



RurAL CAP Child Development Center

PARENT HANDBOOK

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.
Child Development Center
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RURAL CAP

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RurAL CAP

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

VISION

Healthy People, Sustainable Communities, Vibrant Cultures

RURAL CAP'S MISSION STATEMENT

To empower low-income Alaskans through advocacy, education, affordable housing and direct services that respect our unique values and cultures.

CORE VALUES

Action ≈≈≈ Effectiveness ≈≈≈ Honesty ≈≈≈ Respect

WORKPLACE VALUES

As a RurAL CAP employee, I am committed to:

1. Making a positive difference in people's lives;
2. Being responsive to the people I serve;
3. Respecting all others in my actions;
4. Quality work and continual growth; and
5. Fostering a healthy work environment and maintaining a positive attitude.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In this program, each parent is encouraged to openly share information about themselves and their family. To protect families and staff members, the Center has a confidentiality policy which staff is trained to. Staff signs a confidentiality statement acknowledging they understand the confidential nature of information they have about each child and family. Each staff member is acutely aware that all information concerning an enrolled family is private and shall not be discussed with anyone outside of the Center staff without parent permission. Parents shall sign a "release of information" form before any information can be released or shared. Licensing Department or Designee may examine records. The Center complies with Anchorage Municipality Code Requirements.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER'S MISSION STATEMENT

To collaborate with families and the community to create positive experiences for children in a child care setting.

EARLY CARE AND LEARNING BASED ON FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

RurAL CAP Child Development Center's (RurAL CAP CDC) goal is to provide the community with high quality early care and learning which involves families and community members to form a rich and culturally diverse learning center. Quality child care includes the following values:

- Small group sizes
- Low caregiver to child ratios
- Primary care giving
- A family atmosphere
- Individual attention
- Consistent, fair and respectful treatment
- Loving caregivers
- Open communication between Center personnel and families
- Family involvement
- Developing self-control and self-help skills
- Fun

The CDC believes that a child's growth at the Center must be individualized, respected and be done in partnership with parents. To achieve this goal, the Center provides a variety of opportunities for family members to use their special talents and skills in creating a high quality early care and learning program.

Family members are given opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process of the program by participating in a variety of activities such as taking part in interview committees for hiring care givers or participating on the Parent Advisory Committee. Family members are welcome to participate in all aspects of the program, from the classroom activities to a variety of annual events.

The CDC believes that a child's growth at the Center must also be appreciated and supported by the community at large. To achieve this goal, the CDC sponsors community events and offers many opportunities for a richer appreciation of the young child's needs and how to satisfy them. The events include parent activity nights, child activity days, advocacy for children's issues in the community, and cooperation with other programs, including but not limited to, Foster Grandparents, Programs for Infants and Children, and the Anchorage School District preschool special education program.

CENTER OPERATIONS

ENROLLMENT

The Child Development Center is a year-round, full day, licensed child care center program that provides quality early care and learning for up to 64 children between the ages of nineteen months and 5 years old.

The Center operates on an open enrollment policy for all families regardless of income.

RurAL CAP CDC enrolls children and works with parents without regard to sex, race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, color, religion, marital status or changes in marital status.

Throughout the day each child is involved in age and developmental appropriate activities. The Center serves children with special needs and children experiencing disabilities are welcome in the program. The Center staff will coordinate program activities with a current IEP/IFSP, preschool, Head Start or any other educational program in which the child is involved. Prior to enrolling a child with identified special needs, the Center Manager will confer with parents regarding whether the Child Development Center is the most appropriate program for the child. For any child whose special need is identified after the child is enrolled, the Center Manager will facilitate a parent/teacher conference regarding the appropriateness of the CDC's program for that particular child.

Enrollment Procedures

All children will be enrolled on a full time basis only. To enroll in the Center, an enrollment application must be filled out and all applicable documentation completed (see list below). Once eligibility requirements are confirmed and a family is accepted to fill an open position, an enrollment packet is completed along with documentation of current shot records, physicals and other required documents PRIOR to the first day of enrollment. Birth documents may be required at the program's discretion as verification of the date of birth.

In addition to the required documents, families are encouraged to bring in family photos and other personal items to help the child feel more comfortable with the new transition. Families will also be asked to bring in items to be kept at the center during the week such as: extra clothing, blanket for nap time, and appropriate outdoor wear for all weather conditions.

Children with exemption from immunizations are accepted with appropriate documentation.

