child.**

- Stay with her/him until she becomes familiar with a new place or person.
- Tell her calmly you know she doesn't want you to leave. Reassure her you will be back.
- Tell her Mommy or Daddy will be back after naptime or at dinnertime, even if she can't tell time. Be sure to keep your word.
- Let her have her favorite blanket or other "lovie" for comfort. Some children like one of Mom's sweaters or another familiar possession they can keep until you return.
- Avoid leaving your child when she is hungry, tired, or sick.
- Never tease or scold her for her upset feelings.
- Never sneak away without telling her at all.
- Don't bribe her not to cry.

**Your stress level can contribute to separation anxiety.** Your anxiety about child care arrangements or guilt about leaving may add to your child's distress. Be sure to make arrangements for child care that you feel confident about. And remember, some time spent apart can be good for you both. Sometimes, it may be more than separation anxiety. Consider other possible sources of stress in your child's life or consider an alternative child care arrangement for

- a child who continues to be inconsolable in a new child care or other setting for more than 2 weeks; or
- a child who stops eating or sleeping well, refuses to interact with others, and has an ongoing change in behavior.

For related Web resources, see "Please Don't Go! Separation Anxiety and Children" at <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.



# Understanding Children

## Toilet training



### ■ Ready or not?

Learning to use the toilet is a big event in a young child's life—a sure sign of growing up. Most children are eager about learning how to use the “potty” and are quite proud of their achievement.

Toilet teaching is easiest when children are physically and emotionally ready, which happens between the ages of 2 and 3 years. Girls usually gain physical control over their bowel and bladder muscles before boys do. On the average, most girls are potty-trained by age 2 ½ and most boys around the age of 3. But don't be alarmed if your child doesn't follow this pattern closely; individual children mature physically at different rates.

The secret to success is patience and timing. Emotional readiness also is important. Many bright, normal, and healthy 3-year-olds may not be interested in learning to use the toilet. Learning new

things is a full-time job for most toddlers and toilet learning may not be as important as learning to climb, jump, run, and talk. A toddler who resists toilet training now may be ready in 3 to 6 months, then often learns almost overnight.

### ■ How do you tell if your child is ready?

#### Ask yourself the following questions:

Can my child:

- \_\_\_ follow simple directions?
- \_\_\_ remain dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day?
- \_\_\_ walk to and from the bathroom, pull down pants, pull pants up?

Does my child:

- \_\_\_ remain dry during nap time?
- \_\_\_ seem uncomfortable with soiled or wet diapers?

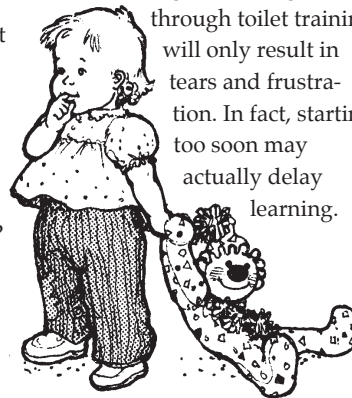
\_\_\_ show interest in the toilet or potty chair?

\_\_\_ Are bowel movements regular and predictable? (Some children move their bowels two to three times a day; others may go 2 to 3 days without a bowel movement.)

\_\_\_ Has your toddler asked to wear grown-up underwear?

If you answered “yes” to most of the questions, you may want to introduce your child to toilet training. If you answered “no” to many questions, wait a while

longer. Rushing a child through toilet training will only result in tears and frustration. In fact, starting too soon may actually delay learning.



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When a child is truly ready, toilet training will seem much easier.

## ■ Ten steps to toilet learning

### Step 1

**Relax!** A calm, easygoing approach to toilet training seems to work best. Remember that learning to use the toilet takes time and that each child is different. If you find that one of your children learns to use the toilet at age 2 and another learns at age 3 1/2, rest assured that you are not alone.

