



Early Childhood Programs

FAMILY HANDBOOK



WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY
Early Childhood Programs
Family Handbook

Sechler- Rhoades Hall
12th Street at Virginia Street
P.O. Box 680
Silver City, New Mexico 88062
Hours of Operation: 7:30am-4:00pm
Phone: 575-538-6344
FAX: 575-538-6405



The Early Childhood Programs are a division of the School of Education at Western New Mexico University, and the programs are under the management of the Executive Director for Early Childhood Programs. The Programs provide early care and education from eight weeks to five years of age and also serve as a laboratory site for university students from many disciplines. The Child Development Center and Growing Tree Infant and Toddler Program are 5 Star, licensed, and nationally accredited by the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC).

Executive Director for Early Childhood Programs
Phone: 538-6801
Laboratory Site Program Administrator
Phone: 538-6807

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FAMILY



Dear Family,

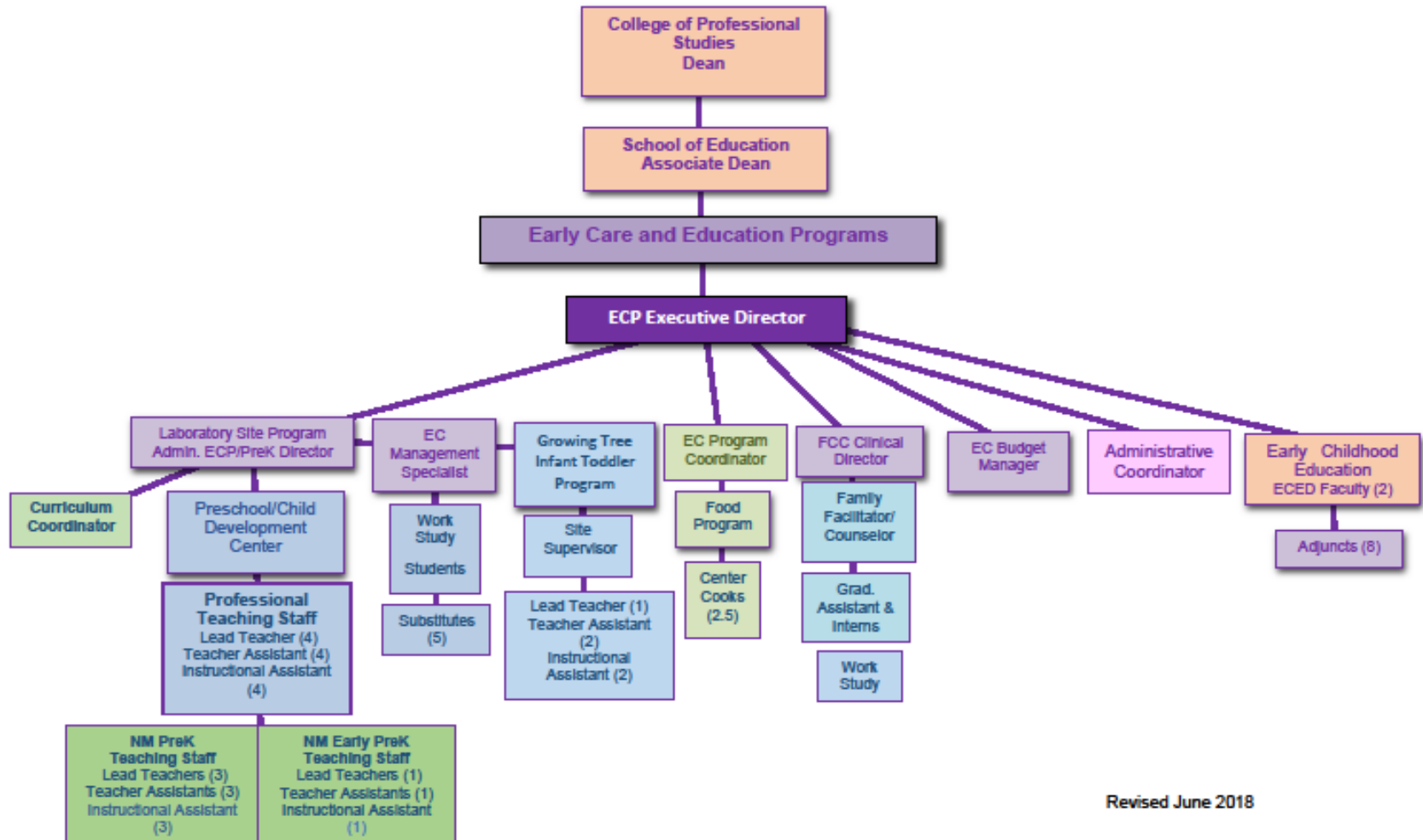
The Early Childhood Programs are a division of the School of Education at Western New Mexico University, and under the management of the Executive Director for Early Childhood Programs. The Programs provide early care and education from eight weeks to five years of age and serve as a laboratory site for university students from many disciplines. The Child Development Center and Growing Tree Infant and Toddler Program are 5 Star, licensed, and nationally accredited by the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC).

Thank you for choosing the Child Development Center and/or Growing Tree. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Shannon Rivera
Executive Director for Early Childhood Programs
575-538-6801

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Revised June 2018

ABOUT US

Vision

The vision of WNMU Early Childhood Programs (ECP) is to provide a consistently high standard of leadership in early childhood education, igniting and nurturing a spirit of learning in all of the constituencies we serve, including:

- WNMU students** *promoting their educational success by providing quality childcare, parenting education, and family support; **and** enhancing professional development through hands-on learning in an early childhood laboratory site;*
- Young children** *creating a safe and nurturing educational environment across all age levels that provides high quality, nationally accredited early childhood education;*
- Teen Parents** *encouraging teen parents to continue their education by providing an accredited infant/toddler program that includes parenting instruction;*
- Families** *partnering with diverse families to better meet the developmental needs of children; linking families to community resources, and supplying age-appropriate materials that encourage learning through play;*
- EC Professionals** *improving standards of childcare and education by providing the highest quality early childhood pre-career, certificate, and degree programs, as well as continuing education and training; **and** advocacy;*
- Community** *collaborating with educators and human service providers to advocate for young children, help the community address its childcare needs, and working with professional organizations to advance public recognition of the vital role of the early childhood field.*

The vision unites these constituencies in building a stronger foundation for our communities in the future.

WNMU Early Childhood Programs Mission & Philosophy 10.A.01

Mission

The Early Childhood Programs (Programs) at Western New Mexico University seek to support the highest quality of early care and education through community outreach, teacher education/training, and advocacy. We promote the primacy of play in children's development in a child-and family-centered context, respecting each family's uniqueness and diversity.

Purpose

The Western New Mexico University Early Childhood Programs offers a comprehensive array of child- and family-centered services. The Program fosters and maintains collaboration and flexibility to meet the increased need for quality care and education throughout the campus and Southwest New Mexico.

Philosophy

Western New Mexico University Early Childhood Programs maintains a caring and positive atmosphere in which each child is respected and accepted as a unique and valuable individual. The focus is on a developmentally appropriate early childhood education provided in the context of a family-centered approach. Dignity and respect of ALL children and families is upheld while honoring individual and cultural differences.

In order to provide an enriching experience of the highest quality for each child, cooperation and mutual understanding among families, early childhood care givers and staff are necessary. Our everyday modeling is absolutely essential to affirm ourselves and others, to accept people's differences, to cooperate in achieving common goals, and to communicate constructively.

Goals

Early Childhood Programs Goals 2.A.03

The goals of the Early Childhood Programs involve children, families, students and the community. Each year, the program staff members create specific yearly goals and objectives, and identify Strategic Goals to be included in Individualized Professional Development Plans.

We believe every child enters the world eager and able to learn. Play is foundational in ALL stages of life and acts as the positive and joyful thread in relationships.

