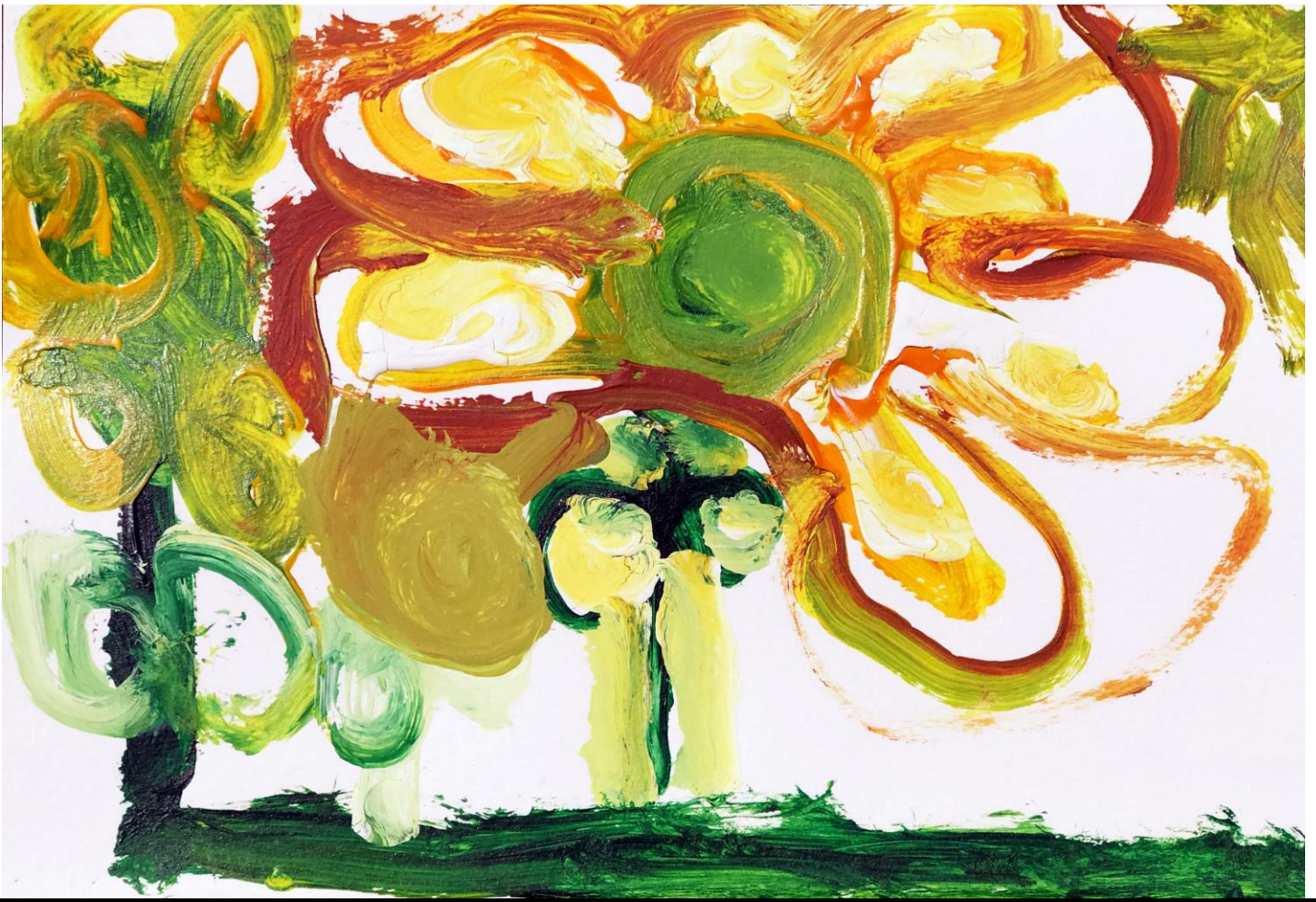




Christina Kent Early Childhood Center Parent Handbook



WELCOME

Welcome to Christina Kent Early Childhood Center (CKECC)! We hope the time you and your child spend at the Center will be happy and joyful. We welcome your involvement at CKECC and encourage you to call and visit the center often. We value your input and your participation.

