

# Parent's Guide:

## Policies & Procedures



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

*We See Tomorrow in Every Child*



UCLC goes above & beyond  
And is QUALITY RATED at Step 4

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# Meet The Team

## The Administrative Team

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## Learning Center Teaching Team

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<b>Amy Peterschick</b> , Yellow Family Teacher B.S. General Studies Minor Early Childhood	<a href="mailto:Amy.peterschick@und.edu">Amy.peterschick@und.edu</a>	October 2006-May 2019 April 2021
<b>Monica Jackson</b> , Blue Family Teacher B.S. Early Childhood Education	<a href="mailto:Monica.jackson@UND.edu">Monica.jackson@UND.edu</a>	April 2018
<b>Ivie Turner</b> , Blue Family Teacher B.S. Early Childhood Education Minor Special Education	<a href="mailto:Ivie.walker@und.edu">Ivie.walker@und.edu</a>	May 2022

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Information about the UCLC Caregiver Team is available on the website: [www.und.edu/uclc](http://www.und.edu/uclc)

## Welcome

Dear Families,

Welcome to the University Children's Learning Center (UCLC, also commonly referred to as the Learning Center). I am honored that you have chosen the Learning Center to be a member of your team in the care and early education of your young child. While UCLC provides a nurturing environment that will help your child feel safe when apart from you, the Learning Center is also dedicated to providing your child with a strong pre-kindergarten foundation.

I invite you to attend a new family orientation. There is one scheduled at the beginning of each semester. Please do not wait until the orientation to ask questions! I encourage you to ask any question you have; no question is insignificant. After all, you are trusting us with your young child's early education. Forging a strong relationship between home and school is a key element that will positively contribute to your child's growth and development.

This family guide you are about to read contains important information regarding your child's participation in the quality programming offered at UCLC. Families, teachers, caregivers, and the administrative team are equally responsible for familiarizing themselves with all the policies as outlined. The expectation is that you will read its contents and refer to the guide as necessary.

I strongly encourage you to stop by my office and visit. Whether you want to ask a question, share a funny story, or express a concern, I want to hear from you. I am looking forward to getting to know you and your child, because together we can create an environment that will allow your child to blossom!

Sincerely,

Gwen Puckett, M.S.  
Director

## Introduction

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### University Children's Learning Center

The Learning Center is dual licensed, as a childcare center and a preschool, by the ND Department of Human Services (NDDHS). UCLC is approved as a pre-kindergarten site by the ND Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI). UCLC is licensed to provide quality care and early education for children of UND students, faculty and staff, and families from the Greater Grand Forks Community. The Learning Center welcomes children from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. The Learning Center is committed to integrating children with special needs. UCLC also provides educational training for UND students from a variety of colleges and departments on campus.

The Learning Center is open 7:00 AM until 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday. The Learning Center is closed for official state and federal holidays; for one week in August for professional development; and for a few days at the end of December. All care is provided on a full day basis. Parents may choose from one of three scheduling options: Monday through Friday, Tuesday and Thursday, or Monday, Wednesday, Friday. No care is offered on a part day basis.

An important element of the Learning Center's work is the attention and time given to providing quality care and early education to the children enrolled. The Learning Center strives to maintain high standards such as those put forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (<https://www.naeyc.org/>). Additionally, the teachers are expected to abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct>).

The Learning Center is licensed by the NDDHS, which indicates compliance with State Health, Safety, and Fire Codes, and State Guidelines for Center-Based Child Care (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/information/acdata/pdf/75-03-10.pdf>) and Preschool Care (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/information/acdata/pdf/75-03-11.pdf>). You are invited to look through the regulations at the links provided or you may request to see hard copy. UCLC is inspected on an annual basis by the fire department, health department, and childcare licensing. Childcare licensing also conducts a minimum of one unannounced drop in visit, annually.

UCLC is also approved, on an annual basis, by the DPI (<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/ECE/Prekapproval/>) as an approved pre-kindergarten site. This approval indicates compliance with teacher education standards and the use of a research-based preschool curriculum.

UCLC has also completed all four quality rating steps through ND Bright and Early Quality Enhancement Program (<http://www.brightnd.org/>). Step 4 approval indicates that the environment we provides meets criteria provided by a research-based environmental rating scale (<https://ers.fpg.unc.edu/>), a formal assessment tool (<https://teachingstrategies.com/>) is utilized to measure and track children's growth and development, and that the teachers meet the criteria of a research-based measurement tool (<http://teachstone.com/class/>) that rates their interactions with children to ensure they are striving to cultivate supportive, structured, and engaging classroom experiences.

The University Children's Learning Center strives to provide quality care and early education by:

- ✓ Enrolling children in a color area "family," which fosters a sense of security and belonging in their classroom community. This also allows teachers and families to build a solid foundation based on trust. Apart from the Red Family (toddler aged children), children do not move to different classrooms or teachers as they get older. Instead, they stay within their own classroom community.
- ✓ Having classrooms staffed with a minimum of two full-time benefitted teacher, employed through the University of North Dakota, who have an educational background in early childhood education or related field. In addition, student caregivers, who have received training in the practices of developmentally appropriate early childhood education, work with each color family.
- ✓ Encouraging children to learn about themselves through active exploration of their environment and to develop friendships through group activities and sharing meals with one another.

- ✓ Providing high quality, USDA approved breakfast, lunch, and snack. The menu is developed by a registered dietician, with input from the UCLC assistant director. The menu is then approved by the ND Department of USDA, ensuring it meets all research-based food recommendations and requirements. All meals are prepared at UND's Wilkerson Dining Center, in an environment that is committed to safe and healthy food preparation practices.
- ✓ Providing purposefully planned learning experiences based on teacher's observations and knowledge of the children's interests, needs, and abilities, including but not limited to creative arts, blocks, role-playing, books, toys, games, large motor equipment, water play, science materials, and cooking.
- ✓ Meeting the individual rest or nap needs of each child.

Educational training for UND students is achieved by providing a site for them to observe/participate in a high-quality early care and education program specifically designed for young children. The Learning Center strives to allow:

- ✓ Students majoring in early childhood education, elementary education, or special education:
  - An opportunity to observe children and be able to see the various theories taught in classroom lectures brought to life.
  - To be supervised by highly qualified early childhood educators during their field experiences, which allows them to experience teaching and receive constructive feedback to help them grow.
- ✓ Early childhood education majors to be mentored by a highly qualified early childhood educator during their individualized student teaching experience.
- ✓ Students from multiple departments, whose future career may involve working with young children, to practice their skills and increase their knowledge of early childhood education under the direct supervision of an early childhood education professional. UCLC has provided professional experience for students in nursing, dietetics, speech/communication disorders, social work, psychology, and other career paths.

## **The University Children's Learning Center Teams**

You can read about each individual teacher's qualifications and purpose statements on our website ([www.und.edu/uclc](http://www.und.edu/uclc)) under the classroom link on the left. The UCLC administrative team consists of the director and assistant director.

The teaching team consists of 10 experienced teachers, who hold a degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field. They are supported by student caregivers. The caregivers are all students at UND and work part time at UCLC.