Child:

To utilize well-designed environments and appropriate planned curriculum to expand and develop:

- relationships with other children and adults
- positive self-image and self-esteem
- appreciation of variations in age, gender, and culture
- thinking and problem solving abilities
- creativity and curiosity
- concepts and ideas about the world
- language and literacy skills
- numeracy and scientific concepts
- appreciation for art, music and nature

Families:

- To provide high-quality experiences and care for the child while the parent pursues his/her own studies or interests
- To provide opportunities to grow in the understanding of child development through planned educational programs and interactions with the program
- To support and integrate the parent's academic process through:
 - on-going communication
 - campus referrals
 - community referrals
 - increase and enhance personal growth and mental health support through the services of the Family Counseling Center

Staff:

- To create an environment that reflect mutual, respect, confidentiality, collaboration, cooperation, and support for each other.
- To support ongoing professional growth and development.
- To support staff in setting attainable objectives for children based on assessments that will reflect the program's philosophy and goals.

Student:

- To provide laboratory opportunities for students to observe and participate in a model early childhood education program
- To provide opportunities for students to apply theoretical material into practice in the classroom

Community:

- To provide a model for early education and child-care services
- To provide leadership in the field of early education through programs that reflect current theoretical views and research
- To educate the community about the importance of high-quality child care and appropriate early childhood practices

Advisory Board 10.B.06

The Early Childhood Programs Committee, or ECPC, serves as an advisory board to the WNMU Early Childhood Programs. The Committee provides guidance, direction, and support to staff and assists in development and support of funding, programs, policies, and curriculum. It is the belief of the WNMU ECPC that the role of a state-funded university is to address the needs of students and community for exemplary child care/development and laboratory services. Therefore, the Committee accepts the mandate for identifying and responding to campus and community needs for innovative, high quality, affordable, and accessible child care/development programs. Further, the Committee is committed to the principles outlined in the University Mission Statement. The ECPC Handbook outlines the roles and responsibilities of the members, and the policies and procedures for the group.

Early Childhood Program Centers

<i>Program</i>	<i>Contact Number</i>	<i>Ages of Children</i>	<i>Hours of M-F</i>	<i>Serving</i>
All Programs	575-538-6801 Executive Director for Early Childhood Programs	All ages	8:00 am to 4:00 pm	All Early Childhood Programs
CDC Lab Site Sechler-Rhoades Hall	575-538-6807 Program Administrator	8 weeks to 5 years of age	7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	WNMU Students, Community, Staff and Faculty
Growing Tree Infant Toddler Program Silver Consolidated School District	575-388-1289 Site Supervisor	8 weeks to 3 years of age	7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	SHS teen parents, WNMU students, Silver Schools Staff
Family Counseling Center	575-538-6805 Clinical Director	All ages	By scheduled appointment.	Children and families of all early childhood programs
Early Childhood Education	575-538-6550 Visiting Instructor			WNMU Students majoring in Early Childhood Education including degree programs for certificate, AA and BS.

WNMU EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Families as Partners

We invite families to become a part of their child's school experience. Your interest and involvement as families is welcome. We adhere to an open door policy and families are welcome to visit. Most sites have observation areas available to observe children's interactions and behavior while engaged in activities with other children. The "Families as Partners" philosophy recognizes the need for family involvement in providing quality education programs for children. To effectively partner with families who do not have English as their first language, we offer interpreter services in their preferred language. Participation includes the following activities:

- Home Visit
- Family History
- Family Orientation
- Family Plan to be written within the first six weeks of enrollment with the Family Facilitator
- Family-teacher conferences
- Family support group & parenting classes
- Individual conferences/parenting support
- Volunteer work in classrooms
- Checking out books and videos from the WNMU Child Development Center Resource Library to further knowledge in parenting
- Assessments of children: Ounce Scale Assessment, Assessment Portfolio based on the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines (ELG's), ELG Family Report
- Referral to appropriate agencies (if needed)

End Services Interview and Exit Form (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/exit-form/>).

At the beginning of school, families will sign Families as Partners Agreement form (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/families-as-partners-agreement/>).

Program Orientation: *10.E.12e*

The program administration conducts orientation sessions for all aspects of the program. During orientation sessions, information is shared regarding the mission, vision, philosophy of the Early Childhood Programs, the curriculum of the centers, the confidentiality policy, and the policies and procedures that are relevant to each group.

- **Family Orientation-** All program staff members play a role in the orientation of children and families into the program. There are four steps to the Family Orientation process.

Program administrators conduct **Family Orientation** sessions at the beginning of each semester/year.

(<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/familyorientationchecklist/>).

- The Professional Teaching Staff complete **Home Visits** and the Family History Interview with families.
- PTS are also responsible for hosting classroom visits and/or curriculum presentations (**Classroom Orientation**) for children and families.

Family Counseling Center staff meets with each family to support the Families as Partners Agreement and the **Family Support Plan Interview** (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/family-support-plan/>).

Family Concern Policy

We value our relationship with the children and families of our program. When concerns arise, we want to work constructively with families to resolve them. Concerns regarding classroom issues should first be directed to the classroom teacher. If not resolved, concerns should next be addressed to the Program Administrator, and then to the Executive Director for Early Childhood Programs.

If still unsatisfied after these steps have been taken, families can follow the grievance procedure in the WNMU student handbook, beginning with the Dean of the College of Education. A copy of the student handbook is available at the CDC front desk, and is online at <http://www.wnmu.edu/univ/StudentHandBook/studentHandbook08.shtml>. Every effort will be made to address concerns affecting the needs of the children and their families.

Confidentiality 4.E.07, 6.A.01

All information obtained by the Programs will be held at greatest confidence with the exception of child abuse cases, at which time information will be given to the proper authorities only. Each year, ECP staff members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Practicum and Field Experience students also sign confidentiality agreements. The Program will only release confidential information, including assessment results, to other parties, with permission from the family, except upon request from regulatory authorities (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/consent-to-rel...formation-form/>).

Supervision of Children 3.C.02-.05, 10.B.12, 10.D.01c

Teachers will supervise children at all times by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible, including outdoor areas near equipment where potential injury could occur. Teachers will take attendance each time they move from one location to another. Teachers will supervise children primarily by sight and sound. Teachers will check frequently on those children out of visual range. Staff members maintain approved staff-child ratios during indoor and outdoor time. Children will be accompanied by a teacher when coming in from outdoors to use the restroom or get water. No child will be left alone or unattended by a staff member at any time.

Teachers in infant/toddler rooms will supervise children through sight and sound at ALL times. Positioning themselves in centralized areas as to accommodate as many children as possible. Napping children will be frequently checked and a teacher will position themselves close to napping children.

Procedure on Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

The Early Childhood Programs are required by law to report by phone immediately to Child Protective Services when we suspect child abuse or neglect. We serve as childcare providers and have a responsibility to protect the rights of children.

Child Custody

It is not the responsibility or right of the WNMU Early Childhood Programs staff to decide child custody issues. In the absence of a valid and enforceable court order, it will be assumed that each natural parent of a child in our care is entitled to custody of the child as well as the right to determine the child's whereabouts and circumstances. The site must be advised of any existing court orders, and a certified copy of these papers must be at the site at the time of enrollment or promptly after any such order is entered.

We encourage parents to cooperate for the child's best interests, and support the child's right to have meaningful relationships with both parents. **Unless we are court ordered, we will not release children's attendance records, write letters to attorneys, or otherwise participate in custody disputes.** The Family Counseling Center staff is available to help mediate family issues in the best interests of the child.

Release of Child *10.D.06e*

The Early Childhood Programs will release a child only to a parent, guardian or other adult who is authorized by the parent/guardian on the Individuals Permitted to Pick-Up Child(ren) Form. ([https://ecp.wnmu.edu/individuals-pe...ted-to-pick-up/](https://ecp.wnmu.edu/individuals-permitted-to-pick-up/)) In order to comply with New Mexico laws prohibiting child abuse, if a staff member of the Early Childhood Program has reason to believe that a parent, guardian or other authorized adult may be:

- Intoxicated;
- Impaired; or
- Is behaving inappropriately

such that releasing the child into the custody of the parent, guardian or other authorized adult may endanger the life or health of the child, the staff member should take action to remove the child from the situation and contact or have someone else contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

- The CDC must contact Campus Police by dialing 538-6666
- Growing Tree must contact the City police, with later follow-up contact with the Campus Police to file an incident report.