### Step 2

**Show children what they are to do in the bathroom.** Toddlers love to imitate adults or older children. Next time your toddler follows you into the bathroom, talk about what you do when you

use the toilet. If you are comfortable with the idea, it may be a good idea to let the child watch you use the toilet. Ideally, fathers should set an example for sons and mothers should set an example for daughters. Children also can learn about bathroom practices from older brothers, sisters, or relatives.

### Step 3

**Teach your toddler the words your family uses for body parts, urine, and bowel movements.**

Make sure it's a word you feel comfortable with because others are sure to hear it. There is nothing quite like a toddler loudly announcing in the check-out lane of the grocery store that it's time to go "Poo Poo!"

### Step 4

**Help your child recognize when he or she is urinating or having a bowel movement.**

Most children will grunt, squat, turn red in the face, or simply stop playing for a moment. Children need to be aware that they are urinating or having a bowel movement before they can do anything about it. For most children, bowel movements are generally easier to recognize.

### Step 5

**Borrow or purchase a potty chair or a potty attachment for the toilet.** If you purchase a

potty attachment, be sure to get one with a footrest. This will allow your child to sit more comfortably

and make it easier for the child to "push" during a bowel movement. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that parents avoid urine deflectors because they can cut a child who is climbing on or off a potty chair. You may want to let your child practice sitting on the potty fully clothed just to get used to the idea.

### Step 6

**Begin reading potty books to your child.** There are many wonderful books about learning to use the potty at your local library or bookstore. Reading a book together helps children understand the general process and that other children also learn to use the potty. Book suggestions are listed later on in this publication.

### Step 7

**Purchase training pants and easy-to-remove clothing.** Just getting to the potty on time is a major task for most children. You can help make the job easier by letting them wear pants that are easy to pull down, and by being around to assist. Avoid snaps, buttons, zippers, and belts. Some parents prefer to use diapers or disposable training pants at first and then switch to cloth training pants when their child is urinating in the potty several times a day.

### Step 8

**When your child tells you that he or she needs to use the potty, help with clothing and sit the child on the potty for a few minutes.** Stay with your child. It's



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a good idea to keep a few books close by. Reading a book together takes the pressure off for an immediate result.

### Step 9

**After 4 to 5 minutes, help your child off the potty.** Reward with hugs and praise if your child's efforts have been successful. Say that he or she can try again later if the child wasn't successful. Don't be surprised if your child has a bowel movement or urinates right after being taken off the toilet. This is not unusual. Accidents and near misses are generally not an act of stubbornness. It simply takes time to learn this new skill. If accidents seem to be frequent, it may be best to hold off and try toilet training a few months later.

### Step 10

**Wipe your child carefully.** Wipe girls from front to back to prevent infection. Teach your child to *always* wash hands with soap and water after using the potty.

### ■ More ideas

- If possible, plan to devote at least 3 to 4 days to begin toilet training. Maintaining the same routine for 3 to 4 weeks also helps.
- Some parents find it helpful to establish a routine by putting a child on the toilet for 3 to 4 minutes right after he or she gets up in the morning, before naps, after naps, after meals, and before bedtime. Realize however, that your child will not always use the potty.

- If you are anticipating a new baby, moving to a new home, or another major life event, you may want to wait a few months. Toilet training is easiest when both parent and child can give it their full attention.
- Remember that it's OK to keep your child in diapers or disposable training pants for sleeping. Nighttime control generally comes many months after daytime control.
- It may be helpful to use a plastic mattress cover, tablecloth, or shower curtain between the sheet and mattress until children gain nighttime control.
- Treat accidents casually. Avoid punishing, scolding, or shaming. Give your child support by keeping an upbeat, positive attitude.

