



Orfalea Family and ASI Children's Center

Parent Handbook

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¹ ASI Website: http://www.asi.calpoly.edu/childrens_center

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Orfalea Family and ASI Children's Center! The staff of the center looks forward to getting to know you and your family. We hope that you will become very comfortable here and that you will find support for your child's development, for your journey as a parent and for success in your educational and professional endeavors.

The following statement helps define and shape who we are as a unique program. We call this our Center's Identity.

The Orfalea Family and ASI Children's Center

- *a place that honors the joys, challenges and changes of childhood and adulthood*
- *where learning happens through relationships*
- *where experimentation, discovery and sensory experiences are promoted*
- *where experiences are influenced by the campus, the surrounding community and the environment of the Central Coast.*

OUR HISTORY

The ASI Children's Center was established in 1974 to meet the needs of student parents on campus. At that time the center was funded through Associated Students Inc. (ASI) and parent fees. The center has grown and moved locations many times. The current facility was built in 1992 doubling the capacity for childcare. ASI continues to fund the program.

In 2000 the center received an endowment from the Orfalea Family Foundation and was renamed as the Orfalea Family and ASI Children's Center. The endowment provides annual funding for the operation of the program. Our program continues to put the needs of student parents as its first priority.

ASI first received funding from the California Department of Education to provide child care services to low income student families in the late 1970's. The program was accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children in (NAEYC) in 2000



The Associated Students Incorporated (ASI) Board of Directors serves as the non-profit Board of Directors for the Orfalea Family and ASI Children's Center. All board meetings are open to the public and parents are welcome to attend any meeting of the board. Board meetings are held every other Wednesday evening in the University Union.

MISSION

ASI Children's Programs exists to provide quality early care and education services to students, staff and faculty at Cal Poly State University.

PROGRAMS & CURRICULUM

Center Philosophy and Practices

The Orfalea Family and ASI Children's Center operates with the belief that each family comes with its own unique ethnic, cultural and familial backgrounds, values and beliefs. With respect for each child's beginnings, we strive to foster a secure, loving and safe environment that encourages children to develop at their own pace in all areas. In order to provide the best experience for each child, we encourage parents to actively participate in their child's program. Constant communication between parents and center staff assures a positive experience for all.

Theoretically, the center is a developmental education program. Since children of a wide variety of ages and stages attend, the first consideration is the child's emotional well-being. We create an environment that provides a variety of learning experiences in all areas of cognitive, physical, self-help, language, social and emotional development. These experiences enable children to build self-esteem, learn acceptable methods of cooperation and become competent individuals within a group setting.

Developmental Learning

Curriculum is based on two dimensions of developmental learning:

1. Age appropriateness:

Predictable developmental changes occur in all domains (physical, emotional, social, and cognitive). Teachers prepare the learning environment and plan experiences to challenge the child's development, increase understanding in the developmental domains, build life skills and form relationships.

2. Individual appropriateness:

Each child is unique with an individual personality, learning style, family background and pattern of growth. Individuality is respected in all interactions. The learning environment is also set up and developed to support the various learning styles.

Project Approach

The project approach is a comprehensive curriculum incorporated into all classrooms within the center. This is a method of teaching in which an in-depth study or investigation of a particular topic is conducted by a child or a group of children. How this type of learning is carried out in each classroom will look different due to the abilities, interests and needs of the group. Staff's careful observation, documentation and reflection of the children's interaction with their environment and peers are key components to project work. Family participation is another important component in project work and adds richness to the children's study on a particular topic.



Children's Center Goals

For Children...

- Provide a classroom and outdoor environment that allows children to grow and learn in all areas: socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically
- Encourage children to learn positive methods of communication, problem solving techniques and accountability for their behavior
- Learn to take safe risks that challenge growth in all areas
- Become competent and confident members of their group
- Freedom to play and find joy in their daily experiences
- Respect and appreciate individual differences
- Learn to be caretaker of their environment

For Families...

- See themselves as essential partners in their child's experience and learning at the Children's Center
- Provide opportunities for increased understanding of their child and general development
- Provide opportunities to learn parenting skills and techniques that increase their confidence as parents
- Encourage contribution and participation in daily activities in the classroom, curriculum development and sharing in areas of expertise
- For student parents to be able to complete their educational goals and feel supported in the process
- Develop a belief that the program is a trusting, safe environment for their children

For the Staff...

- Build a comprehensive understanding of young children and their development
- Develop stimulating, challenging and educational environments for the children
- Become effective communicators and managers of their classrooms
- Competently complete the assessment, curriculum and observation cycle
- Develop caring respectful relationships with children, parents and staff
- Continued growth in their knowledge and skills as professionals

Non-Discrimination Policy

All children, parents, teachers and staff deserve the right to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of gender, cultural, or religious background. All educational programs and activities are available to all qualified persons without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability. Additionally, no religious instruction is provided.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special developmental needs are welcomed into the program once we have determined that the child's needs can be met appropriately within the classroom setting. Teachers will make accommodations in the environment and activity plans for the child's individual needs. The parents are expected to seek all available support for their child, such as assessments, screenings and therapeutic interventions, as well as to share the child's history, individualized family services, or education plan with the Children's Center staff. If necessary, inclusion support will be required since it is not always possible for the Center to provide extra staff to assist a child with special needs. If referrals are needed for special services please contact your child's Teacher or the Associate Director or Director.

The Staff

All Head Teachers at the center have a BA/BS degree in Child Development, Early Childhood Education or a related field, at least two years classroom experience, and California Children's Center Permits. The Teachers have a minimum of one-year of experience and 24 units in early childhood education. The staff also includes a Director, Associate Director, Food Program Manager, Food Program Assistant and Administrative / Accounting Assistant. The additional classroom, office, and kitchen staff are Cal Poly students from a variety of areas of study who work part-time.

The teaching staff is required to continue to develop their skills through education by attending conferences, workshops and college courses. Each teacher develops annual goals and is encouraged and supported to grow professionally.



Classroom Arrangements

All of our classrooms are arranged into learning areas such as art, science, publishing, blocks, library, etc. In these areas we provide a variety of activities and exposure to assorted materials. Children have opportunities to make choices and initiate their own ideas, either alone or cooperatively. Our program is designed to allow time for exploring, experimenting and discovering spontaneously. The teachers facilitate learning experiences by answering questions and encouraging the child's natural curiosity to stimulate their thinking and seeking. They hope to encourage a positive approach to life-long learning in each child by fostering individual direction, self-confidence and an intrinsic sense of wonder of the world.

Infant-Toddler Program



There are two classrooms under this program: Room 1 is an infant room, and Room 2/3 is a toddler room. The needs of infants and toddlers differ from preschoolers. A child goes through rapid changes during the first three years of life and the program is designed to accommodate these changes in development. All areas of development--physical, emotional, social and cognitive are interactive. Although infants and toddlers depend on adults to meet most of their needs, they learn through their own experiences. Adults guide and encourage growth by making the environment safe and emotionally supportive. Our program has an array of stimulating activities and materials balanced by a daily routine that provides security and predictability.

Our program encourages parent involvement. Parents are welcome to spend time in the classroom; especially those parents who wish to come during the day to breastfeed their infants. We ask that you be aware of the small classroom space and respect the children's need to move freely around the room.

Imitation

Imitation is the primary mode of learning for a toddler. Energetic, curious, impulsive and in constant motion, a toddler's play is grounded in action and sensory experiences. They actively seek out their world through physical activity. As sensory experiences build upon each other, toddlers gradually begin to recognize similarities and differences, to categorize, to understand relationships between actual objects and pictures, and to solve problems.

Transitional Program

This unique class for children two to three years of age provides transition time from toddlerhood to preschool. Both Rooms 4 and 5 may be considered transition rooms depending on enrollment. At this age, children have many new emotions and capabilities; the most prominent is autonomy. In the transition class, we help children learn how to deal with their newfound desire for control and power through activities, as well as peer and adult interactions.