The Center is committed to making any new transition for a child as positive and comfortable as possible.

Enrollment application must include the following:

Current Physical Examination Record

Immunization Records

Verification of Income

Child Care Authorization if applicable.

Medical Statement for Allergies if applicable.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

The Center will be closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- President's Day
- Seward's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Alaska Day
- Thanksgiving (two days)
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- In-service days in August (three days)
- Training days in October (two days)
- In-service day in December (one day)
- Training days in February (two days)
- In-service day in May (one day)

KEY CARDS

All entrances to the Child Development Center remain locked at all times. The Keyless Identification Card (KIC) System allows parents access to the Child Development Center facility Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. CDC staff will activate and distribute keyless identification cards (KIC) to eligible parents and guardians. Parents are required to sign for a KIC to verify their understanding of the responsibilities for a KIC regarding lost keys, replacement costs and loaning and sharing keys.

WEATHER CLOSURES

The Child Development Center will follow the Anchorage School District weather closures. When there is no school for ASD (Anchorage School District) due to inclement weather, our Center will also be closed.

ABSENCES

Parents are required to notify the Center if their child will be absent. Telephone the Center at 278-0068 for an unexpected absent. For a planned absence, a call or short note ahead of time will work. Prior notification of an absence is important because it may allow adjust meal planning needs; etc.

DAILY ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

After a child(ren) is signed in, parents are expected to accompany their child(ren) all the way to his/her class. It is the parent's responsibility to make the child's teacher or classroom aide aware of the child's arrival. Parents are required to sign in their child before leaving the child in the classroom. Under no circumstances should the child be left anywhere in the Center other than with a designated teacher. When the child is picked up at the end of the day, the parent is required to sign out their child before leaving the classroom. Children are expected to remain with his/her parent and under no circumstances should the child be free to roam about the Center unsupervised.

Teachers post the daily schedule and lesson plans for each classroom. The planned "school day" runs from 9am – 3pm. We ask that children be present for the entire period. Parents are asked to drop off their children anytime between 7 & 9 am and to pick them up anytime between 4 & 6 pm. Pick up and drop off during the core day activities are disruptive to the entire program.

The Center is licensed to have care for children until 6 pm, therefore, all children must be picked up by 6 pm. If the center is unable to contact the parent or designee listed on the child's emergency record within 30 min after closing, the center shall notify the appropriate authorities. Families who continually miss the deadline for pick up may be dismissed from the program.

ILLNESS

The Center does not have facilities or programs for ill children. A daily wellness check will be conducted before a child is accepted into the Center for the day. Parents will be notified when a child becomes ill, and a child may be briefly isolated until an authorized adult signs the child out for the day.

Children are expected to be healthy enough to participate in all aspects of the Center programs including the more active periods of the day. Children cannot be kept inside when the rest of their class is outside. If you feel your child is not well enough to participate in all of the class activities, please keep him or her at home.

Children will be excluded from the Center when they exhibit the following symptoms/illness (per AMC 16.55.390J):

- a. Severe pain or discomfort particularly in joints, ear or abdomen;
- b. Acute diarrhea, characterized as two times the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a loose consistency within a period of 24 hours;
- c. Two or more episodes of acute vomiting within 24 hours;
- d. Severe coughing or sore throat;
- e. Oral or axillary temperature of 100.4° F or more; (RurAL CAP)
- f. Yellow skin or eyes;
- g. Red eyes with discharge;
- h. Infected, untreated skin patches or lesions;
- i. Difficult or rapid breathing;
- j. Severe itching of body or scalp;
- k. Skin rashes, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than one day;
- l. Swollen joints;
- m. Visibly enlarged lymph nodes;
- n. Stiff neck;

- o. Blood or pus from ear, skin, urine or stool;
- p. Unusual behavior for the child characterized by no playing, confusion, persistent, inconsolable crying;
- q. Loss of appetite characterized by refusing all solids;
- r. The following reportable communicable diseases will be reported to the DHHS, Child/Adult Care Unit.

Respiratory

Diphtheria
 German Measles (rubella)
 Hemophilus Influenza
 Measles (rubella)
 Bacterial Meningitis
 Mumps
 Pertussis (whooping cough)
 Tuberculosis
 Meningococcal Infection

Gastrointestinal

Giardiasis
 Hepatitis A
 Hepatitis B
 Salmonellosis

Children who have been diagnosed with any of the mentioned reportable communicable diseases may return to the Center only when written documentation from a licensed physician states that s/he has been evaluated and presents no risk to other children.