While waiting for an officer to arrive, the staff member should utilize other options, as deemed necessary to control the situation. Options for dealing with the situation may include the following:

- Obtaining assistance from another staff member
- Engaging the parent guardian or adult in a conversation until officer arrives.
- Alerting the front office to the situation.
- Seeking the vehicle license plate number of the parent, guardian or other authorized adult.
- Contacting the Early Childhood Administrative Team for follow-up with the family.

Once the law enforcement officer arrives, the officer has jurisdiction over the matter and will make a decision concerning the safety and well-being of the child.

Action Taken in Case of a Child Missing from the Facility

Should a child become missing from the facility, the following steps will occur. First we will conduct a thorough search of the facility and grounds for the missing child. Next, the child's guardian, the program administrator, and the Campus Police will be contacted. Once the Campus Police is onsite, they will assume jurisdiction over the matter. Information leading up to this incident and its outcome will be placed in the child's file. For sites located at WNMU, the Campus Police will be notified. For the sites located in Silver Consolidated Schools, the Silver City Police Department will be notified.

Accidents or Emergencies Involving a Child 10.D.09

The safety of children is of utmost concern. Should an accident occur, it is the responsibility of the staff to address that child's immediate need(s). The site is equipped with first-aid materials, and all teachers are first-aid and CPR certified. Should an emergency occur, and immediate help is needed, we will call 911. For all other emergencies, we will check the child's on-file emergency card for the name of the contact person and the child's physician, if necessary. Details of any accident or emergency are logged, dated, reported to administrative staff, and placed in the child's folder. When the child is picked up, this information will be given to the family. It is also reported to the appropriate responding police agency. For sites located at WNMU, Campus Police will be notified. For the site located in Silver Consolidated Schools, Silver City Police Department will be called.

Policy Concerning Incident Reports

Incident reports address safety issues and injuries. Incident reports will be completed on the day the incident occurs. They are in triplicate form, one to the parent, one to the child's file, and one to school file. This is to ensure effective and collaborative communication with families. When incidents involve two children or more, an incident report will be provided to each party. Names of other children involved will not be released due to confidentiality issues. If a parent feels it is necessary to involve the other family to effectively resolve a problem, the other party will be notified for consent. A mediation meeting will be set up with teachers, the family, and the program administration.

Discharge of Children

Lack of willingness by the family to work in collaboration with the staff for the benefit of the child could result in the child no longer attending the program. Examples: refusal to attend parent conferences, continued violation of designated schedule, or failure to meet the financial obligation within the required payment time. Failure to comply with **all** program policies could also result in the child no longer attending the program. Upon exiting the Program, families are required to complete an **Exit Form**. (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/exit-form/>).

As stated in the attendance policy for the programs, families are asked to notify the program if a child is absent. If a child is absent for three consecutive days without notifying the program, the child could be dis-enrolled from the program.

Admission & Enrollment

How to enroll your child in the Early Childhood Programs

WNMU has two programs that serve young children and their families:

The Child Development Center (CDC) serves children eight weeks to five years of age. Enrollment prioritization is as follows:

- (1) Full time WNMU students
- (2) Part time WNMU students
- (3) WNMU employees
- (4) Community members.

Infants must be born before the semester begins in order to hold a placement.

The Growing Tree Infant Toddler Program (GT) serves children from eight weeks to three years of age. **Growing Tree** primarily serves teen parents at Silver High School (SHS) and WNMU students.

Enrollment is as follows:

- (1) Teen parents of SHS
- (2) Full time WNMU students
- (3) Part time WNMU students
- (4) Staff of Silver Consolidated School District.

Parents/families enrolled in the program are guaranteed their placement(s) on a semester basis. Due to priority to teen parents, if a teen parent is in need of a placement, the last non-teen parent/family may lose their placement for the upcoming semester. Every effort is made to fill each opening with full time high school students (our priority). Full time WNMU students are considered next. If WNMU students are offered an opening, they will be allowed to finish the semester - even if a high school student comes forward needing care once the semester has begun. The high school student may begin the next semester. Infants must have been born before the semester

begins in order for them to be considered for placement. Vacancies in this program are rare. When they occur, they are offered first to employees of Silver Consolidated School District.

The program accepts children based on the physical capacity of the classrooms to serve children of different ages. There are fewer placements available for infants and toddlers than for older children because those classrooms have small enrollments. Within the guidelines of our priorities for service, CDC attempts to maintain a balance between fairness to all parents on the waiting list and responsiveness to the extraordinary needs some families experience. For example, developmental concerns or special hardships in the family's circumstances might warrant special consideration. Five placements are reserved for contracted full-time employees of ECP. The Early Childhood Programs are committed to serving a diverse population of children and families in each of our programs.

CDC PRIORITIES FOR SERVICE:

1. Full-time WNMU students
2. Part-time WNMU students
3. WNMU faculty & staff
4. Community members unaffiliated with WNMU.

In each category, applicants seeking full-time care have priority over those seeking part-time care.

WNMU students must verify their student status each semester and at midterm to retain their enrollment status.

Every effort is made to serve the siblings of currently enrolled children.

Waiting List

Due to the heavy demand for services, both the CDC and Growing Tree currently have a waiting list for enrollment. To enroll your child, you must complete the following process to be placed on the waiting list. If your need for childcare is immediate, please log on to www.newmexicokids.org for a list of other childcare providers in the community and information about what to look for in a childcare setting.

If you wish to be placed on the waiting list for CDC, you may:

- Apply by completing the initial information sheet in the enrollment section of this website: wnmu.edu under the Early Childhood Programs
- Apply in person at Sechler-Rhoades Hall, 12th St. at Virginia.

Applications for enrollment will not be accepted over the phone.

- To apply, a family must be pregnant, have a child, or be awaiting an adoptive or foster care placement. Please inform us when a child is born or a placement has been made.
- No registration fee is due at the time of application to the waiting list.
- Requests for enrollment are entered into the system by the date of contact, and children are immediately placed on the waiting list.
- When an opening is available, the administrative team calls the family to let them know of the availability.

It is your responsibility to keep all information current, including contact numbers, student status, age of the child, and any special circumstances.

We encourage you to call the Child Development Center (538-6344) before the end of each semester to update your information and check your status on the waiting list.

Because so many factors may be involved in enrollment decisions, staff members are unable to make any predictions about when you may receive an offer of enrollment.

Continuation of Services for WNMU Graduates

- For children, ages 3-5, who have been enrolled and the student status no longer applies, fees will be adjusted at the community rate.
- Infants and toddler children may enroll in the program only if a parent enrolls in a minimum of 12 credit hours, or 9 graduate credit hours.

An appeal process for graduated students **denied** continued enrollment is available under certain extenuating circumstances. Parents may pick up an appeal application at the Child Development Center front desk and turn it in for consideration by the Early Childhood Program Coordinators. (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/appeal-for-enrollment/>)

Continuing Services for Growing Tree Children

Teen parents graduating from high school and continuing on to WNMU may register for continued services during the returning student enrollment period. They receive the same priority as returning WNMU students.

Offers

- Offers for child care are made only by the center's manager or designee.
- An offer may be made, although service may not begin until the child is 8 weeks of age or older.
- Once an offer is made, a response is generally required within two working days.
- Families accepting offers will review and must follow tuition and registration procedures.

Refusal of Service

- If you receive an offer and decline it, you will not receive another offer during that same semester.
- If an offer is made and declined, the date of refusal is recorded, and the child is placed at the bottom of the waiting list. The date of refusal, not the original application date, will be used to determine your child's place on the waiting list.

Once your child is admitted to the program...

- All children will be treated the same, regardless of race, color, age, national origin, language of preference, or sex.
- One parent or legal guardian is expected to complete the enrollment information.
- Once the family accepts placement, they must come in to complete the admissions paperwork.
- Parents/guardians of each child accepted into the program must provide the following before the child will be allowed to attend the program:
 - Completed admission record
 - Completed consent forms
 - Copy of child's immunization record/notarized Public Health Department Exemption
 - Class schedule and/or work schedule
 - Non-refundable registration fee
 - Pre-Enrollment Health Statement (due within the first 6 weeks of enrollment)
 - Signed financial agreement and CYFD paperwork
 - Child Care Food Program application (if applicable)

Once all paperwork is complete and has been submitted, the following sequence of events complete the admission process:

- Your child will be assigned to a classroom. The classroom teachers then schedule a home visit.
- It is required for families to attend a program orientation
- Families meet with a member of the Family Counseling Center to develop a family plan.
- The family and child visit the classroom prior to the first day of school and/or attend a classroom orientation session.