UCLC color families benefit from volunteers. We have various individuals that choose to volunteer on a short- or long-term basis. Many want experience working with young children. The UCLC team benefits from the assistance of volunteers (year-round), Upward Bound Students (in June), Helping Hands (summers), student teachers, and field experience students from a variety of disciplines at UND and area institutions.

The most important quality of any member of the UCLC team is their dedication to providing high quality care and education that meets the individual needs of young children and their families. The emphasis is on partnering with families, to help each child grow and flourish.

## **Student Teachers**

Student teaching is a graduation requirement for any student majoring in Early Childhood Education from the College of Education & Human Development, specifically the Department of Teaching & Learning. Student teachers work one-on-one with a cooperating teacher (an experience teacher in the employ of UCLC) at the Learning Center to put into practice the theories, guidelines, and teaching techniques learned as they progressed through their educational program. The experience is designed to allow the student teacher to gradually assume responsibility in leading their assigned classroom, including the planning, implementation, and assessment of developmentally appropriate educational experiences for young children, classroom management, setting up the learning environment, etc. Throughout this experience the student teacher is receiving constructive feedback from their cooperating teacher and the Learning Center teaching and administrative teams.

## **Policies And Procedures**

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### **Basic Rules at UCLC**

There are three (3) basic rules at UCLC that children, families, teachers, student teachers, caregivers, volunteers, and guests are expected to abide by:

1. Show respect for other people. Hurting others (children, peers, teachers, caregivers, family members, or guests) physically or emotionally through our actions or words is unacceptable.
2. Show respect for the indoor and outdoor environment. Hurting, damaging, destroying materials carelessly, or destructively using toys, equipment, or damaging the building is unacceptable.
3. Everyone (teachers, caregivers, volunteers, guests, children, and parents) must work together to ensure the safety (physical and emotional) of everyone (teachers, caregivers, volunteers, guests, children, and parents).

Respectful, appropriate, safe words and actions are expected of any individual that enters UCLC's doors or outdoor classroom. There will be consequences for any individual not adhering to these rules.

### **Parent's Responsibilities at UCLC**

You as the parent play a critical role in the early education of your child. You have responsibilities to UCLC that are important to the early care and education that we provide. It is important that you, your child's teachers, and administrators work as a team. By doing this, your child will have a better chance of reaching their highest potential.

Your responsibilities include:

1. Establishing a routine for drop off and pick-up.
2. Sign your child in upon arriving and sign your child out upon leaving. In the event we must evacuate the premises, the sign in/out sheet is the most accurate reflection of which children are present and need to be accounted for.
3. Communicate with your child's teacher – this cannot be stressed enough. If something is going on in a child's life, it is imperative that their teacher know about it. This alerts the teacher to the possibility that your child may need some extra comfort or support. Strict confidentiality is maintained by all employees at UCLC.
4. Ask questions! Everything that occurs at UCLC is going to have an impact on your child, so it is important that you know what is happening and why. Your questions are not an imposition.
5. Talk about anything that is a concern to you about your child's care. If you see or hear something that you question, bring it to the attention of the administrative team or contact Child Care Licensing at 701-787-8540.

### **Parent's Rights at UCLC**

UCLC teachers, caregivers, and volunteers believe that families are of primary importance in children's development. The Learning Center strives to enter a partnership with families; one in which both sides are committed to the well-being of the child. Families, as defined by UCLC, include those adults, besides parents, with the responsibility of being involved in educating, nurturing, and advocating for the child.

For UCLC to uphold their side of this partnership, parents have the right to:

- Visit the Learning Center during the hours of operation, without prior notice.
- Be informed about the Learning Center's philosophy, policies, curriculum, assessment system, cultural practices, and personnel qualifications.
- Request and receive daily notes written by teachers
- Participate in any activities or events sponsored by the Learning Center.
- Be heard and respected for individual parenting styles.
- Be respectful for individual family structures, culture, language, customs, and beliefs to ensure a culturally consistent environment for your child.
- Be respected for individual childrearing values.
- Be included in decisions that affect your child.
- Receive timely and accurate information about your child's growth and development.
- Have a voice in the development of policies and procedures when they impact children and/or families.
- Confidentiality, except in situations impacted by the ND Mandated Reporting Law.



## Hours of Operation

- Year Round, Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
- UCLC closes for state recognized holidays and for professional development
- The University Children's Learning Center reserves the right to charge a late fee\*\* for children not picked up by 5:30 pm. Late fees will be charged according to this schedule:

01 – 05 minutes late: \$5	16 – 30 minutes late: \$30
06 – 10 minutes late: \$10	31 – 45 minutes late: \$45
11 – 15 minutes late: \$15	46 – 60 minutes late: \$60

### \*\* Special Note about Late Fees:

- Late fees are assessed separately from the regular tuition bill and are due upon receipt.
- An email will be sent from a member of the administrative team indicating the late fee charge.
- Late pick up times will be determined according to the atomic clock located in the entry way of the Housing Building.
- Law enforcement officials may be notified if children are not picked up within 30 minutes of the closure time without contact from parent or another adult.

## Childcare Tuition

Childcare tuition is subject to change the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1). Childcare tuition is billed as a flat monthly fee. You will not receive a credit for regularly scheduled closure dates (see UCLC Closures for exact dates of closure), except for the days UCLC closes in August and the dates in late December. You are also eligible to request five (5) vacation days (see Vacation Policy).

- ❖ Childcare tuition bills will post to your online Campus Connections account on or around the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the date it is due, with the exception of July. Due to constraints in the auditing of fiscal year postings, July tuition will post on July 1.
- ❖ Childcare tuition is due on the first of each month preceding care.
- ❖ No credit is given for holiday closures, weather related closures, or closures due to causes over which the Learning Center has no control.
- ❖ No credit is given for UND or UCLC closure due to concerns related to the health and safety of employees or children, i.e. COVID-19 exposure.
- ❖ Credits will post to your childcare tuition bill for the dates of closure for professional development in August and the dates in late December.
- ❖ All childcare tuition fees must be paid to UND One Stop. You may pay online, mail your payment to One - Stop Student Services at 264 Centennial Drive., Stop 7155, or drop your payment in the Drop Box at UND's One Stop office on the second floor of Twamley Hall. As per UND policy, UCLC is unable to accept direct payments at the Learning Center. You will find directions about setting up your account to pay online at <https://www1.und.edu/uclc/payment.cfm>. You will have to claim an account, which takes you through a process as if you were becoming a student.
- ❖ It is your responsibility to retain all receipts for income tax purpose.
- ❖ The Federal Tax Identification number for University Children's Learning Center is 45-600-2491. Year-end statements are not automatically generated. You may request one by emailing the Learning Center at [uclc@und.edu](mailto:uclc@und.edu). Please allow a minimum of five (5) days' notice to ensure you receive the appropriate documentation.
- ❖ Failure to pay your childcare tuition may result in a loss of childcare services. Any outstanding bills will be sent to collections in accordance with UND policy.
- ❖ All children under the age of 36 months will be charged at the Toddler rate, regardless of what classroom they are assigned. Tuition will change the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month in which the child turns 3 years of age.