Children are encouraged to dress themselves, serve themselves at meals, wash and dry their own hands, and initiate their own activities. Adults help by giving appropriate choices, and by setting appropriate limits. At this age, children vacillate between wanting to do it all and wanting to be cared for like an infant. Keeping this in mind, the teachers' approach is to model behavior and language for the children to use with each other.

Preschool

Our preschool environment focuses on choice, negotiation and socialization. The main goal of daily interactions is to develop social competence in each child. This includes: the ability to make friends; speak up for one's own feelings, thoughts, and ideas; disagree with peers; find resolutions and then return to play. These skills foster a feeling of security in the world.

The curriculum and classroom environment revolve around children's interests. Teachers introduce new ideas and concepts that allow children time to explore, investigate and experiment in their own way at their own pace. Preschool offers a wealth of experiences that help develop skills needed throughout life.

Kindergarten

Following the developmental approach, our kindergarten continues to focus on the development of the whole child. An age appropriate integrated curriculum nurtures physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Children are encouraged to participate in the learning process, because learning that lasts is based on meaningful experiences that are best directed by children.

Poly Trekkers

The ASI Children's Center offers a summer program for school age (K-4th grade) children, called Poly Trekkers. Trekkers, as the name implies, are a very active group of children. Each summer the coordinating staff provides a program rich in activities, while focusing on the children's needs to relax and "hang out" with their friends. Staff provides opportunities for crafts, field trips, sports activities and a good deal of fun. One of the goals is to take full advantage of a wide variety of experiences offered on the Cal Poly campus. Meals are included and are provided by the food program.



Transitions from Room to Room

Keeping with our philosophy, children move between classes only when they are developmentally ready, not when they have changed age. During conferences, parent, teacher and new teacher (if possible) meet to discuss the child's transition to a new room. In general, we try to maintain continuity of care as children move to a new room with a group of their peers and their core teachers.

When transitioning children from one room to another we will consider many factors including:

- Age
- Social skill development
- Cognitive skills development
- Length of time in the classroom (attempting to minimize transitions whenever possible and appropriate)
- Which room his/her closest companions are in
- Ways to keep the majority of the group (classroom community) together
- Family's placement preference

We use these factors as general guidelines. As the decisions about placement or transitions are made the classroom teachers will communicate with parents for collaborative input.

Holidays and Cultural Celebrations

Every holiday in every culture celebrates some of that culture's basic human values. In choosing how we will recognize each holiday we look for the universal values and for the fun ways in which they can be enjoyed. We focus our attention providing activities that are child-centered. In doing so we hope that all children can gain appreciation for the richness of their culture as well as other cultures. Parents are encouraged to participate in these celebrations to offer insight and education about the cultural practices or holidays. The choice for a child to participate or not participate in any holiday related event is left completely up to the parent and should be discussed with the teacher.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Communication

It is important for parents to take an active role in their child's care. Parents are expected to conduct daily verbal communication with a teacher about their child's well being. This includes how the child slept and is feeling, any family changes, or anything that may affect the child's behavior during the day. Written messages for staff may be left on the pad of paper near the classroom entrance. Types of messages include pick-up instructions, doctor's appointments or other special reminders. Parents should check for communication messages from the center daily. Examples of information sent to parents by the center include: newsletters, information from teachers, office forms, bills and service hour ideas. Whenever possible, notices are sent via email to minimize paper use and expense.

Orientation

The orientation process is the start of developing a communication system with families. Each family will have an initial tour of the center to gain an understanding of the philosophy and approach to education. Then each family will meet with administrative staff to learn more about the policies and procedures of the center. Finally, each family will meet with their child's teacher to discuss how the classroom runs and how their individual child's development can best be supported in the classroom. Daily communication with the teachers continues to build the relationship between families and teachers. We want you to feel that the Children's Center is your child's home away from home and that you are welcome here at any time.

Parent Conferences

Parents are strongly encouraged to have a conference with their child's teacher at least every six months. This is a requirement for subsidized families. Teachers will notify parents of available conference times. Requests for additional meeting times with teachers will be honored whenever possible. Please avoid talking to teachers about your child in front of your child or other children. Schedule a time to speak privately to discuss your concerns.

A written progress report will be sent home after the second attempt to schedule a parent conference without success. This written report will take the place of a parent conference until the next regularly scheduled conference.



Parent Participation

Parent participation hours are essential to the success of the center. Two hours per parent, per month is the recommended guideline. Fee paying families will receive a dollar per day discount on their monthly bill for the oldest child if two hours per parent have been completed by the end of the month that service occurs. Hours in excess of two hours per parent will be applied to the following month's service hours.

Participation hours are fulfilled in several ways:

- Volunteering time at the center in classrooms, office, or kitchen
- Performing maintenance on center equipment, grounds, or facility
- Assisting with fundraisers or classroom projects
- Participating on the Children's Center Advisory Board

- Donating supplies such as science and art project materials, pet care items for classroom animals, or materials, etc. Donations are credited as service hours at an equivalence of the current hourly minimum wage (\$ at minimum wage = 1 hour of service).
- Sharing special talents or interests, such as cultural information, art, etc.

Parent Meetings

Parent groups meet several times each quarter to discuss issues and share experiences. The meetings enable parents to get to know each other, increase their understanding of children's development and learn new parenting skills. The center also offers evening meetings to discuss current issues, or present a guest speaker. Childcare is available if requested in advance. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings to gain knowledge and form relationships with other parents. Participation hours are given for parents who attend parent groups or evening parent meetings.

Children's Center Advisory Board / Planning Committee

- Welcomes new families to the Center
- Reports to parents in meetings and flyers
- Provides input to Director for all policies
- Reviews the annual self-evaluation documents and provides suggestions for the annual goals
- Provides information to ASI Board of Directors and University President on childcare needs for campus
- Establishes events to raise money for the center

Parents who wish to be on the Advisory Board should contact the Director. The Board bylaws and annual roster are available in the office.

Parent Feedback

You will be asked to provide the center staff with feedback about your satisfaction with the program through two different tools and in ongoing conversations. Each year the center asks parents to provide feedback using the Desired Results Parent Survey and the NAEYC Parent Survey. Both documents are part of a program self-evaluation process. These surveys are used to plan and conduct activities to help support the children's learning and development as well as meet the family's needs.

Observation, Interviews, & Photographs

The center is pleased to serve students in fields of study that require observation of young children. All projects and student visitors are screened by the Director, Assistant Director or classroom Teacher and should not disrupt the children or program. A child is never taken from the classroom for testing unless a parent has given prior consent. All visitors must check in at the front desk. Prior notice is preferred before visiting, and students must make appointments.

NUTRITION & WELLNESS

Food and Nutrition Program

Our participation in the federally funded Child Care Food Program (CCFP) ensures that we serve your children nutritious meals and snacks. This helps your children get the nourishment and energy they need to learn, grow and be healthy. There is a critical relationship between nutrition, health and learning.

In addition to following CCFP regulations, our goal is to provide meals that reflect current dietary guidelines. We stress a diet with a wide variety of foods that are low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and that include vegetables, fruits, grains, milk products, meat, and meat alternatives. Our goal is to encourage wise food choices and healthful eating. What we eat is influenced by many factors -- taste, culture, social situation, religious beliefs, ethnic background and even food sensitivities or allergies. Food should be enjoyed. It is the overall diet that counts, not one single food or day's meals. We strive to provide healthful food that tastes good and is presented attractively so that your children will choose it. It is center policy to serve whole milk for children between 12 and 36 months as a supplement to breast milk or formula and when the child is no longer taking a bottle.