Tours

Please visit the main facility at 12th St. and Virginia any weekday after 9:00 AM for a personal tour of the Child Development Center and to learn more about the philosophy and services.

Program Policies Regarding Attendance

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is encouraged in order to provide continuity and predictability for children. We do not provide drop-in care. If your child(ren) will be absent, please notify the program. Failure to notify the program after three consecutive absences could result in dismissal from the program.

8:30 a.m. Policy

In order to maximize a child's learning in the school setting, and maintain a high quality program, it is essential that all children are checking into the program by 8:30 a.m., or earlier. After a verbal and written warning, any child arriving after 8:30 a.m. will not be permitted to stay; but he/she may return at 11:30 a.m., provided those hours are in his/her schedule and approval is given by the office staff.

If you experience an emergency, or if your child has an early morning appointment, please contact the front office to arrange an approved alternate arrival time. Office staff will need to add your child to the daily lunch count. The 8:30 a.m. policy does not apply to the infant classrooms.

Pick-Up Policy

The enrollment card and the Individuals Permitted to Pick Up Child(ren) Form must have the names of the custodial parents and the names, addresses and phone numbers of the persons who are authorized to pick up the child. Parents or a designated responsible person should sign the child in and out daily using the ProCare computer, and bring the child into the classroom. Children are expected to be picked up promptly at their scheduled pick up time. Before leaving, parents should check the child's cubby, gather articles to be taken home, and aid the child in putting away any toys he/she is using, if necessary. No child will be permitted to leave until the designated adult has arrived.

PreK Policy

The NM PreK program hours are 8:30am - 2:30pm, Monday through Friday. PreK curriculum begins at 8:30 am. Please bring your child by 8:30am to allow for proper transition time into the classroom. Please pick up your child by 2:30pm a late charge fee of \$5.00 will be charged for the first minute and \$1.00 per each additional minute will be assessed. The program offers wrap-around care in the mornings and in the afternoons as an alternative to the accrual of late fees. Wrap-around care begins at 7:30am - 8:30am and 2:30pm - 4:00pm. The tuition for wrap-around care is \$300.00 per semester and can be paid throughout the semester and can be added at a prorated cost.

Late Pick Up and After Hours Charge

All children must be picked up prior to program closure. The Child Development Center and the Growing Tree closes at 4:00pm. The first time the child is not picked up before closing, there will be a verbal reminder of pick up times and policies. The second time, families will be given a written reminder. The third time a child is not picked up prior to closing time, a late fee of \$5.00 **plus** \$1.00 per minute will be enforced with payment due *before* the child can return to the Center. Repeated offenses could result in dismissal from the program.

Failure to Pick Up Child When Contacted

The centers are licensed child care facilities and must follow licensure rules and regulations. According to some of those regulations, children must be picked up when requested. We try very hard to understand the family's situation, however, the other children in our care must be considered as well. When a CDC staff member contacts you, or people on your emergency contact list, it is your responsibility to pick up the child *immediately*, and *no later than 30 minutes* after being contacted. Should you, or your emergency contacts, choose not to comply with this request and fail to pick up your child; you *must* meet with the Director before your child can return. It is your responsibility to maintain accurate emergency contact information.

Some circumstances under which you may be contacted are, but are not limited to: when your child is ill; when there are behavior issues with specific regard to an established agreement; when your child's clothes are soiled and he/she has no others; when the CDC closes during the day due to inclement weather.

Early Release Policy

The Early Childhood Programs will be closing early to provide training for the teaching staff on select dates. The Program will close at 2:30 pm and provide a two-hour block of training on five (5) pre-determined Fridays throughout the year. See Early Release Calendar for specific dates.

Section 2

HEALTH

Health Policy 5.A.01, 10.D.01, 05

For participation, children must be healthy. The following health policies are designed to protect all children.

Each child is required to have the recommended series of immunizations or a *notarized* Public Health Department exemption form, signed by the parent or legal guardian. Each child's file must include a health form with immunization records. For the child to continue in the Program, a completed Pre-Enrollment Health Form must be turned into the office within the first eight weeks of enrollment (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/pre-enrollment...alth-statement/>). After initial enrollment, a well-child check is required for subsequent years. Only office personnel, teachers, and the family have access to the health information about child.

An attempt is made to observe for any signs of illness, teachers observe for symptoms of illness as children arrive at school. Contagious children may not return to the program until after a 24 hour period. Families need to keep their child home if their child demonstrates any of the following symptoms the previous night or the morning of attending school: Symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Fever (oral temperature 101 degrees, armpit 100.4 degrees)
- Rash of any type. Skin abnormalities that may be contagious and caused by irritation or infection (body rash not diaper rash)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (runny bowel movements that occur more than twice within an hour)
- Persistent cold symptoms (runny nose, cough, congestion, colored mucus, irritability)
- Bronchitis (untreated chest congestion)
- Strep throat (may return after 24 hours of treatment with antibiotics)
- Pink eye (matted eyes or mucus discharge from eye)
- Nasal discharge (yellow/green in color)
- Croup (barking cough)
- ANY OTHER SYMPTOMS THAT MAY BE CONTAGIOUS

The program administration or teacher has the right and responsibility to determine whether a child is well enough to remain at the center upon arrival. Under some circumstances, the program may require a doctor's release to return. A child will be sent home if they become ill. Ill children will be removed from the classroom, and cared for by a staff member until someone arrives. Teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or types of communicable disease to which their child was exposed.

The school should be notified if a child is absent for any illness for more than three consecutive days. The program administrator is required to report to the County Health Office and notify other parents of possible exposure to any infectious disease such as mumps, measles, or chicken pox. Families will also be notified in writing of infectious diseases or illnesses in the classroom.

(<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/notice-of-exposure-to-infectious-disease/>)

A copy of the New Mexico Health and Social Services Licensing Procedures Handbook is available in the office for loan to parents. It describes the health and safety standards required by the State and are also available at www.newmexicokids.org New Mexico offers a service to people to help them determine whether or not to go the doctor's office for treatment of illness. The 24-hour Nurse Advice line in New Mexico is a free service, available at: 1-877-725-2552.

We do not provide sick care for children. Please refer to the Failure to Pick Up Child When Contacted policy.

Handling of Medications 5.A.11, 10.D.01b, 10

Children are to remain at home if they are not well. Families are allowed to refrigerate and administer medication to their own children at the centers during school hours. If, for any reason, this is not possible, written permission from the parent or guardian will be given to the Center including the written directions from the prescribing physician. Program staff may not administer medication to children without first being trained by a licensed medical professional. If the staff member has been trained and is willing to administer medication, the required medical forms must be on file. These forms are available upon request from the office staff.

- All medications brought into the centers must be labeled with
 - The child's first and last name
 - Name of clinician
 - Expiration date
 - Manufacturer's instructions
 - Original prescription label that details the name and strength of medication, and directions on administering and storing.

The designated staff member will log the child's name, name of medication, dosage, hours, and dates the child received medication on the Medication Administration Form. This log is to be picked up by the family at the end of each day, and a copy of the log will be placed into the child's file (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/medical-permission-form/>) and (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/medication-administration-form-staff/>).

Hand Washing

Children and all adults are required to wash hands upon arrival for the day. Children wash hands independently or with assistance. Proper hand-washing procedure:

- Use liquid soap and warm running water.

- Rub hands 10 seconds all over, including under nails and jewelry.
- Rinse well.
- Dry hands with single paper towel or dryer.
- Avoid touching faucet, use paper towel to turn off water.

Children will wash their hands many times throughout the day as proper hand washing is the first line of defense against disease and infection.

Policy to Protect Against Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) 10.D.01f

Infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. **(This is required of all programs with infants.)** Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft items are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants younger than eight months. If a blanket is used, the infant is placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant's chest. The infant's head remains uncovered during sleep. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.