Children who have symptoms of illness may be admitted to or remain at the Center only when there is written documentation from a licensed physician (or verbal with written follow-up), stating that the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to the child or other children.

The Center will notify parents of all occurrences of, or exposure to, communicable diseases or conditions in the Center.

The parents of children who become ill or injured while in child care will be immediately notified of any illness/symptoms or any injury more serious than minor cuts and scratches. Parental instructions for action will be taken. The Center Manager or staff will obtain emergency medical treatment without specific parental instruction in those cases where illness/symptoms or injury are such that there must be no delay in treatment.

In non-emergency situations, the Center Manager or staff will make prompt arrangements with the parent(s) for medical evaluation or for the child to be picked up by the parents if necessary.

Until removal from the Center, the child will be provided a place to rest quietly under supervision.

ACCIDENT

In the event of an on-site incident or injury, the parent or an authorized adult will be notified, according to the numbers listed on the child's emergency card. If needed, the parent may be required to come to the Center and participate in on-site care given to the child and jointly determine further professional care. In situations where professional care is not needed, Center staff will perform reasonable action consistent with First Aid training. If immediate medical attention is needed, 911 will be called.

INSURANCE

In accordance with Municipal Code AMC 16.55.410 (B&C) the Child Development Center maintains personal injury, general liability and commercial auto coverage. We also maintain a secondary accident policy for injuries which occur while children are being cared for by CDC staff.

MEDICATION POLICY

Non-Prescription Medication – The Child Development Center staff will not store or administer non-prescription (over-the-counter) medication for any child. Non-prescription medications include: aspirin, Tylenol, pain relievers, lozenges, or syrup. Parents who wish their child to receive non-prescription medication during the day at the Center must come to the Center and administer the medication themselves.

Chapsticks, lotions, sun screen and diapering supplies are not considered medications.

Non-Prescription Medication with a Medical Provider's Approval to Administer – In order for the staff to administer non-prescription medication such as "over the counter" medication and preparations as those described above (i.e., aspirin, Tylenol, pain relievers, cold and cough medicine, lozenges and/or syrup), the medication must have a prescription label which complies with the requirements listed below, and the parent must complete the RurAL CAP CDC Medication Form for staff to administer the medication each day.

A separate form must accompany each item.

Center staff will store and administer non-prescription medications that is accompanied by a Medical Provider's approval if the following guidelines are met:

- In original container;
- Physician's prescription attached to container;
- Child's name and current date must be clearly stated and match the parent's written instructions on that day's medication permission slip. "AS NEEDED" is not acceptable, specific times are required.

Prescription Medication with Medical Provider's Approval to Administer – The CDC follows the same procedures for prescription medication with a medical provider's approval as that noted for non-prescription medication with a medical provider's approval. Please see procedures above.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In case of necessary building evacuation due to fire or utilities malfunction, children will generally be evacuated to the adjacent parking lot to the east of the Center or in extreme situations to the RurAL CAP Headquarters at Gambell Street and 8th Avenue (731 E 8th Ave 907-279-2511). Every effort will be made to contact parents individually, and the location of children will be posted at the Center entrance. Center staff will remain with the children until otherwise instructed by the Center Manager.

In the event of a natural disaster, fire or extended power outage, parents are expected to pick up children as soon as possible.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In accordance with Municipal Code AMC 16.55.230 E 4 and State Statute AS 47.17, Center staff is mandated to report every suspicion of possible child abuse or neglect of children regardless of whether they occur in or are related to children attending the Center. Staff is obligated by law to report such suspicions within 24 hours to the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services Child Protection Office. The Child Development Center staff will notify the Municipal Child Care Licensing Office of incidents which allege a child was abused or neglected when the Child Development Center was responsible for the child. The Center Manager will protect confidentiality and accurately document every incident.

Procedures

The staff member suspicious of possible child abuse or neglect shall:

- Take any immediate steps necessary for the care and protection of the child.
- Immediately, and in a confidential manner, inform the teacher on duty for that child's group.
- Document the child's condition and any first aid administered if needed.

The teacher shall:

- Promptly inform the RurAL CAP CDC Manager of the suspicion.
- Assist the staff member in completing the necessary documentation.
- IF THE INCIDENT HAS OCCURRED IN THE CENTER, contact the parent or legal guardian of the child that same day and assist the staff member in filling out a child care facility incident report.