A menu and newsletter is published every four weeks and e-mailed to parents. Mealtime schedules are posted on all classroom doors. Children are served breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Children attending the center with a 12:30 p.m. start time are served lunch at no extra charge if requested in advance by the parent. Your part in all this is to complete a CCFP Center Eligibility Form upon enrollment and annually thereafter. Due to our participation in the CCFP, no food may be brought from home to the center.

Parents may enjoy a meal with their child in his/her classroom by making arrangements at least 24 hours in advance with the child's teacher and the kitchen and paying \$3.00 for lunch and \$1.50 for breakfast. Parents may sit with children at lunchtime and not eat, at any time without paying. However, other food may not be brought by the parent to be eaten in the classroom. Special meals are planned occasionally for center parents and children so that parents can experience meals the children are served. These are publicized. Advance sign-ups and payment for the meal is required.

Food sensitivities and allergies require completion of an Allergy/Food Preference form by your child's doctor. The Food Program Manager will give you the appropriate form after you meet with her. Once the form is received from the doctor, your child can be served the recommended substitute for the offending food(s). Food sensitivity/allergy forms must be renewed annually. Young children outgrow many food sensitivities as their digestive system matures. The variety of foods in their diet can then be expanded.



Immunizations & Doctor's Statement

State law requires all children enrolled at the center to have a record on file indicating up-to-date immunizations. We will ask you for updated information annually. As a general practice, it is best to submit an updated immunization record for your child to the front desk right after the doctor's appointment. A signed doctor's statement indicating that the child is physically and emotionally capable of regular attendance is also required for enrollment.

Illness

Although we try our best to prevent all children from becoming sick, it is not uncommon for children in childcare to share illnesses, especially infants and toddlers. The center is for well children. Ill children have a difficult time functioning because they do not have the energy to cope with other children and the demands of a busy schedule. We realize that parents don't want to miss classes or work, but it is important for a child to stay home, rest and get well if illness occurs. Your child's health is assessed upon arrival, but if symptoms of illness appear during the day, parents are contacted to pick up the sick child. If this occurs, we require at least twenty-four hours of rest, recovery and observation of the child at home. If a child is sent home by a teacher they must be 24 hours symptom free without medication before returning to the center. When your child has been exposed to a particular highly contagious virus or illness we will notify you with a notice on the door of the classroom or via e-mail so you can be aware if your child begins to show symptoms.

Children with the following symptoms will be sent home to rest and recover:

- Respiratory Illnesses and Colds: children with fresh colds will be excluded for 2-3 days.
- Diarrhea: A child with a loose stool will be observed. If it is repeated, the child will be excluded from care.
- Vomiting
- Continuous coughing
- Temperature above 101
- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)
- Lice
- Any contagious illness

Other symptoms that could warrant exclusion include earaches or ear drainage; listlessness; unexplained rashes or sores; difficulty breathing, headaches, coughs, etc. If your child is not well enough to participate in all normal activities including outdoor play he or she may be excluded at the discretion of the teacher.

Injuries

Children commonly experience bumps, bruises and scrapes in an active setting. When this occurs, teachers fill out a brief accident report and place a copy in the parent pocket. If you do not find an explanation for an injury, do not hesitate to ask the teachers. Occasionally the injury report may not have made it into parent pocket, or your child may not have given any sign that an injury occurred. At the same time, please let the teachers know if an injury occurred while your child was away from the Center.

If a child is seriously injured, the center attempts to contact the parent. If the injury requires immediate medical attention we will call an ambulance to transport the child to the emergency room. If the parent is unreachable, the medical release on file enables the child to receive treatment while the center continues to call authorized people on the emergency card. It is important to keep the names and phone numbers on your child's emergency card up-to-date.

Prevention

We work to prevent the spread of communicable diseases by practicing careful sanitation. Children wash hands before and after toileting, after handling pets and before meals. We also ask that when your child arrives at the center each day, you encourage them to wash their hands, as a means to prevent the spread of illness. Each child uses only his or her own mat and bedding. Bedding is washed weekly and toys are sanitized regularly. The teachers take First Aid and CPR training each year and stay aware of possible safety hazards in the environment. We routinely cover sanitary hygiene practices and safety rules as part of our curriculum. Fire drills are held each month as required and we practice evacuating the building.

Medications

Children receiving medications must have written consent from parents permitting staff to give prescription and over-the-counter medication. Parents must complete the Medication Permission Form each morning they drop off their child with the medication for that day. Forms are kept in the classroom, and new forms are available at the front desk. Medications must be in the original prescription bottle, marked with the drug name, physician's name, date, child's name, dosage, and times to be given. Over-the-counter medications are administered only if the label clearly indicates the specific dosage that should be given to a child that is your child's age or weight. Many infant and child over-the-counter medications state that a physician needs to be consulted for dosage. Therefore you must either get a note directly from your doctor's office or have them fax the appropriate dosage to give your child. Remember, with any medication, the child should still be well enough to attend the program and participate in all activities. Parents who ask that their child not go outside or not partake in an activity because they are not feeling well should keep their child home to rest.

Transportation - Safety First

State of California law requires children under the age of eight years and shorter than 4'9" tall must be in a child car seat or booster seat which is approved under California law. The Children's Center staff will report any person who violates this law to the local authorities.

When classes go on field trips, parents are required to provide a car seat or booster seat for their child to be used during the field trip. Each seat needs to be clearly labeled so it is returned to the proper parent. Parents who do not want their child to travel with others must indicate their wishes on the field trip form in their enrollment packet.

Smoke Free Environment

The Children's Center is a smoke-free environment. No smoking is allowed in or around the facility.

No Cell Phone Zone

The Children's Center is a no cell phone zone. We ask that you complete your phone calls prior to entering the building and refrain from answering your phone while you are picking up or dropping off your child. We ask that you spend this time connecting with your child and the teachers regarding your child's day.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff members of ASI Children's Programs are mandated reporters required by law to report suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect or exploitation to Child Protective Services immediately. We are not required to notify parents when a report is made.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Children's Center has a plan for dealing with emergencies such as fire, chemical spills, earthquake, and nuclear accidents. Core staff members are required to keep their First Aid and CPR certifications current. Training in dealing with various disasters is conducted regularly. We discuss roles and responsibilities so that we can act promptly in the event of an emergency. Drills are held monthly with the children. If you are at the Center during a drill you are requested to participate in the procedures until the "all clear" is indicated. Parents may not pick up their child during a drill.

We are connected with Cal Poly Emergency Operations Center, which responds to the city and county. If there is cause to evacuate the campus, parents will be notified to pick up their children as quickly as possible. We are also prepared to remain in our facility for several days if needed. We have a large supply of water, food and first aid materials. Children have extra clothing and blankets in their cubbies, in addition to the center's supply.

Be assured that we will do everything within our ability to care for injuries, alleviate suffering, provide vital services, maintain order, and minimize loss of life and property until the emergency situation is resolved.

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the campus we will wait for parents to pick up their children until it becomes unsafe for us to do so. At that time we will evacuate and leave a sign on the door indicating our evacuation location so you can find us and pick up your child. The Cal Poly Office of Emergency Planning will implement evacuation of the Children's Center.

CLASSROOM

Arrival & Separation

Upon entering the center's lobby, parents need to sign-in electronically at the front desk. Once in the classroom, please make contact with a staff person and sign-in on the clipboard. We welcome extended visits during drop-off and pick-up times as long as this does not create undue anxiety for your child. When you are ready to leave, always say good-bye to your child, even if it causes anxiety. Saying good-bye builds security and trust between parent and child.

Please do not draw out your good-bye. Once you have said it, you should leave. Prolonging departure only makes separation more difficult. If you still need reassurance of your child's emotional state, you can watch through the office/observation rooms. Teachers will assure the child that the parent will always return. Parents may call the front desk to check on a child's well being after a difficult separation. Parents with children in Room 1, or Room 2 may call the classroom directly.