Shower Policy

The shower in the isolation restroom of the Child Development Center can be used for children who have severe accidents as a result of illness (i.e.: vomiting and diarrhea). Staff must have a signed agreement from the family or guardian in the child's file in order to use this shower. Families will be given this form during registration or orientation. For the protection of staff, two adults must accompany the child during the cleanup process. When a shower has been administered, a written incident report will be completed, one copy will be given to the family, and one will be kept on file at the center (<https://ecp.wnmu.edu/shower-permission-form/>).

Animal and Pet Policy 5.C.05

Families are to be notified twenty-four (24) hours in advance of an impending pet visit. Classroom pets or visiting animals are to appear to be in good health. Pets or visiting animals need to have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. PTS are to supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. PTS must make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk for salmonella infection. Children must wash hands thoroughly after handling any classroom pet or visiting animal.

Pest Control 9.D.08

In accordance with state licensing regulations, a professional pest control company sprays all buildings monthly. The exterminator comes to the CDC the third Friday of each month, and does not spray until all children have left the building (after 4:00 p.m.). The program keeps the facilities free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants by utilizing the WNMU maintenance and grounds personnel. The Growing Tree Infant Toddler Program site is sprayed at the discretion of Silver Schools.

Section 3

Curriculum & Family Support

Curriculum Philosophy 2.A.01-04, 08 3.F.01, 03

Children's play is an essential component of a developmentally appropriate curriculum. Children need years of play with real objects and situations before they are ready to understand the meaning of symbols such as letters and numbers. Learning takes place as young children touch, manipulate, and interact with objects and people, which are relevant to their young lives.

Early childhood curriculum respects the way children learn by actively involving them in the learning process. Teaching strategies emerge from children's interests and ideas, with the arrangement of the environment as a major component of the curriculum. "Emergent" curriculum provides concrete hands-on activities, experiences, active exploration and interaction with adults, peers, materials and the environment. Appropriate curriculum emphasizes the process of learning rather than the product, and is based on the understanding that children must first master one stage of development before moving on to the next stage.

Curriculum Process 2.A.02-06, 4.B.05

The information gained through authentic, observational assessment related to the NM Early Learning Guidelines (ELG's) is used to inform parents and plan individualized curriculum activities and strategies to help **each child** grow and develop. A cycle of **observation, reflection, planning, and implementation** is the basis for all curricular planning. Teachers implement strategies and modify activities to better meet the needs of each child based on documented observations of each one's successes and challenges. (NM Early Learning Guidelines, p16). Family home values, beliefs, experiences and language inform the curriculum process. To support the curriculum process, teachers participate in weekly mentoring and coaching sessions with the administrative team during center hours.

Curriculum Plans 2.A.07, 11, 3.F.02

Individual classrooms develop specific *indoor and outdoor* curricula that are developmentally age-appropriate. The curriculum goals are based on the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines, and integrates the areas of; Physical Development, Health and Wellbeing (fine motor), Numeracy, Self, Family and Community, Literacy, Scientific Conceptual Understandings, Aesthetic Creativity, and Approaches to Learning for preschool and PreK. For infants and toddlers, the ELG's include Beginning to Know About Ourselves and Others, Beginning to Move and Do, Beginning to Communicate, Beginning to Build Concepts, and Approaches Toward Learning.

The physical environment and daily schedule are the foundations of the curriculum planning process. Time is allotted in the daily schedule for children to engage in free play experiences in both the indoor and outdoor environments. Teacher's support children's play by intentionally creating environments where children may initiate activities that are of interest to them. Teachers scaffold learning and facilitate play by posing thought provoking questions, supporting interactions, individually engaging children, and planning age appropriate activities. The daily schedule includes opportunities for children to experience self-initiated learning,

creative expression, large group, and small group activities. The daily schedule also provides time and supports for transitions, includes indoor and outdoor experiences, and responds to a child's need for rest and to be active.

Developmental Areas

Emotional:

- Self-awareness
- Self-concept
- Sense of family
- Self-care
- Self-responsibility
- Self-control
- Attention span
- Completing a task
- Smooth transitions
- Delayed gratification

Senses:

- Music appreciation
- Music involvement
- Visual memory
- Creative expression
- Auditory memory
- Tasting and smelling
- Color discrimination
- Tactile awareness

Physical

- Body awareness
- Gross motor coordination
- Fine motor coordination
- Eye-hand coordination
- Eye-foot coordination

Social:

- Parallel play
- Cooperative play
- Dramatic play
- Role playing
- Communication with adults/peers
- Listening to adults/peers
- Cleanliness/health/safety
- Sense of community
- Cultural awareness
- Responsible use of materials
- Etiquette
- Sharing/taking turns

Cognitive

- Nature appreciation
- Numbers concepts
- Special concepts
- Conception of time
- Visual discrimination
- Auditory Discrimination
- Language development
- Following directions

Curriculum Areas 2.A.10, 12

- Pre-reading/reading readiness
- Math/numbers
- Science/nature
- Writing skills
- Language development

- Community
- Field Trips
- Social & Self-help Skills
- Physical Skills
- Technology

Assessment of Children 4.A.01-06, 10.F.02

The purpose of assessment for children is to learn how children are developing, growing, and learning. Assessment results are used to determine the classroom curriculum and environment, and to guide curriculum development to meet the needs of individual children.

The program's philosophy is that informal assessment through observation is the developmentally appropriate way to assess children. Therefore, all assessment tools used by the program include observation as an essential component. A portfolio is developed for each child, and teachers include anecdotal records and other work samples throughout the year. Formal assessments are completed on an ongoing basis.

- For infants and toddlers, the Ounce Scale Assessment is used to assess all developmental domains. It is a comprehensive observation based assessment that allows for both teacher and family participation.
- For preschoolers, an individualized portfolio/journal will be developed for each child that utilizes the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines as a framework to monitor progress and developmental milestones. The ASQ is a developmental screener that can be completed, if necessary, to assess the cognitive and motor domains. The ASQ will be completed with all PreK children within the first six weeks of enrollment.
- Families participate in the assessment process by completing the Early Learning Guidelines Family Report Form, and families of Infants and Toddlers also participate in the Ounce Scale.

Results of all assessments are kept confidential and will be shared with the family during family teacher conferences. Assessment results are used to aid the teacher and family in creating a Family-Teacher Conference Summary Form for the child that includes goals for both the home and school environment.

Children's Oral/Motor Development 5.B.14

The following will not be offered to children younger than four, or children who have not developed specific skills in circular jaw movement: hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, raw peas, raw carrots, spoonful's of peanut butter, or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Staff cut foods into pieces no larger than ¼ inch square for infants, and ½ inch square for toddler/twos, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capabilities.

Nap Time

Children in care for longer than five hours will be given an opportunity for a nap. Children who choose not to nap will be provided alternate quiet activities. Cribs or cots are provided as appropriate.

Family Support Services

The staff of the Family Counseling Center (FCC) is available to provide support and resources for families. The FCC staff are highly trained and qualified clinical specialists in early childhood and infant mental health who can provide a variety of services, including help for children with behavior issues and interventions for families in transition. The FCC staff can help connect families with community resources as needed. Contact the program administrator or classroom teacher for more information about these services.