The Manager shall:

- Within twenty-four hours, assist the staff member in making a telephone report to the Office of Children's Services at 269-4000 or the Municipal Child Care Licensing Office at 343-4758, depending on the alleged source of abuse or neglect.
- Confer with the teacher about the suspicion and assure that all steps were taken.
- Follow-up by submitting report to the Municipal Child Care Licensing Office if appropriate.

MEAL SERVICE

The Child Development Center participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. Child care centers participating in the program offer meals and snacks to all children who are enrolled in their centers. Families will fill out a form indicating that they want to participate in the program or whether they will be declining participation. Families declining participation in the food program will need to provide their child with food that follows the USDA guideline. The Center is a Nut Free Facility.

Sample of USDA Guideline for meals for young children:

Breakfast: One grain (1/4 c. or 1 oz), one fruit or vegetable (1/2 c. or 2 oz), one meat or alternate (1/2 oz), and milk.

Lunch: One grain (1/4 c. or 1 oz), one fruit, one vegetable (1/2c.), one meat or alternate 1 oz for toddlers and 1.5 oz for preschoolers), and milk.

Snack: One grain, one fruit or vegetable, on meat or alternate, and water.

Toddler and Preschool children will be served a nutritious breakfast each day at 9:00am. A healthy snack will be available to all children who arrive between 7:00 and 8:30am; please no outside food in the classroom unless preapproved. A nutritious lunch and snack will be served each day based on USDA guidelines. Menus will be posted at the beginning of each week.

As a part of the enrollment procedure, parents must report any food allergies to the Center. Every precaution will be taken to assure that children do not receive food that can cause distress. Strong preferences on the part of parents will also be honored (such as vegetarian meals, etc.). Parents may be asked to provide alternatives foods for their own children in these situations.

Although developmental programs encourage children to eat a variety of foods, and try foods that are new to them, when there are cases of severe food dislike and/or fragile appetite, teachers will work with parents to assure a suitable program for each child. In these cases, there may be some option available in choice of foods. However, as a general rule, menus will be standard for all participants.

In order to support children's appreciation of cultural diversity and differences, we encourage parents to join us in presenting heritage foods to the children. If you have favorite recipes, we hope you will share ideas with us. On celebrations and special days, food variety is always an important part.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information:

Braille, large print, audiotape, etc., should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to:

USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410

or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Arrivals at Mealtimes

If you have a prearranged plan to bring your child to the Center outside of a mealtime that s/he would regularly attend, please make alternate arrangements for feeding your child.

If you wish to bring in food for your child, please note that the outside food cannot enter the classroom. We have additional spaces for you and your child to sit down and eat prior to them being signed into their classroom. In addition, we ask that you bring items in that are within the guidelines of the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

A healthy snack will be available to all children who arrive between 7:00am and 8:30am.

TUITION AND FEES

RurAL CAP, will establish guidelines for the tuition, fees and deposits schedule and will establish procedures to administer the schedule. In our endeavor to partner with parents we offer a sliding fee schedule based on income & number of family members in the home. The true cost of care for a preschool child is \$900/mo and for a toddler \$1000/mo. RurAL CAP provides a subsidy to qualified families based on income. Families may also qualify for additional state or tribal child care assistance.

A registration fee of \$50.00 will be assessed to each family enrolling in the program.

Tuition Payment and Late Fees:

- Tuition is payable by cash, check, money order or credit card.
- Tuition is due in advance of service, by the fifth day of each month, unless other arrangements have been made prior to the due date.
- A late fee of \$10 will be assessed if your payment is made between 6 and 14 days late.
- An additional late fee of \$25 will be assessed if your payment is more than 14 days late for a total late fee of \$35.
- Alternative payment arrangements may be made at the discretion of the Center Manager.
- If tuition and fees are not paid in full within 5 days of the due date, your child will not be accepted the next day.
- Paid in full means payment of past due and current balances plus whatever late fees have been assessed.
- There will be a \$25 "NSF" charge on all payment checks returned by the bank for closed accounts or non-sufficient funds (NSF).
- Late Pick-up Fee -The charge for each child remaining at the Child Development Center after 6:00 p.m. is \$1.00 per minute.
- Prorated tuition will be charged to families who enroll or withdraw their child(ren) other than at the beginning or end of the month.
- Families with multiple children enrolled in the program will be given a 15% discount off the co-pay amount for the older siblings.
- Children of RurAL CAP employees will be given a 15% discount of all regular charges with multiple children enrolled in the program.