Contact Information

Executive Director:	Allison Hendricks-Smith
Program Manager:	Jeany Baines
Bookkeeper:	Sandra La Luz
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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Christina Kent Early Childhood Center is to serve the children of economically diverse working families with quality childcare, early education, and nutritional services in a safe and nurturing environment.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Christina Kent Early Childhood Center welcomes families without regard to race, religion, nationality, socioeconomic status, family structure, cultural background, gender, abilities, or preferred language into its facility. The programs of CKECC arise from a common desire for excellence in meeting the needs of children and their families for nurturing growth and development, learning, relationships, and understanding.

We Believe:

- The home is the most important factor in a child's development. We strive to support and complement the family in order to promote the healthy development of your child.
- The dignity and the worth of each child and family is important.
- Loving, trusting, and respecting each child makes the child capable of loving, trusting and respecting others.
- It is important to meet each child's needs for physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth.
- Children deserve a nurturing, safe and happy environment which promotes their desire to learn.
- Children deserve to have teachers who are capable and caring and whose values enable them to be excellent role models.
- Children will have teachers who respect the individuality of each child by working with them in both small group and large group activities.
- Children should have the opportunity to learn through play to develop the skills needed to transition to kindergarten successfully.
- Teaching staff should provide guided and unguided experiences through which the children can learn through discovery.

General Information



GENERAL INFORMATION

Accreditation and Licensing: CKECC is a 5-star National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited facility licensed by the State of NM Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD).

Enrollment: CKECC offers a variety of enrollment options to accommodate all families; we do not cap our CYFD subsidized spots, and also offer a Family Sliding Scale to make tuition rates feasible for everyone.

Hours of Operation: CKECC is open from 7:30am to 5:30pm Monday through Friday. We also offer a limited Early Bird Program from 7:00-7:30am. The center is closed for various holidays throughout the year including:

January	Martin Luther King Day In-Service (Professional Training) Day
February	President's Day
April	Good Friday
May	Memorial Day
July	Independence Day
August-	In-Service (Professional Training) Day
September	Labor Day
November	Thanksgiving Break
December	Winter Break

Children's Records: Before your child can be admitted to CKECC, you must complete a number of enrollment and registration forms. These will be reviewed with you at your parent orientation. Forms are updated periodically. It is a mandatory state regulation that Christina Kent Early Childhood Center has a copy of your child's immunization records, and that you provide us with updated records when shots are given.

Nondiscrimination Policy: All children in attendance at CKECC, regardless of race, color, national and ethnic origin, religious preference, or special needs are admitted and receive equal privileges, programs and activities. Children are offered the same meals with no discrimination, and we will make accommodations as needed for special dietary requirements.

Special Needs Philosophy:

The Christina Kent Early Childhood Center (CKECC) believes that children with special needs should be included with their typically developing peers for all daily activities. CKECC defines special needs as any child with a developmental delay, diagnosed condition, or social, emotional, or behavioral concern due to family situations. We believe CKECC programs should allow for children with special needs to learn from the model of the other children and for the typically developing children to learn new skills in assisting and befriending a child with special needs. CKECC collaborates with other local agencies to provide, with permission from parents, referrals for developmental screenings and, if warranted, evaluation to ensure that a child is receiving the appropriate services to address their ongoing needs. CKECC's goal is to provide ongoing assessment and curriculum that is adaptable for all children, regardless of special needs they may or may not have.

Disenrollment policy: KECC reserves the right to disenroll children for any of the following reasons:

- Failure of families to pay tuition on time or late fees as assessed
- Falsification of claims regarding income statements for purposes of admission and tuition determination
- Chronic lateness in picking up child(ren) at the end of the business day
- Chronic lateness in bringing children to KECC in the mornings.
- If your child has continuous behavioral issues which are causing harm to other children or staff members, we will require you to obtain other services to assist us in working with your child. If a parent does not follow through with this process, your child could be disenrolled. Please feel free to see the Executive Director for seeking assistance in the community.

Tuition: KECC relies on tuition fees to meet basic costs. Therefore, it is crucial that tuition be paid on time. You may pay your tuition on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. If you are on the state assistance program through CYFD and are given a co-payment, the monthly amount will be due the first two weeks of that month. If your account becomes delinquent you will be notified and given an opportunity to pay the balance.

Parents who fall behind in making their tuition payments may lose their childcare slot.

In order for children to be enrolled at KECC at least one adult member of the household must maintain a full time job (defined as working 30 or more hours per week), full-time student enrollment or a combination of both. There is no change in the tuition you owe when your child is absent due to illness, vacations or holidays. Fees must be paid for every week that the child is enrolled at KECC including weeks containing holidays and when snow days or other emergencies cause KECC to close for all or part of the day or week.