Care Team Process 7.B.04, 7.C.05, 10.B.01, 10.B.10

A referral to the Care Team should be initiated by contacting your child's teacher who will submit the form to the Program Administrator. Should a concern about a child's development arise, or if your family has any other special need including: counseling services, family crisis-emergency, or health and nutrition concerns, Process for Care Team Referrals:

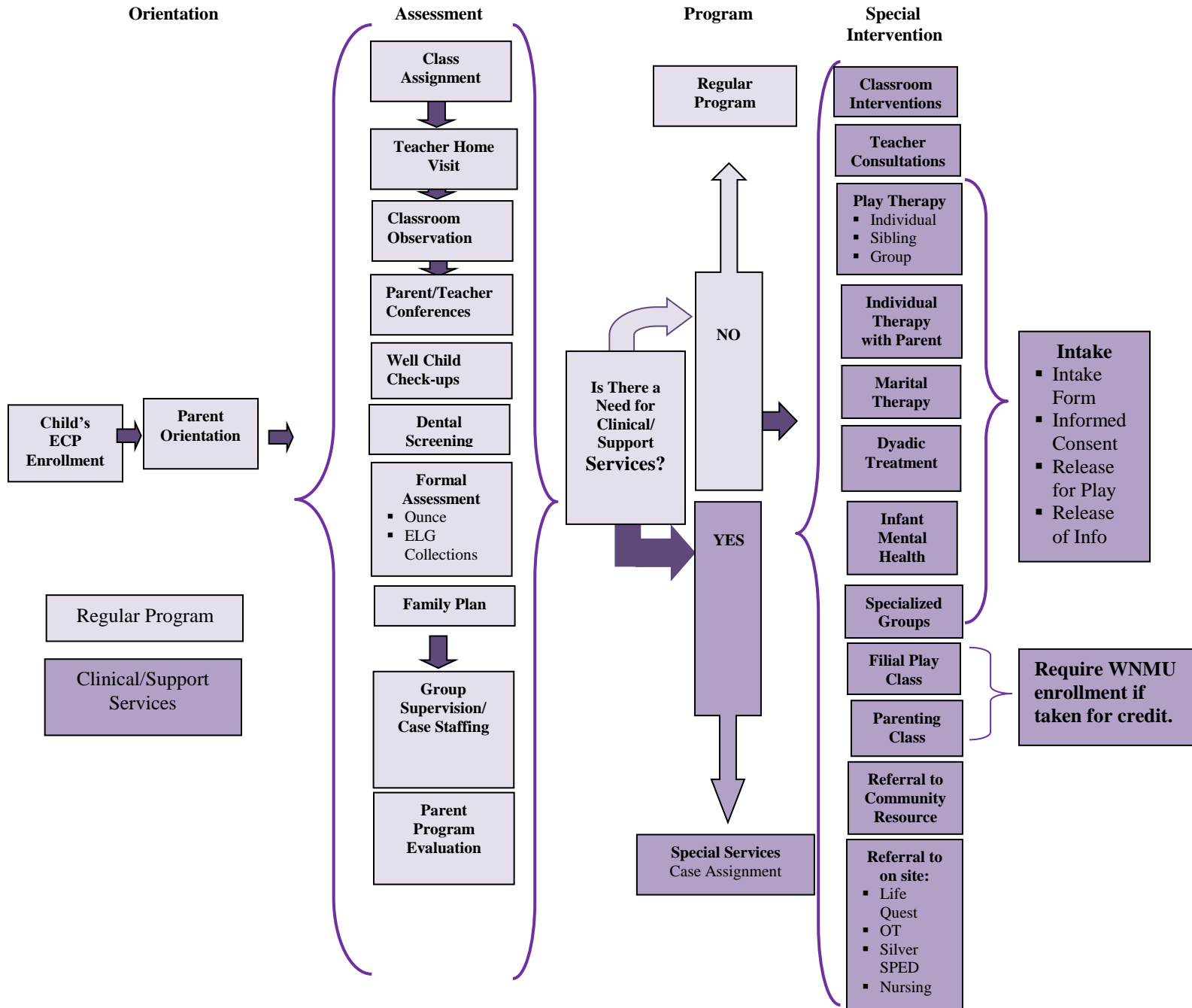
- Referrals will be reviewed by teachers and the Curriculum Coordinator during bi-weekly mentoring meetings to discuss next steps, follow-up plans, and referrals to additional services if necessary
- The Program Administrator communicates with the families in a confidential manner
- If additional support is needed, an Individualized Strategies Plan (ISP) will be created by ECP staff and family members.
- The Care Team Process allows the program to utilize community resources, and to collaborate with other professionals to support child and family needs.

Transition Policies 7.C.06-07, 10.B.14-15

Procedures address transition planning by administrators, teachers, and families to facilitate children's transition from one teacher to another, from group to another, from one classroom to another, and from one program to another.

- **Transition Process for Entry to the Program-** Families and children are transitioned into the program through completing a series of orientations and activities. These include; Program Orientation with administration, Home Visit Interview with teachers, Classroom Orientation in the classroom, and Family Support Plan Interview with the FCC staff.
- **Transition Process for Classroom to Classroom (Teacher to Teacher)-** Whenever possible, a least one teacher will transition to the next age group with the children in order to maintain continuity of care. Teaching placements are for one year.
- **Transition Process for Growing Tree to CDC-** When children enrolled in the Growing Tree reach age three, they may transition into the Child Development Center program at the beginning of the next semester if space allows. The Growing Tree Site Supervisor communicates the need for upcoming transitions to the administration of the CDC, and the teachers, administration and family work together to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Transition Process for Pre-K to Kinder-** During the Family/ Teacher Conference in the fall semester, teachers and families begin to discuss the family's wishes regarding kindergarten placement. In the spring semester, teachers schedule kindergarten site visits, plan a promotion celebration for children and families, return all of the children's portfolio materials to the family, and facilitate an exit interview using the Pre-K Exit Form.
- **Transition Process for Early Intervention to Public School Services (90-Day Transition) -** After appropriate referrals have been made and eligibility is determined, IFSP's and IEP's will take place on site. At least one teacher and Program Administrator will be invited to attend with the family. Teachers may assist in developing and implementing treatment goals for children. Program staff collaborate with service providers from Part C and Part B to ensure that children with IFSP's who are nearing age three receive an appropriate transition meeting 90 days prior to their third birthday.

Flow Chart of ECP/FCC Services



Guidance Policy 1.A.05, 1.B.06, 09, 10, 1.C.04, 1.C.05, 1.D.05, 3.B.13 and NM Child Care Licensing: 8.16.2.34A

The foundation of lifelong learning begins with healthy social and emotional development in the context of relationships. The Early Childhood Programs staff maintains a loving, caring and safe atmosphere, where all children are valued and treated as individual's worthy of respect in a culturally appropriate manner. We believe that by being affirmative and consistent within appropriate flexible environments, few discipline problems arise.

Our Guidance philosophy relies on several underlying principles:

1. If guidance is to have any power at all, it must be grounded in family-teacher partnerships. (Gartrell, 2004)
2. Children are problem solvers and are encouraged to solve problems according to their developmental level.
3. It is the role of the teacher to create appropriate flexible environments, plan developmentally appropriate curriculum, assist children in solving problems, and use the language of play to build social and emotional competence.
4. Effective communication skills decrease behavior problems and increase healthy relationships.
5. Relationships are the most important component to any learning. When children are securely attached, and feel like they are heard, appreciated and understood, they thrive.

In order to address these underlying principles, teachers use a certain set of skills, strategies and techniques that are based in the latest research into child brain development. Within our Program, you will see and hear the following A-F & L strategies:

ACKNOWLEDGING feelings helps the child to learn to identify what feelings are—the first step to learning how to control them and to begin to experience empathy for others. *“You look very happy about that!”*

BOUNDARIES is the process of setting clear limits for the child. Limits and boundaries increase feelings of safety. Boundaries are positively stated and expressed as clear rules such as *“Hands are not for hitting.”*

CHOICES offer the child the opportunity to practice problem solving and to feel empowered. Choices also give children acceptable alternatives to undesirable behavior. *“You may choose to sit on the rug or you may choose to sit on the bean bag. Which do you choose?”*

DISCUSSION helps further explore the dynamics of a situation, once a calmer emotional state has been achieved. It gives the child an opportunity to begin to process what happened. Discussions can occur during classroom meetings or with children individually. *“I know it makes you feel really sad when she doesn't want to play with you.”*

ENCOURAGEMENT Once the child has made a choice, acknowledging that choice encourages the skills to be used again. Encouragement leads to repetition and practice, and confidence which lead to self-regulation. *“You know just what you want to do!”*

FLEXIBILITY is always important when working with children. Use flexibility when selecting a strategy, and selecting the strategy that will work best for the specific situation.

LEVELING Getting down to the child's level.