### ■ Cleaning up

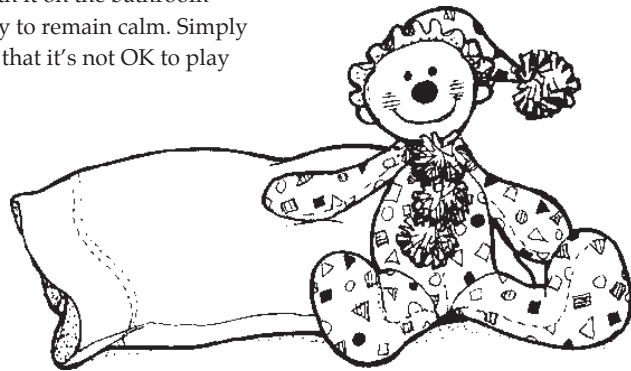
Children often are quite curious about bowel movements. If you find your child trying to remove fecal material from the toilet, or worse yet "finger painting" with it on the bathroom floor, try to remain calm. Simply explain that it's not OK to play

with feces or urine; help your child clean up the mess. Then you both can wash your hands with soap and water. It is generally a good idea to help with clean-up and flushing during much of the toilet training process.

### ■ The big flush

Children often have one of two reactions to flushing. Either they are fascinated by it (and would be willing to do it for hours) or they are quite fearful. Children who enjoy flushing will often delight in emptying the potty chair into the toilet, waving bye-bye, and watching everything "flush away."

Children who are fearful prefer that parents take charge of this process. Before flushing the toilet, make sure the child is off the potty attachment. Many children are not only fearful of the noise and swirling water, but also may think that they will be flushed down too. Reassure your child that only body wastes and toilet paper will be flushed away.



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## ■ A note about bedwetting

Bedwetting is common in children under age 7. Remember that learning to control the bladder generally comes after bowel control. Many children who have mastered the toileting process during the day may not be able to stay dry at night for many months. Most children will achieve nighttime dryness by age 5, but one out of four children may continue to wet the bed for several more years.

Bedwetting appears to be related to the size of the bladder, the amount of liquid consumed before bedtime, and how soundly the child sleeps. Bedwetting also is more likely to occur when a child is ill, excited, or when a routine is upset.

For children who tend to wet the bed, it may help to wake them once during the night to use the toilet. An easy time to do this is just before parents go to bed. Persistent bedwetting, particularly after age 7, may be caused by an infection or allergy and a physician should be consulted.

## ■ Books for children

*No More Diapers*, J.G. Brooks—

A popular book with toddlers. Toilet training is illustrated through two stories. The first story is about Johnny and the second is about Susie. The text is simple and drawings are in black, white, and orange.

*Your New Potty*, Joanna Cole—

This book tells the story of two children, Ben and Steffie, who are learning to use their new potties. Illustrated by colorful photographs. Information for parents is included in the introduction. Uses adult terms for elimination.

*Once Upon a Potty*, Alona

Frankel—Simple text with cartoon-like illustrations.

Available in both a boy's and girl's version as well as a book and toy package, complete with an anatomically correct doll and toy potty.

*All By Myself*, Anna Grossnickle

Hines—One of the few books that talks about nighttime dryness. Josie, like most children, has successfully mastered daytime control, but at night still needs help from her mother to get to the bathroom.

In time she learns how to manage by herself.

*Going to the Potty*, Fred Rogers—

Part of the Mister Rogers Neighborhood First Experience series, this colorful book discusses toilet training. Photographs show children of all sizes, ages, and ethnic groups.

*KoKo Bear's New Potty*, Vicki

Lansky—A "read together" book with cartoon bear illustrations. A useful companion to Vicki Lansky's *Practical Parenting: Toilet Training*.

## ■ Books for parents

*Parents Book of Toilet Teaching*,

Joanna Cole

*Practical Parenting: Toilet Training*,

Vicki Lansky

*Toilet Learning*, Alison Mack

## ■ Read more about it!

For more information about infants and toddlers, ask for these publications at your county extension office.

*Understanding Children: Disciplining your toddler*, Pm-1529c

*Guide to Healthy Kids: What Parents Can Do*, NCR-374

*Understanding Children: Fears*, Pm-1529d

*Ages and Stages*, Pm-1530a-i

File: Family life 8

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### ... and justice for all

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