## Child Care Assistance

UCLC will work with you if you receive Child Care Assistance. You must submit written verification to the assistant director of the Learning Center showing you are approved to receive Child Care Assistance. Without written verification from County Social Services, you will be required to pay the full month of childcare tuition. When approval verification is received by the assistant director, then you will be held responsible to pay any amount not covered by Child Care Assistance. Payment is due on the first of the month preceding care for your children (i.e., childcare tuition for June is due on June 1).

At the beginning of each month, in which you qualify for Child Care Assistance, the assistant director will complete the required Child Care Assistance form(s) and place it in your child's mailbox for signature or use the electronic system through the state of ND. You must sign the form and return it to the Learning Center office within 2 business days, or complete the online electronic signature by the stated date. Failure to submit forms in the appropriate timeframe may result in a loss of childcare services. If, for any reason, you are not eligible to receive Child Care Assistance, you will be required to pay the full childcare tuition.

### **Changes in a Child's Schedule**

Permanent or long-term changes to a child's schedule: If you wish to permanently change your child's schedule you may request to do so by completing the Change of Schedule Form. You will find the form on the UCLC website ([www.und.edu/uclc](http://www.und.edu/uclc)), in the office, or may request one via email. Requests will be approved based on availability of space.

Short-term or One-Time changes to a child's schedule: If you wish to add a single day to your child's part time schedule, please complete the Additional Care Day form. You will find the form on the UCLC website ([www.und.edu/uclc](http://www.und.edu/uclc)), in the office, or may request one via email. Requests will be approved based on availability of space.

### **Withdrawal from University Children's Learning Center**

If you choose to withdraw your child from the Learning Center, you must complete a withdrawal form (available in the office, on the UCLC website, or may be requested via email) a minimum of four (4) weeks in advance of your child's last day of attendance. You will be charged for four (4) weeks past the date of the submission on the Withdrawal Form or until your child's last day, whichever is longer.

### **Vacation Policy**

Each family is eligible to take one (1) week of vacation with 100% childcare tuition credit per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) per toddler or preschool age child. The vacation credit is not available to children enrolled in the Summer School-Age program. The credit will appear on the monthly childcare tuition bill the month following the vacation, if all criteria below is met:

- ✓ Vacation credit applies only to a period of one continuous week of the child's regular schedule, i.e., five (5) consecutive days in a seven (7) day period if your child is enrolled full time; three (3) days within a seven (7) day period; two (2) days within a seven (7) day period.
- ✓ To receive vacation credit, you must submit a dated and signed Vacation Notice (available in the office, on the UCLC website, or may be requested via email) a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of the vacation dates.

Unused vacation credits do not have a cash value and cannot be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

### **Absentee Policy**

You will not be credited for days your child is absent due to illness or participation in extra-curricular activities.

If your child does not attend the Learning Center for two (2) consecutive weeks without verbal or written communication from you, your child care services will be discontinued and you will be charged for a minimum four (4) weeks of child care tuition based on your regular tuition schedule past your child's last date of attendance.

### **Storm Days**

UCLC closes for weather related instances when directed by the University of North Dakota, Department of Safety. While the Learning Center will be open when directed by UND, we highly encourage parents to consider safety when making traveling decisions.

- The Learning Center does **not** close based on the Grand Forks Public School closure decisions.
- Listen to local radio and television stations for UND closing announcements.
- **No childcare tuition credit is given for storm days or closures due to other causes over which the Learning Center has not control (i.e., extended loss of power, water, COVID-19, etc.)**

### **Late Openings**

UCLC will open at the time the UND Department of Safety instructs UND Offices to open. This time may differ from the time that UND classes are to resume. Electronic access to the door security system will be restored to parents at the time the Learning Center is open for children to be dropped off. Please understand that teachers arrive a few minutes before the official opening time; allowing for adjustments to be made regarding any teachers that are unable to get to the Learning Center, as well as for time for teachers to get the classroom ready for the children. If the Learning Center opens at 10:30 AM, lunch will not be served.

### **Early Closures**

All parents will be expected to pick their child(ren) up within 30 minutes of the stated closure time. A late fee based on the UCLC late fee schedule may be imposed for children picked up past the 30 minutes allowed timeframe.

### **UCLC Closures**

- UCLC is closed for State of ND recognized holidays, including: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.
- UCLC is closed the day after Thanksgiving.
- UCLC is closed Christmas Eve.
- UCLC is closed for up to five (5) days between Christmas and New Year's to allow carpets and floors to be cleaned. The exact dates depend on UND's official holiday schedule.
- UCLC is closed for up to five (5) days in mid-August to allow the floors and carpets to be cleaned and the teachers to receive professional development training.
- UCLC is closed for any weather-related emergencies in which UND closes.
- Any date UND or the State of North Dakota declares as a holiday.

UCLC is open between semesters and during Spring Break. Please refer to the calendar you were given and that is available on the website.

### **Transitioning from the Toddler Classroom to a Preschool Classroom**

Children will transition from the Red Family (toddler room) to the Purple, Yellow, Blue, or Green Family on or around their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The following items are considered before moving a child from the toddler classroom to a preschool classroom:

- The child's chronological age
- The child's developmental readiness to move
- Availability in a preschool classroom

The decision to move a child will be made as a team with input from the toddler teachers, the proposed preschool teachers, the administrative team, and you.

Tuition will change on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month in which the child turns 3 years old, regardless of when the transition occurs.

Each transition is designed to meet the needs of the individual child. Some children are excited to move to the preschool classroom and may enthusiastically join their new color family. Other children may require a longer period to adjust to the new environment. All transitions begin with the child visiting the new color family for a brief period in the morning during their planned learning experiences. The amount of time spent visiting will gradually increase to include a mealtime, time during the afternoon learning experiences, and finally to include nap time. The length of this transition will, in large part and whenever possible, be dictated by the needs of the individual child. Parents and teacher work as a team to make this transition as smooth and easy as possible.

### **Communication between Parents and Teachers**

Teachers are encouraged to not share their personal cellular telephone number with parents. Sharing of this type of information creates a fuzzy boundary as to when it is appropriate or inappropriate for a teacher or parent to contact

the other. If a teacher shares his/her number, it is acceptable for parents to send a text message sharing the following types of information:

- Their Child is going to be absent for the day.
- Their child is going to be coming in late.
- Their child is going to be picked up earlier than usual or unexpectedly.

Teachers may respond via text message letting the parent know the message was received.

Teachers will not text or call from a personal cellular telephone to discuss certain topics with parents. Teachers are to use the UCLC landline to call parents in the following instances:

- Child is ill.
- Child is hurt.
- Child is having a hard day (i.e., more emotional/tired than usual).

When a teacher calls from a UCLC landline to inform a parent that their child received an injury that may need medical attention, a text that has a picture of the injury may be sent to the parent after initial telephone contact has been made. It is preferable that only the director send these pictures, however, teachers may in the absence of the director.

If a parent has a question about their child's day, parents are requested to call UCLC or to send an email to [uclc@und.edu](mailto:uclc@und.edu). It is important for parents to understand that teachers are busy with the children during the day and may not be able to respond to an email immediately. The [uclc@und.edu](mailto:uclc@und.edu) address is checked by the assistant director, director, and 2 or 3 teachers on a regular basis. This is a good way to ensure your message will be seen in a timely manner.