The guidance philosophy, policies, and techniques of the Early Childhood Programs at WNMU are consistent with the New Mexico licensing standards. Physical hitting or hurting of a child by another child is not permitted. Redirection and setting limits is mandated to prevent and discourage such behavior. Teachers will not use any of the following practices: physical punishment of any type, withholding food, rest, bathroom access, or outdoor activities, abusive or profane language including yelling, and any form of threats or humiliation whether public or private. A copy of the New Mexico Health and Social Services Licensing Procedures Handbook is available in the office for loan to parents. It describes the health and safety standards required by the State, as well as established guidelines for discipline.

Conflict Resolution Policy (for children)

Teaching staff will assist children in resolving conflicts by helping them identify feelings, describe problems, and try alternative solutions.

Violence/Aggression Policy

Every member of Program community (teachers, staff, families, volunteers, and children) has the right to a safe environment. Our policy on violence and aggression stresses positive empowerment for the child and family and development of internal self-control of the child. At times, it may necessary for trained staff to remove a child from the classroom for a length of time in order to help the child regain control. We are committed to discovering the causes of behavior problems and utilizing appropriate techniques to help the child regain control of his/her behavior. These techniques will be documented in the Individualized Services Plan by the teachers, family, and administration. Dismissal from the Program is a last resort and will occur only when the family has refused to cooperate with the ISP agreement.

Assessment and Evaluation of Program *10.F.02-03*

Each semester, families are asked to complete a program evaluation. The purpose of this assessment tool is to determine how well the program is meeting the needs of the family. Family input is highly valued and is used to improve program quality. Results of the program evaluations are reported to the ECPC committee, are posted in each classroom, and are made available at the front desk. Evaluation results are used as a basis for supporting positive activities and policies, and changing those that need improvement. Lab students also complete an evaluation regarding their experience in the center, the results of these evaluations are used to improve the quality of the lab site experience. Evaluations are completed online.

Strategic Planning- Continuous Improvement Process

2.A.05-.06, 4.A.01-.06, 4.D.02, 7.B.04, 10.B.07

The Program utilizes a strategic planning process to support the implementation of the vision and mission, achieve desired outcomes for children, maintain high quality comprehensive services to children and families, and to provide long-term resources to sustain program operations. As part of the continuous program improvement efforts, the programs use a variety of assessment methods to evaluate effectiveness, and develop goals and objectives. Assessments are conducted with staff, children, and the program at large. The purposes, value, and use of these assessments can be found in Section 3 “Curriculum & Family Support.”

Section 4

Food Program

Meals & Snacks

Food Program and Snacks

Good nutrition in the early years of a child's life is extremely important, not only for general physical growth and development, but also for the formation of the brain. A nutritious diet is crucial to ensure normal growth, development, and learning.

Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are provided to the programs by the WNMU Early Childhood Programs. The food program is provided through the Child and Adult Care Food Program at no cost to families. This federal program requires that each family enrolled complete an Income Eligibility Application. It is a requirement, and part of the Early Childhood program's curriculum, that ALL children participate in the hot food program. It is the family's responsibility to fill out the income eligibility form, in its entirety, each fiscal year. Menus are posted so you will know in advance what is being served. Your input is welcome on different foods children would enjoy.

Individual serving amounts provided for each child are specified by the Child/Adult Care Program. Frequently, children prepare snacks or meals as part of the program curriculum. Families are not required to furnish snacks. Please inform the group teacher of any food or drug allergies that may affect your child, as well as any special dietary needs. If your child has a specific dietary need, you are welcome to provide alternative foods for your child only.

Snacks and Special Occasions

Families often like to furnish refreshments for special occasions, such as birthdays, but this is optional. If you choose to bring snacks, please keep them simple and nutritious. Please avoid items with high sugar and fat content.

In planning classroom birthdays, please reinforce the goal of helping children make healthy food choices. Be sure to include colorful fruits and veggies and/or juice in your party menu!

Recommended Party Foods:

- ❖ Fresh fruit or vegetables
- ❖ 100% fruit juice and/or sparkling water
- ❖ Small bags of trail mix
- ❖ Dried fruits, such as raisins, apricots, pears, prunes, dates or apples
- ❖ Fresh fruit or vegetable and cheese tray
- ❖ Yogurt with fresh fruit (i.e., strawberries with vanilla yogurt) and granola or whole grain cereal
- ❖ Low fat yogurt as a dip with veggie sticks such as, carrots
- ❖ Tortilla spread with yogurt and decorated with fresh fruit (pizza)
- ❖ Banana, pumpkin or zucchini bread

- ❖ Whole grain fruity muffins
- ❖ Celery and peanut butter
- ❖ Quesadilla made with low fat cheese
- ❖ Pretzels and peanut butter
- ❖ Finger sandwiches made with whole wheat bread, low fat cheese and lean meats such as, ham or turkey

The New Mexico Health and Social Services Licensing Procedures Handbook describes the health and safety standards required by the State, as well as established guidelines for the kinds and amounts of food to be served for snacks or meals. The handbook is available in the office for loan to families.

Infant Feeding/Breastfeeding/ Bottle Feeding *5.A.14, 5.B.8-10, 11, 13*

Infant teachers work with families to ensure that the food served to infants is based on the child's individual nutritional needs and developmental stage. During the Family History Interview, teachers discuss any food allergies or special dietary needs with families.

The Program welcomes breastfeeding mothers and supports breastfeeding by:

- Accepting, storing, and serving expressed human milk for feedings in the classroom
- Labeling the milk with the infant's name and date
- Storing the milk in a refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the milk was previously frozen)
- Ensuring that staff gently mix, not shake, the milk before serving to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in the milk
- Providing a comfortable place for breastfeeding at both the CDC and Growing Tree
- Coordinating feedings with the infant's mother
- Teaching staff offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup.

Teaching staff does not offer solid foods and fruit juices to infants younger than six months, unless that practice is recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by families. Sweetened beverages are avoided and if 100% fruit juice is served, the amount is limited to no more than 4oz per child daily. The program does not feed cow's milk to infants younger than 12 months (formula is provided), and it serves only whole milk to children 12-24 months.

Section 5

Other

Clothing

Please send one extra change of clothes for your child's cubby to be used in case of spills, biological accidents, or mud and water play. The clothing should be in a bag with the child's name on it. Any soiled clothing will be sent home at the end of the day, and a new set of clothing will be needed for the next day. If the child has no change of clothes, the parent will be called and asked to pick up the child or to bring extra clothes. It is important for children to be able to participate fully in all activities; therefore, clothes should be *suitable for play*, and of a quality that will not cause distress if stained or snagged. Clothing should be loose enough to allow the child to move freely. Fasteners should be of a kind the child can manage alone. Appropriate shoes are important in order for the child to run, climb, and play in the sand. Shoes should fit well, offer good support, and have non-slip soles.

Child care licensing standards require that children go outdoors each day. Your child should be *dressed for current weather* and prepared for changes in weather that could occur during the day. Jackets should be warm but lightweight enough to allow the child to move freely. PLEASE MARK ALL CLOTHING in a way that makes it identifiable if left on the playground or classroom.

Personal Items

Personal items such as a blanket and a small pillow are allowed. However, we ask that you do not allow your child to bring toys, food or other personal items from home. Items such as these will be placed in your child's cubby and taken home at the end of the day.

Visitors/Observers

For the safety of the children in the programs, doors remained locked during operating hours and **all visitors must check in at the front desk and obtain a visitor's pass.**

- **Families-** Family members coming to the program to volunteer may check in at the front desk, and then sign in to document participation in the Family Participation notebooks in the classrooms.
- **Students-** WNMU students and other authorized visitors must check in at the front desk and sign in and out in the Lab Site book.
- **Children-** Children who are not enrolled in the program are not permitted to stay in the classrooms or playgrounds as visitors for the following reasons: 1. State licensing code requires that any child present in the environment must have a current health record on file. 2. There could be legal liability if the visitor is injured or causes injury to another child. 3. A child who is unfamiliar with school procedures may cause difficulties for other children and the teacher. Families who anticipate enrolling a child in the program may bring the child for a short visit, but will be expected to stay with their child for the entire visit and be responsible for the child in an unobtrusive way.