Withdrawal: KECC must receive written notice two weeks prior to the child's withdrawal and all fees and charges must be paid prior to withdrawal.

Christina Kent Early Childhood Center CYFD Child Care Assistance & KECC Sliding Scale (Tuition)

Christina Kent receives government and private funding to provide affordable, high-quality child care and education. If a family's household income is 150% or less of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, it is highly likely that the family will qualify for Child Care Assistance (CCA) through NM CYFD.

All incoming families will meet with Christina Kent's Executive Director and/or Program Manager to discuss the family's household income, number in household and general circumstances. Those families that qualify for CCA will be required to apply for assistance from CYFD in order to enroll their child at Christina Kent.

If a family does not qualify for CCA, they will be required to bring a document signed by a CYFD caseworker stating this. These families will be considered for the lowest range of the Christina Kent sliding scale tuition.

If a family refuses to apply for CCA, even though they may qualify, they can still enroll at Christina Kent but must pay the full market rate of \$208 per week.

If a family does not meet Christina Kent's work/school requirement (one member of the family must be enrolled full-time in school or work full-time [30+ hours], or a combination of both), they are not eligible for the Christina Kent sliding scale. They may enroll their child at the full market rate of \$208 per week.

Exceptions:

Families who do not qualify for CAA, but report a low income, may be eligible for our Family Sliding Scale. Documents that may be used to qualify a family for the sliding scale are:

- Pay Stubs
- Tax Returns
- SNAP (165% FPL)
- LIHEAP (150% FPL)
- Adult Medicaid (under ACA) (138%)

CYFD Child Care Assistance Guidelines

Families are eligible for financial assistance if they meet the state's low-income guidelines and need child care to work, are looking for work (TANF), or are attending employment training. If you are attending school, you may also be eligible.

You are guaranteed child care if you are on Public Assistance and need child care in order to meet any work participation requirements. If you left Public Assistance for a job and need child care to go to work, you are guaranteed assistance in paying for child care for one year after leaving Public Assistance.

Eligibility is based on:

- income
- your reasons for needing day care
- your child's age and individual needs

Payment is based on:

- income
- family size
- how many children you have in child care

Part of the required payment you make for your child is called a fee or co-payment and is paid directly to Christina Kent.

APPLICATIONS ON WALK-IN or APPOINTMENT BASIS at CYFD

Child Care Services Bureau
3401 Pan American Freeway NE

Albuquerque NM 87107
Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

BE PREPARED!

If you have everything, it can be processed the same day!

You must bring the following documentation:

- (1) current check stub if paid monthly
- (2) current check stubs if paid bi-weekly
- (4) current check stubs if paid weekly
- If you have not been in a new job long enough to have the above check stubs, then a letter signed by the employer is required with your hours, wages, and start date and telephone number.
- Verification of any other income (child support, SSI, alimony, etc.)
- Birth certificates for ALL children (even if you do not need child care for them). Need a birth certificate? Contact Vital Records Office at 505-841-4185
- Social Security cards for ALL household members or a printout from the Social Security office with a social security number on it.
- School schedule for adult household members
- Picture ID for head of household
- Verification of residency (lease agreement, utility bill)
- Child care provider – name, address, telephone number (if provider is a private individual, please provide the person's social security number)
- TANF recipients may be required to obtain a DWP005, Work Participation for job search; volunteer work, etc. from their TANF caseworker

KNOW WHEN TO GO!

The Children, Youth & Families Department: Child Care Services Bureau can be a BUSY place...but don't let that keep you away. Here are some hints:

- 8:00 am is a good time to apply. The office tends to be busier later in the day
 - The busy months are January, May and August
 - Have everything with you that are listed on the documentation list.
- BE PREPARED!

Each year all parents are asked to requalify or recertify for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and tuition may change at this time. In the meantime, if your income goes up or down, please notify the office staff so that we can recalculate your fee to meet your new wage. We take all methods of payment including Visa and MasterCard. We also have the ability to run your debit/credit cards automatically for your tuition. Please see the office if you're interested in this feature. Please keep all receipts for the tuition that you have paid as a record for your income taxes.