The Center will work individually with a family in cases where a long illness, or other extenuating circumstances, would cause an extended absence of the child. In this situation, every effort will be made to support the family and not cause undue hardship.

Third Party Billing

The Child Development Center accepts third party payments, including but not limited to, the Child Care Assistance Program. Parents are responsible for any charges which exceed the amount reimbursed by the third party agreement.

The Child Development Center requires written authorization before any service is provided for all third party billings. This includes new enrollment and renewal contracts. If an authorization expires, a child will not be able to attend the Center until a new written authorization is on file.

CHILD FILES

A confidential child's file will be kept for program needs and will contain health and program information pertinent to each child. These files will be kept in a locked file cabinet accessible by approved personnel only. Parents and legal guardians are allowed to view their child's files upon request.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

To enrich our program and be sure that there is ample attention given to each child, the Center has a variety of volunteers involved in the program. Some of these volunteers are from senior citizen programs; some are students from the local universities or other adult training programs. We also welcome volunteers who simply enjoy working with children and are willing to give their time.

When regular staff members are ill or on leave, well-trained substitutes will work with your child(ren). Regular substitutes are on call, and sometimes staff assignments are changed slightly in the absence of a regular staff member. All volunteers and substitutes have the same requirements as members of the regular staff.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

To assure the maintenance of a quality program, the Center Manager encourages parents to offer feedback regarding the Center's program. If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about any aspect of the Center, please address them to the Center Manager.

The Child Development Center is licensed by the Municipality of Anchorage Child/Adult Care Licensing Office. To be licensed, we are in compliance with all state and municipal laws and regulations. Any persons wishing to lodge a complaint against the Center should contact the Child Care Licensing Office at 825 L Street. The phone number is 343-4758.

CHANGES IN POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Parents will be notified in writing thirty days prior to the effective date of any changes in the policies or program at the Center.

SMOKE FREE FACILITY

Smoking is not allowed at any place inside the Center, on the outdoor playground or within 50 feet of the building. Staff or parents who wish to smoke will need to exit to the parking lot, and move away from the entrance door of the Center and out of children's sight.

CODE OF CONDUCT

While on the premises, all adults will need to act in a reasonable and appropriate manner in order to maintain a positive learning environment for the children. Adults need to consider their tone of voice, vocabulary, and physical gestures while at the Center.

APPROACH TO LEARNING

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Child Development Center believes high quality early childhood programs have parent participation at the core of their program. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as much as possible and this can be done in a variety of ways:

- Participation in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the program. (The Parent Advisory Committee is the vehicle for parents to become involved in the decision making process.)
- Participation in the classroom as paid employees, volunteers or observers. (Parents are given priority for paid and volunteer positions at the Center, provided they meet qualification standards.
- Attending parent events sponsored by the Center.
- Working with their own children in cooperation with the staff of the Center.
- Contributions to the Center's monthly newsletter.

Parent Visitation

Parents are encouraged to visit the Center frequently enough so that they are aware of the program in which they have placed their child. The CDC has an open door policy and drop-in visits are welcomed. Children feel very important and pleased when a parent comes to visit, and it enhances their place in the family when parents and caregivers pay extra attention to the child care program.

If a parent or caregiver wishes to visit at lunch time and eat with the child, it is requested that arrangements be made 24 hours in advance.

Copies of all applicable legal restraining orders will be required and placed in the confidential child's file. Without a restraining order document on file at the center, the Center's staff cannot deny visitation or removal of the child(ren) from the center by a biological or legal parent.

Parent Advisory Committee

The CDC will maintain an active Parent Advisory Committee. The Parent Advisory Committee will act as an advisory group to the program. They will meet once a month to discuss ideas, concerns, or listen to discussions related to the program and give input into policy decisions. All parents who have children enrolled in the program are members of the Parent Advisory Committee and are encouraged to participate in the meetings.

Communication with Parents

A monthly newsletter will be provided to parents and caregivers. This document, compiled by the staff, will contain content of interest about the on-going activities at the Center. The newsletter will also contain informational and educational items for parents and caregivers regarding child development and management. The newsletter relays other pertinent information to parents and caregivers such as discussing the topic of upcoming parent/teacher conferences, etc.

Parents are encouraged to submit articles to the newsletter for publication. The newsletter is intended as a Center-wide forum for ideas and discussion, and writing for the newsletter is an excellent form of parent involvement. Articles may be of any topic related to child development, Center news or opinion/editorial pieces. Please refer to the Center Manager or Assistant Manager for further information.