Parents and teachers are discouraged from using other modes of communication, such as Facebook Messenger or other social media platforms.

## **Arrival and Departure**

At arrival **you must sign in your child on the attendance sheet located in each Color Area.** You must indicate the time at which you are dropping your child off and we ask that you indicate your expected pick up time. The sign in/out sheets are extremely important because: **in the event of an emergency, the attendance sheets are the verification attendance used when accounting for all the children.**

Once your child is signed in, UCLC assumes responsibility for your child. Once you sign your child out at the end of the day, you assume responsibility for your child. The University Children's Learning Center cannot be responsible for any child until he/she is formally signed in.

Please be aware of the following notes regarding signing in and out:

- **Consistent** failure to sign your child in and/or out may result in the loss of childcare services.
- While signing your child in, encourage him/her to put his/her coat and/or other belongings in his/her cubby and to wash his/her hands. Learning Center teachers will also help to direct your child to complete these duties.
- Please be sure the teacher in your child's classroom is aware of your child's arrival. You may do this by saying hello, or by letting your child's teacher know any important information that may affect your child's day.
- At the time of pick up, please be sure the teacher is aware of your child's departure by talking with the teacher or in some other way making contact with him/her. This is a good time for the teacher to let you know any important information that may affect your child's evening

## **Someone other than Parent Picking up Child**

When someone other than parent/guardian is going to pick up your child please inform office personnel and your child's teacher. Please provide, in writing, the first and last name of the person picking up your child. It is your responsibility to inform the person picking your child up that a photo ID may be required before your child will be released from the Learning Center.

Please Note: The Learning Center reserves the right to assess a late fee if the individual picking up arrives after 5:30. You may also be assessed a late fee if the person picking up your child is after 5:30 due to having to get their ID. **The University Children’s Learning Center cannot and will not release a child to a person that does not have the proper authorization and proper identification.**

Also, please be aware that if the teacher or caregiver working in the classroom has not met you, you may very well be asked to show photo ID before we release your child to leave the Learning Center. The Learning Center’s number one goal is your child’s safety.

### **Health Exclusion/Screening Policy**

University Children’s Learning Center follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. A copy of this manual is on file at the Learning Center and is available to review. Additionally, copies can be purchased for \$60.00 from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

UCLC’s wellness policy is designed to keep all children and staff healthy. Keeping children healthy and not spreading contagious illnesses is the responsibility of both the staff and families. One of the most effective ways to avoid the spread of germs is through frequent hand washing, and by asking children and staff who may be contagious to remain at home until they feel better. If parents know their child is not feeling well, they are asked to keep them at home.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease, including those listed below. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the *American Academy of Pediatrics’ Quick Reference Guide: Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools*. Children must present a doctor’s note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. UCLC reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the Director believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

UCLC will follow the general guidelines as listed below, however, the primary determinant of a child’s well-being will be assessed based on their behaviors first and then other symptoms that may be present. Behaviors considered include such things as a significant difference in the child’s typical activity level, appetite, and/or sleepiness. When these behavior changes are noted, a full health assessment will be completed.

A child will be sent home if one or more of the following conditions exist (taken directly from the North Dakota Child Care Aware website):

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the childcare provider.
2. The illness results in greater need for care than the childcare staff can provide; therefore, compromising the health and safety of the other children as determined by the childcare provider.
3. The child has any of the following conditions:
  - A. Fever with behavior changes (for behavior changes see 1 and 2 above) or other symptoms: UCLC will use the Center for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics’ definition of a fever: as having a tympanic temperature of 100.6 degrees F or higher. UCLC may use a tympanic thermometer or a forehead (temporal) scanning thermometer. Children may return to care once they are fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication.
  - B. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child.
  - C. Diarrhea (if stool is not contained in the diaper; if causing “accidents” for toilet trained children; if stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for the child). Children can return to childcare once the diarrhea resolves except for the following:
    - Salmonella, until 3 negative stool cultures
    - Shigella, until 2 negative stool cultures
    - E. Coli, until 2 negative stool cultures

- Cryptosporidium, until 2 negative cultures  
G intestinalis, until 2 negative cultures
- D. Blood in stools
- E. Vomiting illness (2 or more episodes in the previous 24 hours) if no other symptoms. One episode if other symptoms are present or if child has recent history of a head injury. Children may return to care once vomiting has ceased for at least 24 hours.
- F. Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
- G. Mouth sores with drooling (except for hand-foot-and-mouth disease, canker sores, thrush) unless a health care provider or health department official determines that the child is noninfectious.
- H. Hand-Foot-And-Mouth Disease until lesions crust over.
- I. Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
- J. Head lice, from the end of the day until after the first treatment.
- K. Scabies, until after treatment has been completed.
- L. Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official gives written permission stating that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare.
- M. Impetigo, until treatment has started if lesions are covered.
- N. Strep throat, until the child has been treated for 24 hours.
- O. Chickenpox, until all sores have dried and crusted.
- P. Pertussis (whooping cough), until 5 days of antibiotic treatment.
- Q. Mumps, until 5 days after the onset of parotid gland swelling.
- R. Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness, jaundice, or as directed by the health department when immune globulin has been given to appropriate children and staff members.
- S. Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- T. Rubella, until 7 days after onset of rash.
- U. Unspecified respiratory illness (including the common cold, sore throat, croup, bronchitis, runny nose, influenza or ear infection), only if their illness is characterized by one or more of the following conditions:
- The illness has a specified cause that requires exclusion, as determined by other specific performance standards listed above.
  - The illness limits the child's comfortable participation in childcare activities.
  - The illness results in the need for more care than the staff can provide; therefore, compromising the health and safety of other children.
- V. Shingles, exclusion should be decided by the health care provider. If a child is allowed in childcare, it is recommended to keep all sores covered by clothing or a dressing until all sores have crusted over. The virus is present in small, fluid filled blisters, and is spread by direct contact.
- W. Herpes simplex, if child is drooling and mouthing toys/items. In selected situations, children with mild disease who are in control of their mouth secretions may not have to be excluded if recommended by a health care provider.
- X. Coronavirus (COVID-19), **exclusion should be decided up by the most current recommendation from the North Dakota Department of Health.** Recommendations as of March 11, 2022 are the following:
- In addition to general infectious disease exclusion criteria, childcares should exclude ill children who meeting the following criteria: Fever of 100.4° F OR two or more of the following symptoms: fatigue, muscle aches, cough, sore throat, runny nose, and sneezing, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain OR loss of taste and/or smell. Employees and children need to be excluded until either (1) tested negative for (2) diagnosed by a health care provider with another illness that does not require exclusion OR (3) for 5 days from onset AND fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) AND symptoms are improving, whichever is longer.*
- It is the recommendation of the CDC that the close contact of the positive case quarantine at home for 5 days since the last date of exposure. If the close contact remains symptom-free, the individual may return to childcare, with the use of a mask from day 6 through day 10.*

*If you have (or develop) symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider. You should wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.*

*If the infected person and close contact were both wearing a mask at all times during the exposure, this would exempt the contact from being quarantined. In this situation, individuals should monitor symptoms for 10 days and should continue to wear a mask.*