School Procedures



SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Arrival and Departure: For safety reasons, you or any other adult who drops off or picks up your child must enter the building with the child and must sign him/her in and out each day in order to

maintain daily records of attendance and meals. Please be certain that everyone authorized by you to bring your child or pick up your child is aware of this requirement. Every child must be signed in and out every day.

Children may not be signed in prior to 7:30 (the start of the school day) unless Early Baird participation has been previously arranged!

All children must arrive by 9:30am each day.

If you are unable to arrive by 9:30 you must call the school to let us know. Habitual lateness may result in the disenrollment of your child.

We prefer that children NOT be picked up during naptime, out of respect for your child as well as the other children in the classroom.

Children must be picked up by 5:30pm. Parents who will be late must call CKECC in advance. Parents who pick up their children late two or more times may be assessed a late fee of \$2.00 per minute they are late. The business office will send an invoice for the amount of the late fee.

If someone else will be picking up your child, be sure that the person's name is listed on your child's pick up form. Children will not be allowed to leave with anyone without express, written permission from the parent. Please inform anyone picking up your child that they should bring some form of photo identification to show the admitting staff member so that identity can be verified.

Safety:

All the exterior doors of the CKECC are locked from the outside at all times. These doors are not locked from the inside, thus enabling a rapid exit in case of an emergency evacuation of the building is necessary. This is for staff and child safety. Parents are provided key pad codes, and visitors are required to ring the doorbell.

If a designated person comes to pick up your child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance, **for the child's safety**, Christina Kent Early Childhood Center staff will keep the child at the school until another person can pick up the child.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect: By law, staff at CKECC must report any incident of suspected abuse or neglect regarding a child in care to the New Mexico Department of Children, Youth and Families. Likewise, parents have an obligation to report any concerns of abuse. CKECC makes every effort to respect the dignity, worth and individuality of each child, family member and staff member through relationships that are based on mutual trust, respect and positive treatment. However, if at any time you have a concern, please feel free to schedule an appointment with the Executive Director to discuss the matter immediately. It is our intention to address all parent concerns in a timely and mutually agreeable manner. If you believe that your concerns have not been addressed, you also have the right to contact any member of the CKECC Board of Directors. You also may contact the New Mexico Department of Children, Youth and Families at 841-4825.

Filing Complaints:

If you have a concern or question regarding your child or your child's classroom, please speak to your child's Teacher first. If you are not comfortable addressing your concerns with your child's teacher, you are welcome to speak to the Executive Director or Program Manager.

Cell Phone Policy:

The Center is a cell phone free zone. We ask that when you enter the building to drop off or pick up your child, that you turn off your cell phone or leave it in your vehicle. Often teachers will want to speak with you about your child's day. It is helpful if the teacher has your undivided attention.

Parent Involvement



PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

CKECC has an open door policy for parents to visit their child's class. CKECC encourages parents to participate in the education of their young children. We are here to support your efforts to learn as much as you can about your child's development. We have a variety of fun family events and we encourage you and your family members to attend. Parents are asked to:

- Attend our family centered events: Living Wall Planting Day, Open House, and 98 Apples to name a few
- Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences that are held two to three times per year
- Accompany children on field trips
- Read to the children
- Join your child for a meal at CKECC (parent is asked to call in advance.)
- Check child's Information Pocket on his/her classroom door on a daily basis
- Read your weekly parent e-mails and attached lesson plans
- Please return paperwork for child's file to the office in a timely manner. Some of our State paperwork has deadlines that we MUST meet

Changes in Address or Phone Numbers: Please notify the Center's office staff immediately when any change in address or phone numbers occurs for you or for your emergency contacts. The Center must have accurate addresses and telephone numbers in case of an emergency at all times.

Conferences: Parents are welcome to visit CKECC at any time. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled two to three times a year – Parent attendance at these conferences is mandatory. Every attempt will be made to schedule them at a time that is convenient for you. If at any time you would like an additional conference, please notify your child's Lead Teacher or the administrative staff. We will be glad to schedule an appointment.

At parent-teacher conferences, your child's progress will be reviewed using the Focused Portfolio method. Throughout the year, teachers will be collecting samples of your child's work, will photograph him/her doing activities, and will record direct quotations made by your child. These will be compiled into a portfolio, which will be reviewed with you at each conference. Your child's progress will be measured using developmental milestones.

Family Resource Area: Just inside the entryway you will locate a table with pertinent information for our families. Please take the time to visit this area periodically.