CURRICULUM

The Child Development Center is influenced by *The Creative Curriculum* both for Infants and Toddlers as well as for Preschoolers. *The Creative Curriculum* is based on research and theory. It is an approach to learning that looks holistically at the development of the child. *The Creative Curriculum® Approach* shows teachers how to create literacy learning opportunities within the framework of a comprehensive, integrated curriculum. It provides the most up-to-date research about literacy development and thoroughly describes the seven components of literacy in detail: literacy as a source of enjoyment, vocabulary and language, phonological awareness, knowledge of print, letters and words, comprehension, and books and other texts.

The children's learning is built upon by their interests, ideas, and curiosities. With information gained from observing the children, the teacher is able to create an environment that allows the children to explore, test ideas, and learn. The teachers create emergent lessons that use the children's current interests as a tool for helping the children advance their development. The teachers also create a learning community that invites the families and the outside community to join the community's learning journey.

By exploring their classroom environment, the children develop a sense of ownership. Real materials in the learning centers allow children to begin to understand sizes, shapes, colors and relationships between objects. This builds the child's capacity for abstract thinking and serves as one of the basis for the academic structure the child will encounter as s/he progresses from infancy to kindergarten and on to grade school.

The teacher's role in the learning is to create opportunities for the children to explore by leading group meetings, posing questions, and providing appropriate materials for children to test their theories and ideas. During free play the teacher interacts with the children by asking open-ended questions that challenge the children to extend their knowledge. S/He facilitates problem-solving and the development of self-control. The teacher also leads the children through group activities at different points in the day such as story, class meetings, and the exploration of art and science.

Literacy

Research shows that children who grow up in an environment full of language are more likely to grow up as proficient readers and writers. The Child Development Center provides a language rich environment to all the children in the Center based on their age, developmental level and individual needs. A brief outline of the literacy activities incorporated into each age group is presented below.

Toddlers - Caregivers talk to and with toddlers constantly as their vocabulary builds from an average of 20 words at 19 months to 1,000 words by the age of three. The classrooms will have pictures of familiar objects in order to expose children to more vocabulary. Caregivers will give children many opportunities to work with big crayons and paper or paints. This helps the children develop the fine motor skills required for writing. Their "scribbles" will be cherished and praised in order to encourage future attempts at writing. Short stories with predictable outcomes and familiar characters will be read daily, as well as the singing of rhymes and simple songs.

Preschool - Caregivers will continue to talk to and with children constantly as their vocabulary builds to 1,800 words and they can speak in phrases and sentences. More complex stories will

be read every day, and they will be followed by discussions of the story and book based activities. The children will begin to see how the content of books can relate to their own world. Some stories will be read repetitively in order to help the children learn to "read" them on their own. Memorized reading and mimicking reading by children, even if it does not match the text exactly, will be praised. These are beginning steps to lifelong literacy. The children will have opportunities every day to "write." The caregivers will support children's attempts at understanding print as the children exhibit an interest. The staff will provide writing models and help these children begin to make sound letter connections.

It is our goal that children enrolled in our program will enter kindergarten ready to learn. They will understand that reading is fun, that print represents words that books are read from front to back, that text is read from left-to-right, and, most importantly, that print holds information that is worth knowing. This knowledge and these skills will enable a young child to enter school interested, motivated and prepared for more academic styles of learning - future school success.

SMART Board and Video Viewing

Television and video programming are used only as a part of planned learning activities. Viewing time is limited to one hour per day. Lessons which include SMART Board or Video viewing are indicated on the weekly planners, as any other structured activity. Special occasions may warrant video viewing up to 1 hour in one day and families will be notified. Television viewing is prohibited for children under 2 years old.

Animals

Based on program planning and teaching animals may be brought into the program on a regular or "visitor" basis. Staff may choose to acquire a cage pet such as a rabbit or guinea pig as a regular ongoing part of the classroom. Guidelines for types of pets will be used according to Municipality of Anchorage Code 16.55.440G6. Since the Center is closed on weekends, the animal(s) would be taken to a staff or child's home for the weekend.

CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations are part of the Child Development Center's program for children and families and, therefore, must be planned and carried out in a manner which advances the Center's goals. These special occasions include birthdays, inter-cultural events, holidays, "good-bye's" and end of year events. The Parent Advisory Committee will be involved in suggesting occasions which merit celebration and the manner in which the celebrations will take place. The Center will minimize the commercial aspects of modern holiday celebrations.