*In a childcare setting, close contacts to a case are often staff and children in the same room as a case. This often means that certain rooms in a childcare may close up to 5 days. If staff or children are in multiple rooms (float), then this may mean the entire childcare has to close for up to 5 days.*

Please remember that the policy is that your child must be fever free (without using any fever reducing medications), have not vomited or had diarrhea for a full 24 hours before they come to the Learning Center. Fever free because they have had medication, is not the same as being fever free, they are still contagious and need to be at home. Teachers will conduct ongoing health screening as they observe the children. You will be contacted, but not necessarily required to pick your child up if the following symptoms are noted and seem to be causing your child a great deal of discomfort or interfering with their ability to actively engage in the classroom:

- Runny Nose
- Extreme lethargy
- Extreme inexplicable irritability or persistent crying
- Any signs of difficulty breathing and/or wheezing
- Complaints of a headache
- Persistent cough, especially one that interferes with your child's ability to rest
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms

#### Illness Notification

- If a child becomes ill during the day parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.
- If after three (3) attempts (home, work, and cell) the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, the person(s) listed as an emergency contact will be notified.
- If determined necessary, prompt pick up of your child is expected. UCLC is not equipped with medical staff to provide care for sick children.
- If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, a note will be posted by the sign in/out sheets and an email will be sent notifying all families of the possible exposure (including symptoms and period of incubation). Your child or family will not be identified in the notification.

Children in attendance are expected to be able to participate in all daily activities (for instance, a child may not remain indoors during outdoor play). Please make certain that your child is feeling well enough to fully participate before dropping him/her off at the Learning Center for the day. The Learning Center is not staffed to allow an individual child to stay indoors during outside time. One guideline is to ask yourself: "Would my child feel better at home or are they able to fully participate in the daily schedule at the Learning center?" It is very important for all to have alternate childcare arrangements for instances when your child is not well enough to attend the Learning Center. Families are also asked to please call or email the Learning Center if your child will be absent due to illness or for other reasons.

#### Medication

If your child is taking a prescribed or over-the-counter medication the Learning Center teachers are more than happy to help you out. The definition of "medication" is very broad and includes anything that is taken orally (prescription medications, fever-reducing or pain-relieving medications, etc.) or used topically (including insect repellent, sunscreen, Chap Stick, etc.). The Learning Center's policy regarding administering medication to a child includes:

- No medication, orally or topically, will be administered or applied to any child without written permission including specific, detailed instructions from a parent/guardian or medical professional.

- Permission forms (found in your child’s classroom) must be filled out for a specific medication or topical treatment, with a specified amount to administer and specific times of administration. Nothing may be given (except for the use of an Epi-Pen or other treatments for emergency medical situations) on an “as needed” basis.
- Prescription medications will be administered only to the child whose name is typed on the official prescription label applied by a pharmacy.
- All medications will be stored in the refrigerator in the staff area or in a locked cabinet in the classroom. Only experienced teachers or members of the Learning Center administrative team will administer medication.
- All written medical authorizations are posted in a secure and discrete location within the Color Area.

It is very important you do **NOT** leave medication of any kind in your child’s cubby, backpack, or pocket. This is extremely dangerous for your child and the other children at UCLC.

### **Emergency and Medical Information**

In accordance with best practices as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), you will be required to update all your enrollment paperwork on an annual basis. This is also required by childcare licensing. However, it is crucial that you make the Learning Center aware of any changes in:

- ✓ Telephone contact information
- ✓ Physical address
- ✓ Marital status
- ✓ Legal parental custody of your child

**The Learning Center will not be responsible for anything that may occur as a result of false information given at the time of enrollment or from the use of outdated or inaccurate information.**

In case of a medical emergency, doctors will not normally treat a child until a parent or legal guardian arrives and gives permission for treatment. The Learning Center administrative team, teaching teams, and caregivers will take all necessary steps to obtain emergency medical care, if warranted. These steps may include, but are not limited to, calling 911. If emergency personnel are called:

- The Experienced Teacher most familiar with the child and/or the director/assistant director will accompany the child to the nearest emergency medical center. Per direction of the UND office of Safety, UCLC/UND employees are not allowed to transport a child in a personal vehicle.
- Teachers at the Learning Center will make continued attempts to contact the parent/guardian and/or the emergency contacts listed on the child’s most current enrollment paperwork.
- Teachers will follow the instructions of the medical and emergency professionals.
- The experienced teacher will complete a UCLC Child Injury Report. The assistant director, director, or an assigned teacher (in that order) will complete the SFN 383, Serious Accident, Injury, or Illness/Report and email it to Grand Forks County Social Services. This will be completed within 24 hours of the incident occurring.
- The assistant director, director, or assigned teacher (in that order) will complete the UND Incident Reporting Form and email it to the UND Office of Safety. This will be completed within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

**Any expense incurred in the event of a medical emergency or accidental injury will be borne by the injured child’s family.**

### **Minor Injuries**

All Learning Center teachers and caregivers maintain current certification for First Aid and CPR/AED. All are trained using a ND Department of Human Services approved program. Training will be completed by all new UCLC hires within the first ninety (90) days of employment.

While UCLC teachers and caregivers are diligent about providing a safe and healthy environment, there are going to be situations in which your child receives an injury. Young children are learning to control their muscles and how to



safely move their bodies. The children at UCLC are in all stages of physical and motor development and testing the boundaries of their body sometimes results in minor injuries.

Following is the process each Learning Center teacher or caregiver will follow if your child receives an injury:

- ✓ The injury will be evaluated for severity. If the injury appears to be minor, then the appropriate first aid measures will be taken, starting with ensuring the child feels safe and secure. Following this the teachers and caregivers will treat the injury using such measures as washing the area with soap and water, applying a bandage, and/or applying an ice pack.
- ✓ If the injury appears to be severe, the teacher or caregiver will alert the director, assistant director, or supervising teacher in charge (in that order). The injury will be evaluated, and appropriate measures will be taken, which may include calling parents/guardians and/or seeking immediate medical treatment.
- ✓ A parent/guardian will always be notified, regardless of severity, if a child sustains an injury to their head or genital area.
- ✓ The teacher or caregiver that witnessed the incident will complete an UCLC Injury Report. The parent will sign the form and be given a copy upon their arrival to pick up their child.
- ✓ The director or assistant director will report the incident to the UND Safety Office by completing a UND Incident Reporting form.
- ✓ The original UCLC Injury Report and UND Incident Reporting form will be maintained in the child's file according to the UND Records Retention Policy.

UCLC understands that it is frustrating to learn your child sustained an injury while in our care. The frustration is compounded because the teachers will only talk to you about the injury itself, not the circumstances that surrounded the injury (i.e., you will not be told the name of the other child(ren) involved). Please be assured that all UCLC experienced teachers have received extensive training in early childhood guidance and are working to teach all children the appropriate self-regulation skills to make safe choices. No incident is overlooked, and all incidents have a consequence based on the developmental level of each child involved.