Each child handles new experiences differently. It is normal and healthy for some children to adjust in a few days and others in a few months. We believe children work through the adjustment to a new program or classroom if they are given time and support. There are effective ways to help your child work through the anxiety he/she experiences from separation. Allow plenty of time the first few mornings when dropping your child off and establish a routine with them so they feel more secure and know what to expect. If you would like suggestions, your child's teacher will be able to give further information.



Napping

All children are required to have a rest period (nap) after lunch time. We do not require the children to sleep, but it is important that they allow their bodies some time to rejuvenate from the busy activities of the day by resting quietly on rest mats. Infants and Toddlers will sleep according to their individual needs and body rhythms. Infants are placed on their backs to sleep unless otherwise directed by a physician to reduce the risk of SIDS. Once they are able to turn themselves they can move to a different position.

Visits

You may visit your child during the day. However, if a parent's coming and going causes overwhelming distress for the child, visits are reassessed. You may come and observe your child anytime in the teacher's offices unless they are having a meeting or need private time to work on a project. Please be mindful that everything in the offices is either personal or center property.

Departure

Before leaving the center with your child, you must sign-out electronically at the front desk, and then in the classroom. Please check your parent pocket as well. When you enter the classroom at midday, please be considerate of nap times. Realize your child may not be ready to go as quickly as you are. You might enjoy watching or helping your child finish a project or play activity. Helping the child to put away materials creates a nice transition for leaving. As with arrivals, don't prolong the leaving process once initiated. It sends mixed messages to the child. If you would like assistance from the teacher when leaving the center, please let them know. They will be happy to assist you. If you are going to be late, it is essential to call the center and let us know when you will be arriving.

A child is never released to an unauthorized person. Notice of authorization is required in writing for anyone other than you to take the child. Any person picking up your child must be listed on the emergency card in advance and must provide photo identification to the front desk staff in order to pick up your child. Once identification is verified, this person will be set up as an emergency contact in the door access system in order to pick-up the child. They will then be able to sign-out the child in the classroom. A written note should be left with the teacher in the morning to inform them of the change. People that are not known to center staff must show identification before the child is released.

Intoxicated Parent

Children will not be released to a visibly intoxicated adult under any circumstances. If the classroom staff has suspicion that the adult who is picking up the child is intoxicated the adult will be delayed until another person listed on the emergency card can be contacted to pick up the child. If the person refuses to cooperate, is belligerent or acts in a threatening manner, the police will be called to assist.

Clothing

Because our program invites children to explore and manipulate the environment without inhibition, they are often involved in "messy" activities. Although we encourage the use of smocks, we do not require it if they prevent children from participating. Even the use of smocks does not guarantee spotless clothing. Children attending the Children's Center will get messy!

Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothes that allow free movement and play without worry. Shoes should be comfortable, safe and practical for running, climbing and walking. Wearing shoes while playing at the center is optional, except when children go on walks and field trips. It's a great idea to have an extra pair of tennis shoes in the child's cubby so your child is always prepared to participate in activities. No flip flops, crocs, high heels or shoes that inhibit safe movement are allowed. Sandals must have a back strap to be considered safe.

Sunscreen and Water Play

Parents are given a "Permission to Apply Sunscreen to their Child" form in their enrollment packet. Staff applies sunscreen periodically throughout the day; however, parents should apply sunscreen to their child's skin before coming to the center. Sunscreen will not be applied to children less than 6 months of age due to medical recommendations. They will be kept out of the direct sunlight as much as possible.

Children engage in a lot of water play during warm weather. They are allowed to undress to their underpants and t-shirt, or diapers and t-shirts in the case of infants and toddlers.

Please label your child's name on all clothing clearly with permanent ink. If you need your child dressed in clean clothes at the end of the day, please bring an extra set so you can change your child before leaving.

Cubbies

Parents should keep the following in their child's cubby:

- Extra underwear
- Long pants
- Shorts
- Socks
- Long-sleeved shirt or sweatshirt
- Short sleeved shirt
- Small (crib-size) blanket
- Extra shoes or rubber boots
- Swimwear (for summer season)

Please replace and clean all clothing in the cubby each time it is used. It is important to check the clothes in your child's cubby at least once each quarter because children outgrow clothes rapidly. If your child is sent home in ASICC spare clothing, please launder them and return them the next day so they may be used again as needed.



What Not to Bring

The center has an abundance of materials for children to use. Toys from home often cause aggression between children, so we ask that you leave personal items at home. We specifically ask that you keep gum, candy, money, toys, and food at home. Storing toys from home in the cubbies or parent pockets is not an option.

Here are some suggestions for how to say “no” to your child in a positive way, when your child wants to bring toys to the center:

- “The Children’s Center has lots of school toys. This is a home toy.”
- “I will keep this toy safe for you, at home or in the car until after school.”

Birthdays

Each classroom acknowledges children on their birthdays differently. Ask your child’s teacher for specific information. Parents who would like to contribute something special for their child’s birthday can donate a book to the center dedicated by the child. This way, the child feels special every time the book is shared in the classroom. Teachers can help give advice about what types of books are appropriate. Please do not bring food for sharing, as we must comply with our food program policies and center philosophy. You may also bring birthday themed paper goods for use at a meal in your child’s classroom. If, due to religious or personal beliefs, you do not want your child to participate in birthday celebrations in any way, the classroom staff will make arrangements with you to accommodate your request.

Discipline

Discipline is a complex topic that everyone defines differently. We approach discipline in positive terms, as a structure through which children learn social competence. The center does not use corporal punishment. We use redirection, positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, and natural or logical consequences. Discipline at the center is only effective when children are given consistent age-appropriate limits, meaningful language to express their feelings, a healthy environment, and support from the family.

When children are ready, they should be included in determining the natural or logical consequence of inappropriate behavior. This active involvement helps them become responsible for their actions towards other people and things. Younger children receive a clear message about acceptable and unacceptable behavior through redirection with words to explain the adult’s actions. With gentle adult guidance, children gain the confidence to express themselves and the esteem to work through difficult situations.

Discipline Policy

A key component in the operation of the center is cooperation between parents and staff. This is particularly true in the area of discipline. It is essential that children receive consistent messages at home and in the center setting. In the spirit of cooperation we have defined a procedure for dealing with behavioral problems at the center.

While we recognize that acting out, physical aggression, and disruptive behavior are all part of the normal child's developmental process, we also realize that there are times when parents and staff will need to form an alliance in developing an action plan for dealing with offensive behavior. If a child's behavior progresses to the point of disrupting the normal flow of classroom activity, the following procedure will be used for dealing with this behavior:

1. Immediate or natural consequences including removal from activity or project; or loss of privilege will occur. We will then review our expectations with the child, as appropriate, and inform the parents of the situation. At this time we will share with the parent the current situation and what is being done in the classroom with the child.
2. If unacceptable behavior continues over a consistent period of time, the parent will be required to observe their child in the classroom. Center staff will accompany the parent while observing to discuss what the child is doing and to answer questions. The parent may be asked to take the child home for the day if the behavior is severe.
3. Immediately after observations, a plan of action will be developed. This will include an agreement or time frame for behavioral change, parental action, staff action and the child's level of responsibility for changing behavior. At this time, consultation with a specialist, such as a child or family therapist, may be suggested or required.
4. If the child needs to be physically restrained from hurting others or themselves on a continuing basis or needs to be continually separated from the group, we will discuss termination of enrollment with the parent. Although we see this as a last resort, certain behaviors and situations are beyond the scope of what we are able to provide for children and families.

Confidentiality

All information regarding children or families of the Children's Center is regarded as confidential and the property of the Center and the family involved. Requests for release of information to other agencies will be honored only if made in writing and with the permission from the parent. Students who conduct studies at the Children's Center are not provided with personal information about the children's families.

DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION

Creative Expression

Creative Expression activities differ in each classroom. The focus is on the experience rather than the completed product. Art mediums are provided for children to express and explore their growing understanding of their world as well as an avenue to share their inner pleasures. Children use creative materials as part of their “hundred languages” (Loris Malaguzzi). The staff is trained to follow two particular practices regarding art exploration:

Never model art for children. An adult's drawing of specific things like an airplane or heart sets a standard that young children cannot realistically reproduce. When an adult draws or makes something for the child, the child may not be motivated to even try to do the activity and may become frustrated when they do try but their drawing does not look like the adult's. This creates frustration and lack of motivation in the child. The child should gain a sense of personal potential and capacity to manipulate materials.

Use non-judgmental descriptions when talking about a child's artwork

“I see you used lots of blue paint on your paper” instead of “What a pretty picture of a house.” This allows children to make their own evaluation of their work. External judgments create expectations that place an adult's value on the child's work.



Labeling Behavior - Not the Child

As with art, using objective words rather than judgmental words to describe children's behaviors allows them to focus on their behavior rather than their value as a person. For example, “Nathan, you put away those blocks carefully” instead of “What a good boy for putting away the blocks.” This approach is especially important with young children who are developing self-worth based on the opinions of others, especially the ones they love.

“Be good today” or “bad girl” are overwhelming expectations and generalizations that set children up for failure. No child is always “good” or “bad” during an entire day. When leaving your child, instead of saying “Be good today,” simply say, “I love you and I'll see you this afternoon.” This type of statement reassures the child of the parent's unconditional love, acceptance and promised return.

Sharing as a Social Skill

Sharing, like apologizing, is appropriate only when children are cognitively and emotionally ready to understand the social benefits of this interaction. For the most part, toddlers and young preschoolers are still learning about the social aspects of possession and ownership and cannot grasp the concept of sharing something that they want. This behavior is normal and they should not be forced to share. We try to respect children's needs to have private space, individual time with materials and some control over their play situations.



Our responsibility is to provide more than one toy or activity. We facilitate problem-solving while children work through peer conflict. By verbalizing children's feelings and desires, teachers introduce simple language that children can eventually use in future situations. Sharing happens most naturally when children begin to see the social benefits of doing so, as well as experiencing the natural consequences of not sharing.

One of the best ways to demonstrate sharing is for adults to model sharing behaviors. As children get older, they begin to emulate what has been modeled for them. This modeling is essential because the ways and times for sharing become more complicated as children get older. Even though they begin to understand the concept behind sharing, children will have difficulty with the process at times. However, learning to give and take becomes easier if caring adults consistently respect and support their needs.

Biting

No behavior elicits as much parental concern as biting because the experience is both frightening and painful for the child involved. Helping a child work through this behavior is a challenge for parents, staff and other children. The center staff always attempts to evaluate causes and develop appropriate solutions.

Here are some developmental insights of the problem:

- Biting is a common behavior among older infants and toddlers; very young children lack the verbal ability to express strong feelings, and when frustrated, bite the object of frustration.
- We attempt to stop bites before they happen. If a caregiver senses anger and sees one child move closer to another with teeth bared, the teacher may intervene, saying, "You are really mad and want that toy. But I'm not going to let you bite."
- Toddlers often bite to relieve discomfort from teething; as an alternative, teething rings, cold washcloths or ice cubes may be offered.
- Biting is not a personal attack directed at someone, it's more a case of the bitten child being at the wrong place at the wrong time.
- Young children's egocentric view of the world prevents them from understanding the pain felt by the child that is bitten.
- There is no magic solution; resolution is usually an extensive process.
- By preschool, children should no longer be biting, but using verbal communication to express feelings.
- For older children, biting is usually a symptom of stress or other deeper emotion that the child does not know how to deal with. Staff will meet with parents if biting occurs with older children.

Apologies

While learning to socialize, children encounter peer conflicts that sometimes result in hurting another child. Many adults' first reaction is to have a child say, "I'm sorry". However, a child needs to understand their own feelings and begin empathizing with other children's feelings before the term "I'm sorry" can truly be expressed with genuine meaning. Insisting on an apology teaches a child how to please an adult rather than gaining an understanding for others.

When a conflict arises between non-verbal children, we start the understanding process by modeling appropriate behavior and talking about how the other child feels. As children acquire language, we continue the process by helping the children with the words they need to express their feelings. The teacher facilitates the process by suggesting ways the aggressive child can help the upset child. This helps them to make amends. There is a point in cognitive and social-emotional development when a child understands being sorry, and it is then that we encourage verbal apologies to start.

Conflict Resolution

We encourage children at all age levels to solve their own problems. On a daily basis, children are challenged to resolve conflicts with other children and their environment. Depending on the age group, a teacher will intervene at different times to assure safety. By not prematurely interrupting, adults allow children to work through situations and develop their own solutions. Adults move close and monitor the situation, but only intervene when guidance, such as suggesting words to express their feelings, is needed. This empowers the child to take care of situations and interactions alone.



Sexual Development

We believe that sexual development occurs in the context of overall growth and development along with physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Like all areas of childhood growth, sexual development is highly individualized. An environment which fosters this growth in a positive light is essential. We believe that a positive environment allows children to learn about and feel good about their bodies, develop a vocabulary which allows them to understand and talk about all of the body parts and functions, and allows them freedom of self-expression in a wide variety of non-stereotypical roles during dramatic play. During dress up children may undress to their underwear in order to use dramatic play clothing. We do not allow the children to run around naked, but they may feel very comfortable changing clothes in the classroom. We will stop the use of profanity, teasing and sexual exploration that involves touching or showing each other's private body parts. Our ultimate goal is to foster in children a high sense of self-esteem as their bodies grow and change. The preschool classrooms will engage in discussions about keeping their bodies safe and what is appropriate and inappropriate touching. If you have questions or concerns please talk with the Teachers, the Associate Director or Director.

Toilet Learning - Center's Procedure

The center's policy reflects the general philosophy of respect for each child. We are sensitive to the growing sense of autonomy and encourage active participation by the child while respecting individual pace and style. Even before self-toileting begins, children are included in care giving processes like getting their own diaper, helping to dress themselves, and washing their own hands.

While changing diapers, teachers talk to children, teaching them language they will use during the toileting process. We ask if the child would like to sit on the toilet, and respect their decision. Remember, toilet learning may take longer in a center where children have to choose between leaving their play and using the toilet.

Children in underpants are taken to the bathroom regularly. Children in underpants will be asked to use the toilet at diaper changing times or if they are showing signs of need. When children wet their pants they are taken care of with respect to their feelings. The child helps get the dry pants and is reminded of where the potty is. Again, the process of self-toileting is a gradual one impacted by developmental issues of autonomy and a continued need for security and nurturing. The greatest tools a parent or teacher has in this process are patience and a belief that the child's own strong desire to become self-sufficient will naturally happen with positive support during the process.

Diapers

Parents whose children wear diapers are asked to provide them each quarter according to the number of hours spent at the center. Supplying diapers does not fulfill participation hours. Parents receiving subsidized childcare are not exempt from the diaper requirement. Diaper wipes are supplied by the center. The center does not use cloth diapers or "pull-ups," and we ask that the parent, upon arrival, change children in cloth diapers before leaving. The staff strongly discourages the use of pull-ups at the center. We believe that pull-ups give children conflicting messages of readiness. A child should either wear a diaper or underwear.

The staff is more than happy to elaborate on any of the philosophy, policies, or childcare practices that are outlined in this parent handbook. We welcome your questions and hope that you will become familiar with the philosophical approach of the Children's Center and how these beliefs are put into action every day. For more detailed information about our policies, you may access the ASI Children's Center Policy Manual at our website.