CDC Events (additional events may be added)

- New Years
- Valentines Day
- St. Patrick's Day
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Fall Festival
- Thanksgiving
- Winter Holidays

Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated in the afternoon at snack time for the child's group. Families may provide a special snack for their child's birthday. Healthy snacks are encouraged. The scheduled snack will also be provided during that time in order to assure that the nutrition program is followed. The distribution of party favors is discouraged. We like to maintain the focus on the child being celebrated and not distract from this by the giving of gifts. This is also in part to be respectful to all families' beliefs.

Some acceptable options include:

Fruit platters, games, healthy snacks, making playdough, raisins, etc. Staff are also great resources for ideas.

Birthday party invitations: if a family would like to invite children to a party you are welcome to set out invitations for the class, as long as ALL children are invited. Children can feel left out when they see others with invitations.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE for Toddlers

This classroom schedule is a tentative schedule for toddlers and may change to meet their daily needs.

7:00 - 8:30 am	Morning greetings and getting settled/ Creative play/ Open exploration
8:30 – 8:45 am	Toddlers transition to own areas
8:45 – 9:00 am	*Diaper changing / Prep for morning snack
9:00 – 9:30 am	Breakfast and preparing to go outside if weather permits
10:00 – 10:30 am	Outdoor play
10:30 – 11:30 am	Creative play/ Open exploration (sensory, auditory, music and language)
11:30 – 12:00 pm	Prep for lunch
12:00 – 12:30 pm	Lunch/ *Diaper changing/ prep for nap
12:30 – 3:00 pm	Nap time
2:30 – 3:00 pm	*Diaper changing and prep for afternoon snack
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Afternoon snack
3:30 – 3:45 pm	Creative play/ Prepare for outside
3:45 – 4:30 pm	Outdoor play
4:30 – 6:00 pm	Creative discovery play/*Diaper changing/ Free exploration and closing of room

* Diapering checks and changes will happen as needed throughout the day.

BEHAVIOR AND GUIDANCE

In compliance with Municipal Child Care Licensing Code AMC 16.55.360, which states: "To reduce risk of harm, a child care facility shall help a child to develop age appropriate patterns of behavior fostering constructive relationships and increasing ability to deal with everyday life." The Center does not use any form of corporal punishment or any other techniques which are "cruel, humiliating or otherwise damaging to the child." (QUOTATIONS ARE TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM MUNICIPAL LICENSING CODE.)

In accordance to the NAEYC criteria, the Center ensures that teachers encourage children's growth and development in learning self-control by modeling appropriate, positive, social interactions and fair negotiation exchanges. The children learn self-guidance by being encouraged to stand up for themselves in conflicts, learning empathy, and identifying emotions. If two children are fighting over the same toy, the teacher may show the children that there is another toy one of them can play with, help them take turns playing with the toy, or encourage them to use statements such as, "May I please play with that toy." Children are shown that it is okay to state how they feel to their friends, while they are discouraged from using physical force to obtain what they want. When dealing with infants and toddlers, teachers model behaviors and help them to identify how they are feeling.

In situations where the Center's established discipline guidelines are not meeting the needs of the enrolled family, the Center Manager and classroom staff will meet with the family to develop an individualized plan for that child. This may include observations, one-on-one staffing, parent involvement, or referral to specialized professionals. If this plan does not meet the needs of all involved after a reasonable amount of time, as specified in their individual plan, the Center Manager will make a decision for future recommendations. This may include disenrolling the child.

Behavioral Guidance Procedures

When a classroom situation requires staff intervention, the following steps will be taken in accordance with the developmental stage of the children involved. Parents will be notified verbally or in writing of any disciplinary actions taken with their child.

1. The child(ren) involved will receive a verbal warning. This may range from a simple reminder to a detailed explanation of the consequences which will be experienced if the specified behavior continues. All consequences are related to the specified behavior and are considerate of the child's developmental stage.
2. The child(ren) involved will experience the consequences of his/her behavior as enforced by the staff. The child(ren) will have the option of correcting the behavior or experiencing the consequences. A staff member may say to a child: "You have a choice. You may look at the book carefully or you may leave the reading area. If you continue to throw the book, you will be making a choice to leave the reading area."
3. If the child(ren)'s behavior is jeopardizing the safety or educational experience of the other children in the area, the child(ren) involved will be removed from the group with supervision.