Classroom Information: Classroom information will be located in each classroom. In addition, weekly e-mails will be sent to you with updates on your child's classroom and accompanying lesson plan. Each class is also featured weekly on our social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). Finally, our website has a featured page for each of our classrooms.

Clothing: Please dress your child in comfortable attire that is appropriate for active play and current weather conditions. Children will go outside to play if the weather is not inclement and is above freezing. We do not recommend that your child wear jewelry to school. Jewelry is easily lost and often poses a hazard to the safety of your child and others.

Children may get messy during our active day, please be aware of this when you dress your child for school!

During warm weather months we do have weekly Water Days. Please be prepared to leave a swimsuit, towel and optional water shoes for your child to use during these months.

Children in each classroom must have a complete set of extra clothes that includes underwear, socks, pants and a shirt. All clothing, jackets, hats and mittens or gloves must be labeled with the child's name.

Personal Belongings: Each classroom has guidelines for personal belongings such as toys or other play items. Please see your child's teacher for specific guidelines. CKECC is not responsible for personal belongings brought from home. Please be advised that we not replace lost or broken items.

CKECC appreciates receiving clothing that your child is no longer using at home. CKECC especially needs gently used underwear, pants and items for dress up (ties, hats, shoes, belts, uniforms, etc.). If you would like to make a donation, please see the office staff.

Confidentiality: All children's files are kept in locked cabinets. The Administrative Team has keyed access to these files. Pertinent information is provided to teaching staff and also kept locked in classroom cabinets. All staff members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement upon accepting a position with CKECC. Employees at CKECC respect the privacy of all children enrolled at the Center and all information concerning the children and/or their families is kept confidential.

We will send home Incident and Injury Reports (accordingly) for any situation involving your child. Please note that our Confidentiality Policy does not allow us to share the names of any child other than your own either verbally or in writing involved in any incident.

Changes and Concerns: Changes in your life, family, living arrangements, or people who are important to your child can have a dramatic impact on the feelings and behavior of your child. Please share with us any change that you believe might affect your child and that might be reflected on his/her behavior at CKECC. Occasionally we may call you if we think there is information that needs to be shared with you on a timely basis regarding your child or if we need your input or have questions.

Remember that you may call us at 242-0557 or fax us at 242-4885 throughout the day if you have any questions or concerns or would like to check on your child. Our email address is info@christinakent.org and you may feel free to contact us there, too.

Emergencies



Emergencies

Center Closures: Occasionally, weather or environmental conditions (water main break, gas leak, etc) in the area cause unsafe conditions that require us to close the Center for the safety of the children and staff.

The basic weather policy is as follows:

WE FOLLOW ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (APS) FOR OUR SNOW DAY DELAYS AND CLOSURES. IF APS HAS ANNOUNCED A DELAYED SCHEDULE THE CENTER WILL ALSO BE DELAYED. FOR A 2 HR DELAY CKECC WILL OPEN AT 9:30. ON THESE DAYS NO BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED. ON RARE OCCASIONS, AN EARLY CLOSURE MAY BE NECESSARY DUE TO AREA-WIDE, VERY HAZARDOUS WEATHER. IF THIS OCCURS, WE WILL CALL YOU DIRECTLY TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD. IF YOU CAN NOT BE REACHED, THE NEXT PERSON ON THE CONTACT LIST WILL BE CALLED.

Please tune to Channel's 4, 7 or 13 or our website or Facebook Page for updates regarding delayed start times or school closures. CKECC may not always come up on the TV scroll; please follow APS's schedule. In the event weather conditions arise when APS is on winter break please check our website or Facebook page. We reserve the right to make schedule adjustments as necessary.

If weather or unforeseen conditions cause CKECC to close, it is due to community wide safety conditions beyond our control. We have aligned our closure decisions with those of APS because it gives us the best possibility to make reasonable and safe decisions.

We do not reduce the CKECC fees or provide refunds for the very rare times when these situations caused by weather or other emergencies occur. We also understand that weather conditions in your neighborhood may not look "bad enough" to close. However, we must follow safety guidelines that work for the majority of families and staff at CKECC.

Fire and Disaster Procedures: We will conduct monthly fire and quarterly disaster drills with the children. In the case of a real emergency, children and staff will evacuate to the First United Methodist parking lot located behind CKECC. Emergency contact information (and medications) for each child are taken with a designated staff member in all emergency situations. If it is necessary to evacuate to a shelter we will take the children to either the First United Methodist Church (315 Coal Ave SW) or if we need to evacuate the block entirely the Barelas Community Center (801 Barelas Rd SW). We will contact parents when we are stabilized and inform you about the emergency situation and our location.