ADMINISTRATION

Hours of Operation and Slotted Care

The center is open Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. During the summer and certain quarter breaks, we may choose to close at 5:30 p.m. The center follows the Cal Poly quarter system calendar. A calendar of closure dates is handed out at the beginning of each school year and posted on the Children's Center website.

Cal Poly student parents have flexible scheduling to meet their class and study needs. For non-student parents, the center provides the following combination of days: Monday through Friday, Monday / Wednesday / Friday, or Tuesday / Thursday for part-time or full-time days. Tuesday / Thursday / Friday schedules may be available depending on classroom availability. Parents must schedule their child for a minimum of two part-time days (such as Tuesday/Thursday). A maximum of 10 hours of care is allowed during a single day. Parents will be billed for their contracted hours of care regardless of their child's attendance.

Part-time mornings are between 7:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and part-time afternoons are between 12:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Full-time days are any combination of morning and afternoon. If possible, the center may accommodate parents who choose to add one extra hour to their part-time schedule (either starting at 11:30 a.m. for afternoons or ending at 1:30 p.m. for the morning schedule) depending on classroom availability. The extra hour is billed for each day at the extra hour rate as noted in the current fee schedule. Anything over one additional hour is billed at a full day rate.

Enrollment & Schedule Planning

All enrollment contracts will begin on the first day of each quarter. Fees are assessed from the first day of each quarter. Enrollment contracts are valid for one quarter. All families must complete a re-enrollment contract for each quarter. The center will distribute these forms at the front desk with a specified due date on the contract. Parents are asked to sign a check out sheet when they pick up their child's packet. Each quarter, re-enrollment is handled on a first come, first served basis within the center. These re-enrollment contracts will be date-stamped to insure priority when over enrollment becomes an issue at specific times and the actual number of children must be reduced. It is your responsibility to return your contract to the front desk by the due date even if your child is not scheduled on that day. There will be a late fee of \$5.00 per day, per child for contracts turned in after the announced deadline. Families receiving subsidized care are exempt from the late paperwork fee.

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes are permitted without charge during the first two weeks of each quarter. A written Schedule Change Request Form must be submitted to initiate a child's schedule change. Only approved Schedule Change requests will be entered and any applicable fees will be assessed on the start date of the request. A \$15.00 fee is charged for each schedule change beyond the first two weeks of the quarter. Schedule change fees will also apply after the drop deadline for finals week and quarter break week(s) please see below. Families receiving subsidized care are exempt from the schedule change fee.

It is in the best interest of the child to be dropped off by 9:00 a.m. if scheduled for morning arrival. A minimum of four hours per day spent at the center is optimal. This facilitates continuity for both the child and the classroom.

Finals Week

Student and faculty parents usually need to change their regular schedules during finals week. There is no charge for such changes if you sign up for finals or quarter break before the drop deadline. Parents must sign up for days and hours of attendance on the Finals Week schedule, which will be included on the quarterly re-enrollment contract. There will be a due date on the form. All families are required to complete the finals week schedule regardless of whether the child's schedule will change or not. Parents who do not sign up for finals week by the deadline may not have care for that week. Changes to the requested finals week schedule (adding or dropping days) may be made until the Friday two weeks prior to finals week without charge. Any requested changes not including dropped days after the Friday two weeks prior to finals week may be approved based on availability and are subject to a \$15.00 schedule change fee. Schedule change forms are required for any requested changes. Families receiving subsidized care are exempt from the schedule change fee.

Quarter Break

A quarter break schedule request is included on the re-enrollment form. Days of operation vary each quarter break. Please refer to the current center calendar and newsletter for information about center closures. The center does not plan to operate at full capacity during breaks, so the following requirements for childcare exist:

Childcare is optional during this time so you will only be billed for hours that you request. Dropped days for quarter break will only be allowed through the drop deadline which you will be notified of through center correspondence. After the drop deadline any requested schedule change requests may be approved based upon availability and will be subject to a \$15.00 schedule change fee.

Subsidized care is not available during quarter breaks, unless parents can verify they are working or attending job training. Verification for subsidized care during quarter break must be made on the Quarter Break Subsidy Verification form which will be attached to the re-enrollment packet or given to the parent during the re-enrollment meeting for the following quarter.

Extra Days/Extended Hours

If you need childcare at a time that you are not normally scheduled or want to extend a day, follow these instructions:

1. Fill out an Extra Day/Extended Hours form as soon as possible. One form for each child enrolled is required. Forms are available at the front desk.
2. Give this request form to the front desk staff. The front desk staff will consult your child's classroom teacher and administrative staff for approval. This may take some extra time to determine if space is available. Requests are not always approved. Please do not assume that your request will be honored because the proper form was completed. Both the teacher and administrative staff must approve your extended day or hour request.

Last minute calls to request space are subject to availability and the parent is responsible for completing the appropriate forms for approval when they arrive at the center.

The center does not accept children at unscheduled times unless a previous request has been approved and the appropriate paperwork is completed. This is necessary to provide adequate staffing.

Extended Days

Extra Days/Extended Hours may be refused if the classroom is full. Extended time for subsidized families must also be approved in advance. Your monthly bill will include charges for the additional time. Multiple child discounts do not apply to extended day requests.

Tuition Billing & Payment

The Children's Center will bill parents at the end of the month for all services provided during the month. Tuition is based on contracted hours regardless of actual attendance.

Invoices are distributed in the parent pockets outside the classroom doors, on the 10th of each month and are due by the 20th of each month unless ASI posts a date change regardless of whether your child is scheduled to attend on that day. If either of these deadlines falls on a weekend then it will be changed to the following Monday.

The total amount of your monthly tuition will be available at the Children's Center front desk after the 5th of each month. Invoices will include all tuition charges for the previous month including schedule change fees, late fees, extended days, etc.

Payment may be made by cash, check, or credit card at the front desk. A late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed to payments received after the due date. In addition, a \$25.00 late fee will be assessed every month the payment is late until paid in full. A reminder notice will be provided no later than the 25th of the month when the late fee is assessed if payment has not been received. No waivers for late fees will be considered. If full payment has not been received by the 5th business day of the following month that tuition is due, two-week notice of disenrollment will be given to the family and will apply to all currently enrolled children in the family. Families will additionally be responsible for payment of any scheduled care for 14 consecutive days after notice is given. Student parents will automatically have their academic records placed on hold until payment for all outstanding childcare is made. Any payment received after the two-week notice has been given to the family will not reinstate the disenrolled family and re-enrollment will not be considered. Any children on the waiting list belonging to the family will no longer be considered for enrollment.

Checks that are returned for insufficient funds will incur a fee of \$25.00 for the first bad check and \$35.00 for the second bad check. The dishonored check amount must be remitted in cash, cashier's check, money order, or credit card within 5 business days from the time of notification. If payment is not received within 5 business days, two-week notice of disenrollment will be given. If a second check is returned for insufficient funds, all payments from that time forward must be made in cash or with a credit card.

Because billing is completed after services have been received, non-subsidized families will be required to provide a deposit. The center requires a deposit of \$600.00 per child enrolled. This deposit will be applied to your final invoice or to any delinquent accounts. If your deposit was greater than your last month's tuition, the center will issue a refund after enrollment has ended.

Forms of Payment

The center accepts the following forms of payment: cash, personal check, cashier's check, money order, and credit card. We accept the following credit cards: Visa, Master Card, American Express, and Discover Card. Tuition payments can be made at the front desk of the Children's Center before 5:30 p.m. or at the ASI Business Office. Credit card payments will only be accepted with the card and cardholder present in order to keep your information secure.

Annual Registration

The center re-registers all children yearly and charges an annual fee of \$25.00 billed at the beginning of each fall quarter in addition to the child's September childcare fees. For families with more than one child enrolled, the re-enrollment fee for each additional child is \$5.00. Families receiving subsidized care are exempt from the annual registration fee.