University Laboratory Site

The Early Childhood Programs provide a laboratory setting for college students and education programs for the understanding of young children and their development. Usually university students will observe from an unobtrusive position. Observers do not participate in, nor disrupt, children's activities. Students from advanced classes will be assigned periodically to assist in specific ways with the planned curriculum or special classroom activities. Practicum students may spend extended periods of time at the centers and may have a more significant role in the classrooms with appropriate supervision. Occasionally, teachers and authorized students may be required to complete portfolios, conduct activities, or otherwise participate in daily activities in the classroom. Staff members and students may also take photographs, video tape, or audio tape children for use in class assignments or other educational purposes.

Cell Phone Policy for Families

Please do not use cell phones upon entering the center. Transition time is important for sharing information about your child.

Field Trip Policy

As part of the curriculum, children may go on walking field trips in the vicinity of the school site, and may also go on field trips to offsite locations as appropriate within thirty (30) minutes in a one-way direction. Should a classroom desire to take a field trip beyond the 30 minute boundary, a request is submitted to the Program Administrator who will bring the request at the regularly scheduled coordinators meeting for discussion. Families will be given prior notification as to when a field trip is planned, destination, and time of return, especially when the trip is off site. Appropriate teacher-child ratios will be maintained during all field trips.

[\(https://ecp.wnmu.edu/parent-permission-form/\)](https://ecp.wnmu.edu/parent-permission-form/)

Transportation Policy 10.B.12c, 10.D.06-07

The Early Childhood Programs do not provide daily transportation to children. When staff members do provide transportation for children, they are responsible for the care of children from the time of pick-up to delivery to a responsible adult. The program strives to ensure the safety of all children as pedestrians and passengers.

- All drivers are required to have a current defensive driving certificate.
- All vehicles used for transportation of children will have an operable fire extinguisher, first aid manual, first aid kit, water, and blanket.
- A child shall be transported only if the child is secured in an age/weight appropriate child passenger restraint device or safety belt.
- Operators carry cell phones to ensure communications during emergencies.
- In the event of breakdown, the WNMU maintenance department will supply an alternate vehicle.
- All vehicles used to transport children will meet all applicable state vehicle laws.

- Certification of vehicle licensure and insurance is kept onsite at the CDC

Fire / Evacuation / Disaster Emergency Plan

Evacuation plans are posted in all rooms by exit doors. These plans become familiar to all staff members during monthly drills, during which all staff and students evacuate in an orderly manner. Each classroom is equipped with an emergency bag that contains essential supplies and a contact list for all students. **Families will be contacted should the children be evacuated and unable to return to the Program site.** The complete Disaster and Crisis Response Plan is available on the WNMU Early Childhood Programs website.

Inclement Weather Procedures

The Child Development Center follows the **Silver Schools** inclement weather policy. Please check the local news or radio for information about delays and closures. In the event of a Silver School delay or cancellation:

- 2 Hour Delay: Staff will arrive at 9:30 am, both teacher and teacher assistant. Instructional Assistants arrive as close to their normal schedule as possible.
- Middle of the day cancellations: Staff will contact families to pick up children. Families are asked to come for their children as quickly as possible.
- Full Day Cancellations: The Early Childhood Programs, both Growing Tree and the Child Development Center will be closed.

The Growing Tree Infant Toddler Program follows the Silver Consolidated Schools weather policy. In the event of a Silver Schools delays or cancellation:

- 2 Hour Delay: Staff will arrive at 9:30 am
- Middle of Day Cancellations: Staff will call families to pick up children. Families are asked to come for their children as quickly as possible.
- Full Day Cancellations: Growing Tree will not be in session.

Section 6

Financial

Paying For Childcare

There are different ways parents can elect to pay for childcare.

For current rates contact the front office at 575-538-6344

Cash, Check, Credit: Childcare can be paid in full at the beginning of the semester. Payments must be made to the WNMU Business Office. If not paid in full at the beginning of the semester monthly payments are required the 15th of each month with the final payment for the Fall semester due November 15th and the final payment for the Spring semester is due April 15th. Parents have the option of paying online: Students can pay through their Mustang Express and community families can pay through Marketplace with the following website. https://secure.touchnet.com/C22616_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=244

- Financial Aid: A deduction may be taken from the financial aid to pay for childcare. Any remaining balances will need to be paid monthly by the 15th with the final payment for the Fall semester due November 15th and the final payment for the Spring semester is due April 15.
- CYFD subsidies: A family may apply for childcare subsidies (payment for childcare) directly at the Children, Youth and Families Department. Contracts are issued to the qualifying applicant. ALL contracts are due to the Early Childhood Programs **PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF ATTENDANCE.**

Early Childhood Programs Fee Information

Child Development Center:

Children are enrolled in on semester schedules. A \$25 non-refundable registration fee is collected upon enrollment to reserve an opening for each child for the upcoming semester high school students and PreK are exempt. All tuition is based on the number of weeks in any given semester. Financial Agreements are completed twice yearly in August and December.

Growing Tree Infant Toddler Program:

Children are enrolled for a one-year period, which runs concurrently with the Silver Schools academic schedule. A \$25 per semester non-refundable registration fee for each child is collected to reserve an opening for that child for the upcoming year, except for high school students.

Rates are based on the status of the parent in three categories:

1. Subsidized students*– the Programs accept all state and federally mandated rates. Parent co-pays for this program are established by CYFD. The Program receives reimbursement for eligible children at the state’s 5-STAR, accredited program rate.
2. Unsubsidized WNMU students*: students who do not qualify for CYFD subsidies are assessed a lower fee as one of their student benefits.

3. Non-student/Other subsidies: Community members pay a community rate that is more than for unsubsidized students but less than the program receives for subsidized children. This rate may also be charged to WNMU students who receive child care subsidies through scholarships.

***WNMU student status will be verified at enrollment, census date, and midterm.**

Child care fees also vary by the age of the child and the number of days the child attends the program. The Early Childhood Programs Committee (ECPC) approves all rates.

Tuition and Fees

Families are required to sign a Financial Agreement each semester. The Financial Agreement is a contract for your child care tuition. The fees are tuition based, and reimbursements are not given for absences, or days missed. All financial obligations must be met, and payments must be received as scheduled to prevent disruption of services. Accounts paid in full from semester to semester ensures continued enrollment in the program.

Financial arrangements are made through the WNMU Business Office. Childcare tuition and co-payments are to be paid to the WNMU Business Office only; the centers do not accept payments https://secure.touchnet.com/C22616_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=244). The WNMU Business Office will enforce the WNMU late fee policy for all programs. If your account is not paid in full by the set date, your account will be charged a \$50.00 late fee. If the balance is not paid within two weeks from the date the late fee will be assessed, your account will be sent to collections and you will be responsible for paying collections costs.

Tuition rates are increased annually 3% to meet cost of living adjustments and will be re-evaluated every other year.

CYFD funding is available depending upon income and other criteria. Please contact the CYFD Child Care Services Bureau at 575-538-0259 or 1-877-533-0198 if you are interested.

Financial Agreement Policy

- Tuition is semester based, and there will be no reimbursement for unattended days or program cancellations
- When you follow the proper withdrawal procedures written in the Family Handbook, tuition may be prorated.
- Late fees must be paid prior to the child returning to the program.
- Payments are handled through the WNMU Business Office, and checks or money orders are to be made payable to WNMU.
- If your account is not paid in full by the end of the semester, and financial arrangements have not been set up through the WNMU Business Office, your account balance may be sent to collections.
- Student status will be checked throughout the semester. Should your status change, your account will be adjusted accordingly.

- Enrollment status may NOT be changed once submitted. Should an extenuating circumstance occur that impacts your enrollment status, an appeal may be made to the Administration Committee to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Services may not be rendered if a payment has not been received as scheduled, or if there is a hold on your account due to money owed to WNMU.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 8 weeks to 5 years of age.

Tax Identification Number

Parents claiming a childcare deduction on income tax forms will need the following tax identification number for Western New Mexico University: **85-6000543**. Please note this number for your records and tax purposes.

Certificate of Insurance

The Early Childhood Programs are covered by WNMU's Liability Insurance Policy, which covers liability involving the premises or operations. The certificate can be viewed at the front desk.