Lockdown Situations: We do practice locking down as part of our disaster drill protocol. During these situations the children gather together in an area of the classroom farthest from the threat, all classroom doors are locked from the inside, the lights are turned off, and children are kept quiet and calm with the assistance of their teachers. No one enters or exists the building during lockdown drills or actual lockdown situations. In the case of an actual lockdown situation, we will call all parents AFTER the lockdown has been lifted, and will also send a written description home as well. Please note we will not contact parents DURING an active lockdown, as our priority at the time needs to remain focused on the safety of the children.

Medical Information



MEDICAL/SICKNESS

Allergies: A doctor's note is required for all food and other allergies (latex, pets) your child may have. **It is your responsibility to inform the staff of this allergy. For your child's safety, we must post this for all staff members to see.**

It is quite common for young children to become sick several times throughout the year when they are enrolled in childcare. Our policies are designed to minimize the amount of exposure our staff and children have to potentially contagious conditions. Please call us when your child will be out due to illness. We strongly recommend that you have a plan for someone to care for your child in the event of illness. We recognize that it is often difficult for working parents to make arrangements to take care of children when they are sick, but it is necessary.

The Center does not have the staff or facilities to care for sick children. If your child is not well enough to participate in the full range of daily activities, including indoor and outdoor play, your child is not well enough to attend that day.

Please note that we take the children outside to play several times each day. Research indicates that children who are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions do not become ill from playing in the fresh air. We do not have the ability to keep one child indoors while the other children are outdoors. If your child is well enough to be at the center, he/she is well enough to be outside. Please provide adequate outdoor wear each day.

Medicine: The staff at CKECC will administer both current prescription as well as over-the-counter (OTC) medications to your child. If your child needs to take a medication during the time he/she is at CKECC, you will need to complete a special medication form available in the office. You must bring the medication in the original pharmacy or OTC container. Prescription medication labels must be current, and have the child's name, dosage, and the doctor's name on it. All medications are kept in a locked box in the administrative office.

Although sun block is not considered a medication, we require a signed release from you stating that we may apply sun block to your child. We strongly advise that sun block be used throughout the year. We will supply a children's sunblock to be used by your child. If you prefer a specific brand, you may supply your own with your child's name clearly labeled on the container.

Immunizations: All children must have the following immunizations, with records on file, before they can attend CKECC:

Diphtheria/Tetnus/Pertussis (DTAP)
Polio (OPV/IPV)
Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)
Haemophilus Influenza Type B (HIB)
Hepatitis B (HEPB)
Pneumococcal (PCV)
Varicella (VAR)
Hepatitis A (HEPA)

If your child is sent home due to illness, your child may not return to school for 24 hours or until the specified time listed on the illness notice you will be given at the time you pick up your child. In some cases, a doctor's clearance will be required before the child is readmitted. At the time your child returns to the center, he/she will be checked for symptoms of illness. CKECC administrative staff reserves the right to refuse service for a child who displays symptoms of illness and who may be infectious and/or not able to participate in the daily activities.

We will call you to pick up your child if he or she comes to school with or develops symptoms of any of the following illnesses:

- **Fever:** We will ask you to pick up your child if he/she develops a temperature of 101 degrees or more while at the Center. Remember that giving your child medicine to reduce the symptoms of fever and then bringing him/her to CKECC prolongs the recovery process and exposes other children and staff to the illness.
- **Diarrhea or vomiting:** If not accompanied by a fever, the child may return when the symptoms cease without the aid of medication.
- **Colds:** Your child may attend CKECC if he/she is able to go outside, has a clear discharge from the nose (not green or yellow), and has no fever. If your child has a lingering cough, he/she should be seen by a doctor.
- **Strep Throat:** Strep throat is a bacterial infection that causes inflammation and pain in the throat.
- **Ear Infections:** Your child should see a physician and may not return to CKECC until after he/she has been on the prescribed medication for 24 hours or more.
- **Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis):** Your child should see a physician and may not return to CKECC until after he/she has been on the prescribed medication for 24 hours or more.
- **Lice (Pediculosis):** Your child may return after treatment has eliminated the condition (usually 2 days of treatment). All signs of infestation must be gone.
- **Impetigo:** Your child may return to CKECC after medication has been administered for 24 hours, or when sores are dry with no yellow crust and no longer oozing (7-10) days.
- **Chicken Pox:** Your child's pox must be totally dry and scabbed over before returning to CKECC.
- ***Ringworm, Athlete's Foot, Cold Sores:*** Your child may attend if the infected area is covered and is being treated.
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie):** Your child may return with a Dr's note.