The Child Development Center teaches children to resolve conflicts in nonviolent ways; toy weapons, toys with weapons, and other material depicting violent behavior interferes with CDC's early childhood education program. No materials which may encourage violent play are permitted at the Center.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Employees shall ensure children are adequately supervised at all times according to developmental level.

AMC 16.55.320, AMC 16.55.340 and NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Leadership and Management Standard require child care facilities to enact policies which ensure children are properly supervised.

To ensure compliance with Anchorage Municipal Codes and to maintain the physical safety of children, the Child Development Center shall enact a staffing plan which is in compliance with Anchorage Municipal Code governing child to caregiver ratios and maximum group size by:

1. Providing for the adequate supervision of children throughout the day taking into consideration the following:
 - a. Staff breaks
 - b. Staff lunches
 - c. Special events
 - d. Field trips
 - e. Beginning and ending of shifts
 - f. Ensuring a minimum of two employees at all times when children are present
 - g. Chronological ages of children
 - h. Developmental levels of children
 - i. Children with special needs

2. Employees and volunteers supervising children shall:
 - a. Interact positively with children;
 - b. Actively interact with the children as appropriate to age and developmental level
 - c. Focus primarily on the children
 - d. Model appropriate social interactions and behaviors for children
 - e. Intervene in situations between children as appropriate
 - f. Refrain from gossiping or excessive visiting with colleagues or others

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Parents are encouraged to leave their children's toys at home, however, there will be an occasional time a parent or child may want to bring something from home which enhances the children's learning opportunities. This may include an item related to the theme or a sharing object on the child's assigned sharing day. Bringing a special toy, book, photograph or other material may help a child talk about significant personal/family events such as a trip to the library, a death in the family, or moving to a new home.

In making the transition from home to day care, some children comfort themselves with a "security blanket", a well-worn teddy bear or similar transitional item. This may be something a child needs throughout the day, at rest time, or just for the period after the parents' departure in the morning. Transitional items will be allowed at the Center as discussed and determined by the teacher and parent.

All personal belongings brought into the Center must be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Each child will need to bring a quilt or blanket for rest time. We will launder at the center weekly. If you have a request for a special soap or laundering process it will be the parent/guardians responsibility to launder the items at home each week.

Personal Clothing

For regular indoor wear and summer outdoor wear, parents are expected to dress their child in sturdy, washable, comfortable play clothes in which s/he may become messy without worry. This includes comfortable footwear, preferably sneakers or similar light weight shoes which provide good traction and have closed toes.

Learning to slide down the hill on your bottom, to finger-paint enthusiastically or simply to carry your soup bowl without spilling, can result in stains or tears in "special" clothing.

The Center's indoor temperature and humidity may fluctuate. Parents are asked to provide each child with a sweater or over shirt combined with a lighter weight tee-shirt or blouse, so that s/he can "take off" and "add on" for personal comfort. Parents are expected to keep an extra set of clothes and shoes, appropriate for the current season, in each child's cubby at all times.

OUTDOORS

All children, including toddlers, play outdoors twice daily, for a minimum of 20 minutes at a time except when the Center Manager assesses the weather to be too wet or too cold. Teachers adjust the duration of time outside based upon immediate weather conditions and their observation of the children's needs. Children will not go outside when the temperature, including wind chill, is below zero degrees Fahrenheit. During summer months, the staff will provide additional water to prevent dehydration. Parents are expected to provide appropriate outdoor wear, depending on the season, for their children. Parents may also bring sunscreen when deemed necessary.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips and walking excursions are a regular part of the program for all children. Parents will sign a consent form for regular walking excursions at the time of enrollment. This permission will be kept in the child's file. During all field trips, the child to teacher ratios will be met at ALL times.

For field trips by RurAL CAP vehicle, public transportation or of extended length, parents will be notified of the plans several days in advance of the occasion and asked to sign a separate permission slip for each field trip. The permission slip will indicate the time and location of the field trip. If a parent/caregiver does not sign the permission slip by the day of the field trip, the child will be assigned to another teacher's group and will stay at the Center during the time the field trip is conducted.

All RurAL CAP staff drivers are appropriately insured through our agency's insurance company when transporting children on field trips.

Parents are encouraged to assist on field trips as volunteers. For walking excursions, there will be ample staff and adult volunteers, and children will be taught good walking procedures for the terrain and weather conditions. Maps and guidance will be provided with the classroom sign-in/out sheet so that a parent may join a group that is on a walk.