### **Accidental Poisoning**

In the event of an accidental poisoning, the director, assistant director, or experienced teacher will call ND Poison Control (800-222-1222). They will follow all instructions given by the professional contacted. The director, assistant director, or assigned teacher (in that order) will complete an SFN 383, Serious Accident, Injury, or Illness/Report and email it to Grand Forks County Social Services within 24 hours of the incident occurring. The director, assistant director, or assigned teacher (in that order) will complete an UND Incident Reporting Form and submit it to the UND Office of Safety within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

### **Burns**

In the event of a minor burn, the experienced teacher will run the affected area under cool water. An UCLC Child Injury Report will be completed for parents. No bandaging or topical cream will be placed over the affected area.

In the event of a more serious burn (2<sup>nd</sup> degree or higher) the experienced teacher will run the affected area under cool water. The director or assistant director will contact the child's parent about the incident. An UCLC Child Injury Report will be completed; the director will complete the SFN 383, Serious Accident, Injury, or Illness/Report form and email it to childcare licensing within 24 hours. The assistant director will complete the UND Incident Reporting form and email it to the UND Office of Safety within 24 hours.

### **Intoxication Policy**

The University Children's Learning Center's first obligation is the safety of children. Teachers and caregivers are instructed not to release a child to an adult who they believe is intoxicated with alcohol or other substances. However, if that person is the child's parent, the Learning Center Teachers are required to release the child. If a UCLC Experienced Teacher suspects (using the indicators listed below) that a parent or guardian of the child is under the influence of alcohol or other substance he/she will:

- Make every attempt to detain that person from picking up the child
- Call the child's other parent/guardian

If the parent/guardian that is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or other substance does leave the Learning Center property with the child, particularly if he/she leaves in a motor vehicle, law enforcement will be called and given the name of the adult, make/model/color of the car, and license plate number, if possible. A report will be filed with Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Protection as mandated by North Dakota law.

If a person that is authorized by the parent or guardian to pick up the child appears to be intoxicated, the child will not be released, and parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

- Visible indicators of intoxication: Difficulty with fine motor skills
- Balance and coordination difficulties
- Loud speech
- Slurred speech
- Boasting
- Stumbling
- Crude behavior
- Speaking incoherently
- Slow verbal response
- Bloodshot eyes
- Flushed face
- Alcohol smell from their breath

If, at any time, an individual becomes angry, hostile, belligerent, and/or individuals at UCLC feel threatened the University of North Dakota Campus Police will be contacted.

## **Outside Food Policy**

Parents may not provide food at UCLC. This includes treats for holidays or your child's birthday. There are several reasons for this policy, including:

- ❖ We have children with a variety of food allergies and sensitivities. UCLC cannot monitor the ingredients of a specific food and/or if that specific food was manufactured in a plant with other ingredients that may have resulted in cross-contamination.
- ❖ When we cannot verify the ingredients of a food or know that a food may have been cross-contaminated, then we cannot allow some children to participate in the activity due to the risk this could pose to them. Having an activity that excludes any child, goes against the philosophy of UCLC.
- ❖ When parents provide a cake mix for children to be able to make cupcakes, it becomes a teacher-directed activity, rather than child-directed. And once again, some children end up being excluded.

The only exception will be the rare circumstances in which UCLC cannot meet the dietary needs of an individual child. This exception will only be made after significant consultation with parents, medical professionals, and UND's dietary professionals.

## **Toys from Home**

Young children are learning about sharing, which is hard. Sharing is also an unrealistic expectation, for example, will you "share" your cell phone or car with someone else? We encourage children to share as a way of being a kind friend, however, if a child is not done playing with a given toy, they do not have to share it. Sharing is very difficult under the best of circumstances, but it is extremely difficult when an item is your own personal toy from home. For this reason, personal toys should stay at home to prevent loss, accidental damage, and not wanting to share something personal. If a child does bring a toy from home, even if they leave it in their cubby, the Learning Center is not responsible for loss or damage that may occur.

## **Birthdays**

The Learning Center is proud to have children from all over this great world. The teachers work hard to ensure that everyone feels special, welcomed, and has a sense of belonging in their Color Family and at the Learning Center. The teachers, caregivers, and administrative team respect each family's beliefs, traditions, and practices. Therefore, the Learning Center does not celebrate individual birthdays of children by providing a gift or special treat. If an individual family chooses to bring a 'gift' for members of their child's classroom in honor of his/her birthday, please discuss appropriate options with the teachers (i.e., gifts of stickers, special art material, bubbles, games, books, or puzzles are common suggestions).

**Please remember that outside food is not allowed at the Learning Center.**

## **Outdoor Play**

In October 2015, UCLC proudly opened two nationally certified Nature Explore Outdoor Classrooms. The Outdoor Classrooms extend the learning occurring all day to the outdoors. The Outdoor Classrooms contain learning areas similar to what you will see in the indoor classrooms. The teachers purposefully plan and implement learning experiences that encourage the children to explore and experiment with nature.

UCLC teachers believe outdoor play is an important an integral part of each day. It is important in all areas of the child's growth and development, as well as critical for a person's immune system. For these reasons, and others, children will play outdoors for part of each morning and afternoon.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has clothing appropriate for the season which will allow them to freely explore in the outdoor classroom. Please remember that exploration in the outdoor classroom may result in your child getting dirty!

Ultimately, the rule of thumb for you, as a parent should be: Children who are not well enough to play outdoors are not well enough to be at UCLC.

## **Insect Repellent and Sunscreen**

The Learning Center will provide sunscreen and asks families to provide insect repellent. You will be required to sign a permission form authorizing the Learning Center to use it on your child. At the beginning of the summer season you will be made aware of the brand that will be used at the Learning Center that year. You are welcome to provide your own if you so choose.

## **Dress Code**

The teachers at UCLC understand that the best way children learn is through hands-on experiences. Teachers plan experiences that allow a child to discover as they play. This leads to children understanding that learning new things is FUN. It leads them to become life-long learners. We ask you to help us teach your child that learning is fun.

The Learning Center asks that you dress your child in wash and wear clothing. Learning is always fun and sometimes it is messy. For this reason, we ask that you always have an extra set of clothes at UCLC. Sometimes the fun is so messy, that we need to change into something dry or less "crunchy" (that happens when paint gets on our clothes and then dries).

It is also important to recognize that dressing in layers is critically important in North Dakota. In the spring it can be 35 degrees one day and 85 the next; conversely, in the fall it can be 85 one day and 35 the next. Having a sweater shirt or light weight jacket to put on and take off is important.

The teachers at UCLC understand how important it is to get outdoors in the winter. It gets cold but if a person is properly dressed, then it can be a wonderful learning experience. Painting on the easel is very different in the summer than it is in the winter. Therefore, please provide your child with appropriate winter gear such as, a coat and snow pants or snow suit, hat, mittens, and boots. We discourage scarves because the end can get caught and cause a strangulation hazard.

**Please be sure to label all the clothing with your child's name.**

### **Emergency/Fire Drills**

Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis to allow children the opportunity to practice safely exiting the building. In the winter months, children will stop at the exit door they are to leave through.

Tornado drills will be conducted monthly May thru September.

UCLC will have all the materials necessary for sheltering in place for up to two (2) days.

If the Learning Center must evacuate the building due to weather, fire, or damage to the building, children and teachers will evacuate to Community High School (east of UCLC across Stanford Road).