If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms at home, please do not bring them to CKECC!

If you are called to pick up your child who is ill, we will first try to reach you, and then will begin calling emergency contacts on your child's authorization list. It is essential that you keep us informed of changes in address or telephone numbers. You will be expected to pick up your child within 30 minutes after receiving our call.

Your child may also be sent home if he/she is behaving as follows: lethargic, sleepy, complains of headache and/or stomachache, or any unusual behavior indicative of illness. Sometimes a child's behavior reflects anxiety or a reaction to a change they are experiencing in their life. If you or your family are experiencing significant changes in your home life that may impact your child's emotions, physical health or reactions at school, please notify the administrative staff at CKECC.

Curriculum



Curriculum

CKECC offers a play-based Reggio Emilia Inspired program that will strengthen your child's love of learning. Young children learn through play by using their five senses – seeing, touching, smelling, hearing and tasting. The ability to have hands on experience helps children to organize information and to form concepts that are used throughout life. CKECC provides program activities that give children opportunities for experimentation and self-satisfaction. Teachers strive to provide an environment where children can interact and develop with respect, honesty, compassion and affection. At CKECC, we focus on learning through doing rather than on the end product.

The classrooms at CKECC are separated by age groups. The Bunny classroom is for two and young three year olds. The Teddy classroom is for older three year olds and young four year olds. The Busy Bee classroom is for older four year olds and young five year olds, and is a NM PreK Program.

Some of the Values and Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach are as follows:

- **The Hundred Languages of Children:** Reggio educators believe that children have the capacity for representing ideas in a wide variety of symbolic and graphic modes. Reggio teachers greatly emphasize various visual and expressive arts as symbolic tools or languages of the children that should be cultivated. The hundred “languages” are the many modes of expression, such as speech, writing, movement, drawing, painting, sculpture, shadow play, collage and music, through which children communicate and learn about their world.
- **The Image of the Child:** The educators in Reggio Emilia first and foremost always speak about the image they have of the child. Adults see children as competent, full of potential and active in constructing his or her own knowledge through interactions with others.
- **The Role of the Environment:** Through conscious use of space, colour, natural light, displays of children's work, and attention to nature and detail, the environment serves as another teacher.
- **Teachers and Children as Partners in Learning:** A strong image of the child has to correspond to a strong image of the teacher. They are values, supported for their experience and their ideas and seen as researchers.
- **Not a Pre-Set Curriculum but a Process of Inviting and Sustaining Learning:** Once teachers have prepared an environment rich in materials and possibilities they observe and listen to the children in order to know how to proceed with their work.
- **Children's Relationships and Interactions:** Education has to focus on each child and their relationship with the family, with other children, teachers, the school and the community.

*This information was gathered from various Reggio Emilia publications.

Assessment Plan: CKECC has chosen the Focused Portfolio Assessment Tool to observe, assess and interpret data for each individual child. Focused Portfolio is widely accepted as the most appropriate assessment tool for young children because it is based on observations and developmental milestones. This tool has been adopted by NAEYC as the standard by which to assign a rubric rating for each developmental domain. The Focus Portfolio is used as a means to collect data, show progression, and to inform teachers about individual strengths when planning lessons.

Daily Program: Children function best and are most comfortable in an organized and structured program. They like to know what takes place next. Christina Kent Early Childhood Center flows in a predictable manner, allowing the child to know what will take place next.

Daily Schedule: Each day includes family-style meal times, circle time, free play, rest time, creative experiences and outdoor play.

Meals and Snacks: Mealtime at CKECC is a special time when children are given a wide variety of healthy, colorful and flavorful foods to eat. We serve all meals family style. Through our Food Program (CACFP), children not only eat food that is important for their physical growth and development, but they learn about food, good nutrition, how to set the table, how to serve themselves, how to clean up after eating and how to socialize during mealtimes.