Fee Schedule/Change of Status

Please see the Children's Center's administrative staff for a current fee schedule. Rates are based on the parent's enrollment status.

Student parents are given two quarters at the student rate after graduation if they qualify for student status during the quarter they complete their degree. After those two quarters, the parent will be automatically changed to alumni status and will pay alumni/community rates. Student parents who withdraw from the University, but have not graduated, must pay community rates as soon as they withdraw from the University. Student parents who are not attending classes during any quarter except summer will be charged alumni/community rates. Student status is defined as 7 units and above. Parents taking less than 7 units will not be considered students and will be charged alumni/community rates until an increase in units occurs. Staff and Faculty who end their employment at the University must pay community rates starting the day after their employment ends. The center provides parents with more than one child enrolled a "multiple child discount". This is a 10% discount taken off the tuition of the child with the lowest tuition, in most cases this will be the oldest child. This discount does not apply to extra hours, extended days, late fees or families where the sibling is a Poly Trekker.

Late Pick-up Fees

Parents are expected to pick up their child according to the contracted schedule. It is the parent's responsibility to adhere to their requested schedule. Therefore, it is necessary that you build in your own grace period, such as 5 to 10 minutes, to allow yourself adequate time to pick-up your child. Picking up your child after the stated time can be disruptive to the classroom. This is especially crucial for part day pick-ups at 12:30 p.m. when the classrooms are transitioning to rest time. Another crucial time is at closing time when we are required to pay overtime to our staff members after the stated closing time. If for any reason you find yourself running late please call the front desk to let us know when you will be arriving to pick-up your child. The front desk staff will relay your message to your child's teachers.

Late pick-up fees apply when a child is left at the center beyond:

- 12:30 p.m. for a part-time day or 1:30 p.m. for part-time plus extra hour day
- The 10 hour maximum day schedule
- 6:00 p.m. closing time or as otherwise stated

The following late fees apply:

- 1 to 10 minutes late \$10.00*
- 11 to 20 minutes late \$20.00
- 21 to 30 minutes late \$35.00
- 31 + minutes late \$35.00 plus \$1.00 per minute

*The late pick up fee will be reduced to \$5.00 during the first 5 minutes of the 12:30 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. pick up time only.

After a parent has been late to pick-up two times, we will ask the parent to change their child's current schedule to a more realistic time. The schedule change fee may apply to this schedule adjustment. Excessive late pick-ups may be cause for termination at the discretion of center administration.

Late Paperwork Fees

Administrative due dates for paperwork, such as re-enrollment contracts and food program eligibility forms, are closely followed. A late paperwork fee of \$5.00 per day, per child, will be assessed after the deadline has passed. Families receiving subsidized care are exempt from late paperwork fees but may be subject to two-week termination if contract is not returned within one week of the deadline. All new enrollment paperwork must be turned in within two weeks of your child's start date. After this date your child may not attend until all paperwork is received.

Daily Absences/Leaves of Absence

If your child will be absent, please call the center by 9:00 a.m. that day as a courtesy to the classroom. If it is more convenient, leave a message on the voice-mail overnight. All regularly scheduled days are billed, regardless of absence. There are no "make-ups" for missed days. This includes vacations or sick days.

If a family wants to take time off from the center during fall, winter, or spring quarters the family must maintain minimum enrollment of two part-time days to guarantee their child's space. This is only an option if children will be absent for one month or more. If a family does not guarantee their space over a quarter by this enrollment, the child will be disenrolled and a new waiting list application must be submitted. The child will be placed on the waiting list based on the date of the new application. Families can take summer quarter off and still keep their child's space as long as they have notified the center that they will be returning in fall quarter.

Missed Signatures on Sign In/Out Sheets

State Licensing requires a physical signature on the sign-in / out sheets every day. This is a legal document which cannot be amended or corrected. This document requires an exact time and the full signature of the authorized person who is dropping off or picking up the child. Initials are not acceptable. Center personnel are not authorized to sign any child in or out of the center unless they are legally authorized on the child's emergency contact list by the parent or legal guardian. If a signature is not completed, it will be noted by the teacher on the sign in /out sheet and the parent or legal guardian will be issued a written warning. Families will be allowed 10 warnings in the fiscal year (July - June). Upon the 11th missed signature the family will be given two-week notice and will be disenrolled from the center. When the 5th signature is missed the Director or Associate Director will initiate a conversation with the parent to remind them of the importance of the signatures and the consequences for not signing.

Confidentiality

The Children's Center regards all information about children or families of the center as confidential. The center honors written information release requests by other agencies only with parent permission. Students who conduct studies at the center do not receive personal information about the children's families. The center will comply with all requests required by Child Protective Services. Information will be provided without parent permission. Suspected child abuse will be reported to appropriate authority without parental consent or notification.

Termination/Withdrawal

Either the parent or the Children's Center may terminate enrollment, but two-week notice must be given in either case. Parents will be billed for any scheduled care for 14 consecutive days after the notice is given. A child is welcome to attend the center following their normal schedule until the end of the 14 days. If a parent does not give such notice prior to leaving the center, the full two-week notice period will be billed.

The center may terminate enrollment with two-week notice on the following grounds:

- Failure to provide the necessary documentation, falsification of documents or incomplete documents.
- Failure to submit required documentation by the date requested.
- Failure to pay fees in a timely manner (see section on tuition and billing).
- Child is repeatedly picked up later than the scheduled time and adjustments are not made to resolve the problem.
- Extended absence (more than ten days) without notification within three days of nature of absence.
- Failure to follow California Department of Education subsidized care policies and procedures including falsification or omission of required information.
- Difference in expectations (If the center's child care philosophy so differs from a parent's, that compromise is impossible, the center will suggest a program more in line with the parent's philosophy and needs)
- Failure to form a communicative relationship with the staff to meet the disciplinary and developmental needs of the child.
- ASI Children's Programs cannot meet the expectations or demands of the parent.
- The child is emotionally, socially, or physically unprepared to participate in the program.
- The parent has failed to report schedule changes and to provide the Center with accurate emergency contact information.
- Failure to actively support the code of conduct put forth by the center (Applies only to children enrolled in the Poly Trekker program).
- Disrespect for the center staff including but not limited to harassment.
- Failure to provide the center with updated immunization records.
- Failure to consistently sign the child in/out of the center. (10 times per academic year)

Right to Refuse Service

ASI Children's Programs reserves the right to deny or terminate services to anyone at any time at its sole discretion. The above are examples of situations for which the ASI Director of Children's Programs, in consultation with the ASI Executive Director, could decide to terminate services. These are merely examples and are not a complete list of all types of conduct that can result in denial or termination of services.

Universal Complaint Policy

If any individual has a serious complaint or believes that the law has been violated they have the right to contact the California Department of Education or Community Care Licensing directly.

In less extreme cases parents are encouraged to talk with center staff to resolve any issues that might occur. If this is not successful, the Director will be called upon to mediate the discussion. In very rare occasions if this is not successful, the Executive Director of ASI would be called upon to finally resolve any disputes.

Harassment Policy



Associated Students, Inc. (“ASI”) is committed to providing an environment that is free from intimidation and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, gender, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation. ASI will not tolerate any unlawful harassment based on any of the above characteristics. The anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of ASI including independent contractors, and prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee of ASI, including supervisors, coworkers, and independent contractors. It also includes a perception that anyone has any of those characteristics, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics.

Prohibited unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes, comments, innuendos, slurs, or unwanted sexual advances, invitations, or comments
- Visual displays such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement, or interfering with work because of sex, race, or any other protected characteristic
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a term or condition of employment
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment

If you believe that you have been unlawfully harassed, submit a written complaint to the ASI Executive Director or ASI Human Resources as soon as possible after the incident. Your complaint should include details of the incident or incidents, names of individuals involved, and names of any witnesses.