### **Field Trips**

Children may go on field trips on and off campus during the year. When teachers plan an on-campus field trip, a note will be posted by the sign in sheets to make you aware of their planned departure and arrival times at least two (2) days before the event.

Teachers may take children to playgrounds in the immediate area surrounding the Learning Center. They will leave a note and map by the sign in sheets letting you know which playground they are at and how to get there. The note will also have the time they intend to return.

If the teachers plan a field trip that takes them off-campus, they may walk (if it's a reasonable distance) or use a UND/ND State Fleet Vehicle. You will be notified and asked to sign a permission slip a minimum of one (1) week in advance. Parents are required to provide an appropriate child restraint seat for their child. If you chose to have your child not participate in the field trip, you will need to make alternate childcare arrangements. Your child may visit another classroom, if there is space, but this is not guaranteed. Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to participate in field trips as your schedule allows.

Please note that the Learning Center strictly adheres to the North Dakota State Law requiring that children under age 7 ride in a car seat or booster seat. The car seat or booster seat must be installed and used according to manufacturer's instructions. A seat belt may be used if the child is over 80 pounds and taller than 4'9". Children over 40 pounds may use a lap belt if the vehicle does not have lap/shoulder belts, or all the lap/shoulder belts are in use, because booster seats cannot be used with lap-only seat belts.

### **Nap or Rest Time**

The Learning Center stresses healthy practices. UCLC stresses to children that they need to rest their bodies to help it grow and develop properly. Parents and teachers will work together to determine how much rest a child may need. We offer one of two options:

- Option One: children may take a nap for one to two hours (12:00 – 2:00). We allow your child to wake up naturally but ensure that every child is awake by 2:00. At your request, the teachers will gently wake your child after a desired amount of sleep. The children from the Purple, Yellow, Blue, and Green will go to the gym at 12:00 and have an individual cot on which to sleep from September through May. If children remain awake after 1 hour of trying to fall asleep, they will return to their classroom. For the months of June, July, and August children will nap in their classroom. Children in the Red Family will sleep on their cot in their classroom.
- Option Two: children may rest for 30 minutes (12:00 – 12:30). These children will have an individual cot to lay on quietly as they rest their body. They will be in designated classrooms in the Learning Center.

Regardless of your child being a restor or napper, you are asked to provide a small blanket stored in a covered container with a locking lid, no larger than 18 1/8" L x 12 1/4" W x 7" H. you may also provide a small stuffed animal or pillow to help your child relax and rest. Please be certain that all items fit in the covered container and are labeled with your child's name.

For sanitation reasons we ask that all blankets be taken home and laundered at the end of each week.

## **Discipline and Guidance**

Children are learning not only academic skills in the early years but also social/emotional skills. They are learning how to play with one another, ask for help, and how to be a social being in today's world. Additionally, children are learning to recognize and then control their own emotions and desires. This is a long process, that teachers begin working on from the first day your child is enrolled until they leave the program. There are times when, for a variety of reasons, children struggle to control their emotions. Those big emotions sometimes cause their bodies to react in ways that are not safe or healthy. The teachers at the Learning Center are committed to helping every child learn to self-regulate.

All full-time teachers at the Learning Center have a degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field. Part of their coursework to earn that degree included classroom guidance and appropriate disciplinary measure that are both constructive and educational in nature. UCLC believes that every behavior we see in a child is occurring for a reason. Our job is to be the detective and find out what the reason is, so we can provide what the child needs to be successful. Mistaken behaviors happen a lot.

Student Caregivers, in the first ninety (90) days of their employment, complete an online course entitled "Getting Started." This course has a section that focuses on positive guidance methods. During the Fall and Spring semester, the director may offer trainings that addresses the current needs of the children and caregivers. The training may focus on respecting each other and each individual's differences, developmentally appropriate practice, creating a climate of cultural sensitivity and diversity, or other pertinent topics which may affect discipline and guidance.

University Children's Learning Center's definition/core beliefs about discipline:

- Helping a child change random, impulsive, mistaken, and testing behavior(s) into more controlled, purposeful, and constructive behavior.
- Sound knowledge of a child's developmental level forms the basis of all guidance techniques.
- A young child's strengths and vulnerabilities in language, logical thinking, perception, and memory all affect his/her relationship with others and the degree to which a family member or teacher's guidance is effective.
- Development of self-control, pro-social behavior, and competence in young children is accomplished in part by demonstrating respect for each child as a unique person, developing trusting relationship with him/her, and demonstrating warmth and enthusiasm.
- Teachers act as role models for the children by using language and demonstrating appropriate ways for children to express their feeling and emotions.
- Discipline is about teaching appropriate behaviors and actions. The Learning Center believes teaching appropriate behaviors and actions cannot be done through physical pain or fear.

## **Encouraging Children to Meet Our Expectations**

First and foremost, teachers have high expectations for children and continually communicate what is expected through their own actions/reactions and how they set up their environment. The Learning Center encourages children to meet the Learning Center expectations by:

1. Plan and prepare to prevent conflict by:
  - a. Carefully preparing the environment
  - b. Thoughtfully planning activities
  - c. Making necessary modifications in the environment and activities offered
  - d. Establishing a predictable, yet flexible, daily routine.
2. Communicate expectations for child's behavior by:
  - a. Being consistent
  - b. Getting down to the child's level and using eye contact while stating the expectation
  - c. Using tone of voice, facial expression, body language, and physical guidance, as well as words that match one another.
  - d. When appropriate, repeat expectations and give children time to comply.
  - e. Use when/then statements; explaining that when the child does what is expected, then the result will be...

- f. Sharing accurate, logical reasons for the stated expectations
  - g. Giving children recognition when they meet expectations
3. Give children choices when appropriate, and make it distinctly clear to the child when there is no choice.
  4. Allow children to experience the natural or logical consequences of their actions. Example: Legos are thrown; child will not be able to play with Legos. The child will need to pick up and put away the Legos and choose another activity. However, they are invited to continue with the Legos when they can remember the rules.
  5. Remove the child from the situation (to cubby or safe space) or remove the child from the areas (to the office) to help him/her to relax and regain composure.
  6. As a last resort, restrain (see Use of Gentle Restraint) a child when necessary to protect him/herself or others.

### **Methods of Discipline**

Following are examples of methods you may see your child's teacher using:

- Use as few guidelines (rules) as possible.
- Tell the children the expectations.
- Provide opportunities for children to make choices and to be responsible for their choices and actions.
- Appropriate behaviors are acknowledged by the teachers on a daily basis.
- Ignore the mistaken behavior
- Redirect a child's interest, giving choices, discussing and/or reasoning through the problem.
- Temporarily separate the child from the group if preventative methods and problem-solving methods were not successful – use the safe place in the classroom.

There is no ONE discipline or guidance technique that Learning Center teachers or caregivers use because there is no ONE way in which children learn.

If you have questions regarding the methods of discipline used by the classroom teacher, please feel free to approach the teacher at a convenient time to discuss any concerns you may have.

Teachers at the University Children's Learning Center strive to become acquainted with each individual child by talking and playing with him or her. On occasion teachers may have serious concerns about a child's behavior. If this occurs, teachers address the concerns by recording detailed observations, conferring with the Learning Center's Director and the child's family member or guardian. The teacher may request a conference regarding the child in order to give a clear picture of the child's behavior and to determine if referrals to other services may benefit the child.