CKECC participates in the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CKECC serves the children breakfast from 7:30 to 9:45am, lunch and at 3:00pm, an afternoon snack. Lunch times vary depending on the classroom. Menus are posted in each classroom and on the front parent bulletin board. Please do not allow your child to bring food into CKECC as they arrive in the morning. To do so is a violation of our agreement with the Child and Adult Care Food Program. If your child has been eating in the car on the way to CKECC, please have him/her finish his/her food in the car. CACFP reimburses CKECC for food served at breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack.

As per NAEYC and USDA guidelines: Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers.

Farm to Preschool: We have created a Farm to Preschool Program here at CKECC in which all children participate. Some of the key aspects of this program are as follows:

- Recycling
- Composting
- Gardening (Including our Community Living Wall)
- "Try Days"

Guidance/ Discipline: Positive relationships are valued, and from these relationships, guidance techniques will be implemented in ways that are respectful and supportive of the children in our care. At CKECC we view children as competent and strong, and that social/emotional growth comes from working with others, forming strong relationships, and having meaningful school experiences. Staff strive to understand the meaning behind behaviors that may be challenging, and how to best support all children.

Some techniques that are implemented at CKECC include using literature that focuses on conflict resolution and problem solving, identifying and expressing feelings in developmentally appropriate ways, mindful breathing and calming exercises, redirection, natural consequences, active listening,

designated quiet areas, individualized plans, clear expectations, role playing, offering of choices, family staff communication, and positive modeling by all staff.

If your child is having ongoing behavioral issues we will reach out to you as his/her parents to work with us toward developing an individualized plan for your child. We will also ask your permission to institute the assistance of our Inclusion Consultant. This individual is trained in available services and will assess your child, make recommendations and provide suggestions and supports for your child and his/her teaching team.

CKECC staff is strictly prohibited from:

- Physically punishing a child in any way
- Withdraw of food, rest, water or bathroom opportunities
- Use of abusive, profane, threatening or hurtful language
- Isolation of a child without the ability to supervise that child
- Use of any other punishment that is hazardous to the physical, emotional or mental health of a child

Field trips: Teachers will carry a backpack with a first aid kit, contact information and cell phone during all trips. Parents will give permission for their child to participate, and parent participation is always welcomed for any field trips.

Walking field trips: Teachers walk with the children to local community spots such as the park or library on a regular basis. We see our proximity to so many wonderful downtown sites as an asset to our program.

Bussed Field Trips: We host a few all school fieldtrips each year that may require bussed transportation due to location and proximity to CKECC.

Napping/ Quiet Time: Children are required to have a rest period throughout the day as per our State Licensing regulations. All children are provided with a designated mat. Please bring in a blanket for your child as a comfort during this time. We will launder all blankets on at least a weekly basis. If your child does not want to sleep, he/she will be provided with a book or another quiet activity to do while the others are resting. We do ask children to be respectful of their friends and to be as quiet as possible during this time.

Celebrations: CKECC celebrates many holidays throughout the year, and the children and teachers plan classroom celebrations. You are encouraged to attend these celebrations. If you decide to share food for a holiday, birthday or other celebration, please note all food must comply with our healthy celebration requirements per our participation in the CACFP. You will be notified of upcoming holidays and celebrations through flyers, announcements posted in the classroom, on the front door, in the child's classroom "pocket" and by other written and verbal means.

* As per NAEYC and USDA guidelines: Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers.

Transitions: Children at CKECC move (transition) from one classroom to the next based on their developmental readiness and availability of space in the next classroom. Each classroom has a set

of milestones that the teachers use as guidelines when evaluating your child for transition readiness. Your child's teacher will notify you when your child is ready to move to the next classroom.

When your child is ready, he/she will gradually transition to the next classroom. Usually, this process takes one week to complete. At first, your child will spend only a brief amount of time in the new classroom. As your child is ready, more time will be spent so that by the end of the transition period, he/she is spending an entire day in the new classroom.

You will be given the opportunity to meet with the teachers in the new classroom prior to your child's transition. At that time you will be given an overview of the daily activities and classroom procedures.

Education Committee: The Christina Kent Education Committee is made up of board and staff members with extensive experience and knowledge of early childhood multicultural education and strong ties to our local ECME community. The committee meets monthly to discuss ways to support the educational components of CKECC. The committee suggests ways to ensure that educational excellence is being held to the highest standards. Some examples of this vision include an increased awareness of the Reggio Emilia Approach to learning, additional opportunities for school-wide literacy experiences, intentional introduction of materials to students, increased collaboration with the community, measuring learning outcomes and creating additional ways to express artistic ideas.