Supervisors must refer all harassment complaints to ASI Human Resources or the ASI Executive Director. ASI will immediately undertake an effective, thorough, and objective investigation of the harassment allegations.

Subsidized Childcare

Center administration will assist you with the subsidy application during a scheduled appointment. Appropriate verification of income and training is extremely important and determines your eligibility for subsidized services.

The policies and regulations outlined below are determined by the State Department of Education's Funding Terms and Conditions, Title V, Child Development Programs. These include a listing of contractual agreements and responsibilities of parents who apply for subsidized services.

ASI Children's Programs, provides subsidized care to eligible families through funding from the State Department of Education (SDE). Maintaining your continued eligibility for subsidy is up to you. If there are any changes in income, family status, or student eligibility, you are required to report this to us immediately. Updated information and new contracts will be requested quarterly. Income eligibility will be reviewed semi-annually or sooner if changes have been reported. New applications for services are required annually.

Who is Eligible?

1. Low income student parents attending Cal Poly may apply for subsidized childcare. This requires verification that the recipient is attending an education/training program and maintaining satisfactory progress.
 - Verification would include evidence of enrollment and the center's training verification.
 - Satisfactory Progress requires that a student parent receive a 2.0 GPA or above for the current term. A student who has two consecutive quarters below a 2.0 GPA (current term, cumulative, or higher education grade point average) does not qualify for satisfactory progress and will not be eligible for the program for a six month waiting period.
2. Student families who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF/CALWorks).
3. Student families with children who have been referred by Child Protective Services, with a written referral. These applications need to be updated every six months.

Subsidy Application Process:

1. Make an appointment with the center administration to fill out a subsidy *application when space* is available for your child.
2. Supply income information including paycheck stubs, wage verification, and copies of any other form of payment you received for work done in the last six months. Applications will not be approved if information is not provided for the month prior to application.
3. Submit a current financial aid statement from Cal Poly and/or Cuesta College.
4. Provide the most recent copy of your TANF/CALWorks award letter, listing your monthly payments.
5. Bring in any court agreements about child support, spousal support, monthly medical payments, and child custody arrangements.
6. Thoroughly complete all enrollment and re-enrollment forms.
7. Maintain accurate attendance records and absence verification forms.

Verification of Family Income

Employed Parents

Requires a wage verification form, including days and hours of work per week including wages earned, to be signed and returned by the employer. One consecutive month of paystubs must be provided prior to application.

Self-Employed Parents

Requires copy of business license, self-declaration of days/hours of work per week (or printed open business hours), and a minimum of one week's job log showing specific customer information including phone number. Income Statements must be provided for a minimum of the last three months prior to application showing detailed records of revenues less expenses. No personal expenses can be commingled with business records or the application will automatically be rejected. The past year's income tax return will be required to verify previous year's income and reasonability of current income.

Unemployed Seeking Work

Priority eligibility goes to parents who are full-time students. Often the other parent is working. If a parent is not employed, he/she may be given 60 working days at the discretion of the center's administration, in which the parent can look for employment. You may use no more than 20 hours/week of child care during this job search time. Job search hours must be logged and documented by the parent who is seeking work in order to be eligible for subsidized care. If after 60 days the unemployed parent fails to find employment, the family will be disenrolled from the subsidy program. Please speak with the administrative staff for more information.

Disability

If the second parent of a two parent family is not a student and is unemployed, but is unable to care for the child because of a medically documented disability, a written explanation must be received from the appropriate certified professional stating the nature of the disability, length of disability, and specific need for childcare including hours per day.

Quarterly Subsidy Recertification

Prior to the start of each quarter, a new contract, with appropriate paperwork, must be completed. At that time the administrative staff will develop an individual subsidy contract, according to the hourly formula and what childcare slots are available. When schedule, income or training changes occur, notification and verification of new information must be provided immediately.

Summer Quarter

Summer is a unique situation due to the availability of classes, financial aid, and accelerated classes. For these reasons the following policy applies to summer quarter enrollment. Families are able to suspend their child's enrollment during summer quarter and maintain a space for their child at the center for the subsequent fall quarter. In order to take advantage of this policy, the family must notify the center by checking the appropriate box on the summer re-enrollment contract. This is the only way your child will be guaranteed a space for fall.

Student families who receive subsidized care are still eligible for subsidy during the summer if there is a documented need for care and they remain income eligible. Due to the nature of subsidized care, these cases will be decided by the Children's Center Director in relation to subsidy requirements regardless of the quarter. Qualification guidelines are available at the front desk.

Note: The center may choose to close at 5:30 p.m. during the summer.



Subsidized Childcare Policies

Attendance records:

You must sign your child in and out each day. Your full signature is required daily, in ink. If a mistake is made, please cross this out, initial and sign again. We may not use white out due to licensing requirements. We also request that you check your child in and out through the center's electronic door access system so that we can more easily verify your child's attendance.

Absences:

If your child is absent you must sign an absence verification form. This is located in the binder at the front desk. REMEMBER - YOU MUST SPECIFY A REASON FOR YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE AND SIGN EACH INDIVIDUAL VERIFICATION. If your child is absent to an illness, you must specify a diagnosis, such as "the flu", or "pink eye".

CDE will pay ASICC for EXCUSED ABSENCES - as listed below:

1. A specific illness - any absence for illness lasting four or more consecutive days, requires a doctor's note.
2. Sibling/Parent is ill.
3. Quarantine - reason must be provided.
4. Dental, medical, doctor appointment.
5. Family emergency; death, funeral - a specific reason must be provided in advance. (Limited to three days.)
6. Court ordered visitation. A copy of the court order must be provided for the child's file in order to excuse these absences.

CDE will allow only ten (10) "IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD" days per academic year (July through June). These Best Interest absences are as follows:

1. Vacation during normally scheduled time.
2. Out of town on a trip.
3. Child's Birthday.
4. Unavoidable car problems.
5. Other reasons, clearly in the best interest of the child as determined by the parent.

CDE will NOT pay for UNEXCUSED absences:

1. Child stayed home with a friend or in-town relative.
2. Child stayed home for a reason other than illness.
3. Personal business - parent/child overslept, didn't feel like coming, or tired.
4. Personal interest; music lesson, soccer game, etc.
5. Using more than 10 best interest days.
6. Incomplete absence verification forms.

TEN UNEXCUSED ABSENCES IN ONE YEAR IS REASON FOR TERMINATION FROM THE SUBSIDY PROGRAM.

Note: Falsification of any information on eligibility forms, Children's Center forms, absence or attendance forms, or with any of the information you have given us to determine eligibility, will result in immediate two-week termination from the program. In accordance with the SDE Guidelines, families will be provided a Notice of Action two weeks prior to the termination.

Families continue to receive subsidized care as long as they maintain their eligibility. All qualifying families must sign a contract at the end of each quarter for the next quarter. A family may qualify for regular billing status at the Children's Center if they no longer are eligible for the subsidy program. For more information about the subsidized care program, please contact the center office.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory academic progress must be maintained to receive subsidized childcare at the Children's Center. Satisfactory academic progress is defined as obtaining a GPA of 2.0 or above for each quarter enrolled. If your GPA is below a 2.0 for two consecutive quarters you will no longer be eligible for the subsidy program. There will be a six month waiting period before you can re-qualify for subsidy services as per state regulations.

During the waiting period, the family may be able to remain enrolled in the Children's Center as a regular billing family by paying the applicable deposit and tuition rates. If a family chooses not to remain enrolled in the center and wants their child to be considered for future subsidy enrollment after the waiting period, the family must submit a waiting list application. Evidence of satisfactory academic progress will be required to approve future subsidized services if the student parent has continued to take classes at Cal Poly or another institution during the waiting period.