(Recommended resource: *Discipline* by Jeannette Galambos)

### **Guidelines for using Gentle Restraint**

In the event that a child's behaviors become dangerous to themselves, teachers, caregivers, or other children in the classroom, a teacher may use a Teddy Bear Hug (i.e., gentle restraint). This is to be a tool to help children regain control of their body and their emotions; it is NOT a method of discipline. Being out of control and unable to regain control is extremely scary, meaning the child exhibiting the behaviors is scared because they cannot calm down on their own. **It is to be used only when the child is an immediate danger or threat to him/herself and/or others.** The goal is to help the child regain control of his/her emotions and body. Gentle restraint is never to be used as a tool to get a child to sleep, eat, or go to the bathroom.

Teachers must always have another adult present when using a gentle restraint to help a child regain control of him/herself. The following process is how to use gentle restraint:

- Sit on the floor with legs spread open in front of you.
- Pull the child, back against you, into a gentle hug. Your arms are crossed over their arms. You may be gently holding their hands in yours. Keep your shoulders pulled forward, making your upper body into a U shape. Keep your chin up. This will protect you if the child throws their head back against you.

- All through this time, continually speak in a calm and quiet voice, using a reassuring tone, until the child calms down. You may repeat a statement such as, “you are safe now,” “I am here to help you,” you may gently rock side-to-side. Take deep, slow breathe so they may mimic you and slow their heart rate down.
- Gradually release the child from the hug as he/she gains control of their body.
- If the child has his/her body under control but is still crying, have them take a deep breath in and blow it out very fast (hold your finger up and tell them to blow out the candle).

Once the child is completely calmed down, then have the conversation with them about why they became so angry. If they were angry because it was time to clean up and they didn’t want to, they still need to go back and put the toys away that they were playing with. If they were angry because they didn’t want to clear their lunch plate, they still need to go and clear their space. It is important to make a plan with the child before they re-enter the classroom. The plan may be 1) clear plate from table, 2) go the bathroom, 3) wash hands, 4) get nap bucket. You would tailor the list to whatever they need to finish doing. This allows the child to know exactly what to do and how to re-enter the classroom environment.

Remember, the child was truly scared as well as very angry. It is important to go back to the various methods above that help young children learn to control their words, actions, behaviors, and emotions as they test boundaries and limits.

Following every situation in which gentle restraint is used, teachers will complete a Gentle Restraint Form. If a gentle restraint is used on your child, this form will be given to you at the end of the day. If a second incident occurs in a single day, you may be contacted, but your child does not need to be picked up. If a third incident occurs in a single day, you may be contacted and may be required to pick up your child. In this event the steps outlined in Acts of Aggression or Violence Resulting in Injury to Others as outlined in those names sections of the current Family Guide.

### **Acts of Aggression or Violence Resulting in Injury to Others**

At the University Children’s Learning Center every effort is made to keep children, teachers, caregivers, volunteers, and guests safe and free from danger and harm. Positive discipline techniques are used to encourage children to meet teacher expectations of appropriate behavior (please refer to Encouraging Children to Meet Our Expectations). Along with these stated expectations, teachers at UCLC encourage and teach children to take control of their voice, body, and actions when angry, and to use appropriate language and actions to express anger or frustration,

If a child’s behavior is deemed extreme or excessive by the administrative team, the following step(s) may be taken:

1. After 3-5 incidences, teachers may confer with co-teacher, other color area teachers, and/or the administrative team to review documentation.
2. UCLC teachers may confer with the child’s family member(s) and may decide to conduct a conference with the child’s family.
3. UCLC teachers and the child’s family member(s) may confer with consultants from the UND Early Childhood Education Department, Special Education Department, Grand Forks Public Schools, and /or local child evaluation and treatment programs, as needed.
4. Resulting recommendation(s) will be followed and a written record of behavior will be maintained, with modifications being made in the program, as needed, after consultation with professionals.

If, after an appropriate length of time of implementing recommendations and all available resources have been exhausted, there is not significant improvement in behavior(s), then the administrative team may notify the family that their child must be withdrawn from the Learning Center.

If a child chooses not to listen to the teacher and their actions result in bodily harm, or poses a threat of serious harm to another child, teacher, caregiver, volunteer, or guest or uses materials and/or equipment in a dangerous or destructive manner, University Children’s Learning Center reserves the right to take the following actions:

- The offending child may be restrained (see Use of Gentle Restraint) or be removed from the immediate area to a place of safety.
- The offending child may be suspended from UCLC for the remainder of the day and the following day. The child’s family member will be expected to pick him or her up within one (1) hour.

- The incident will be documented in a written report. A copy of the report will be given to the family(ies) involved; placed in the child's file; and submitted to the UND Office of Safety. If serious injury occurs, which results in the need for medical attention, a report will also be filed with Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Care Licensing.
- If the above action continues to occur on a regular basis, then the director will notify a family member(s) that the child must be withdrawn from the Learning Center.
- If physical damage to property happens repeatedly, families will be expected to compensate, in whole or part, the Learning Center for the materials and/or equipment.

### **Biting Policy**

Biting is a behavior often resulting from limited language skills and/or an inability to control one's own actions. Biting is frustrating for families, teachers, and children, and is a common developmental stage that some children experience. Biting is rarely an act of aggression, instead it is usually the result of frustration. The Learning Center teachers and caregivers will be diligent in their supervision of all children, while keeping frustration to a minimum, and create a classroom environment that encourages cooperation, mutual respect, and safe decision making. However, the reality is that sometimes biting happens.

Young children are learning impulse control and tolerance of frustration. Children with emerging language skills may be frustrated because they cannot communicate their wants and needs. They are learning how to wait for something they want, how to share, and how to take turns. These are all skills that require a child to have the skill of self-regulation. Consequently, most children will display unaccepted, but mistaken, behaviors of one kind or another, such as screaming, hitting, kicking, pushing, hair-pulling, scratching, or biting. The issue of biting is more complicated than other early childhood behaviors because young children bite for reasons other than anger or frustration. Other reasons children may bite include:

- Exploration of the world around them.
- Being hungry.
- Expression of affection, especially if they have observed adults who kiss with their lips parted.
- Getting attention.
- Pain caused by teething or an earache.

When a classroom has a child who is exhibiting these types of mistaken behaviors, the teachers are being diligent in their supervision and attempting to prevent the behaviors (or factors that lead to the behavior) as they are trying to determine the cause. Regardless of the cause of the mistaken behavior, teachers will respond with appropriate guidance techniques. For example, if a child is trying to express affection, the teachers will teach the child how to use gentle touches. If the child uses the mistaken behavior out of frustration, the teacher will actively help the child learn appropriate ways to handle negative emotions and redirect his/her attention to another activity. If the child is biting to get attention, after a verbal reprimand and redirection of the behavior, teachers will monitor the child closely and offer a lot of purposeful praise and attention when the child makes appropriate choices while withdrawing attention for the mistaken behaviors.

A child who is struggling to learn more appropriate behaviors will be shadowed as often as possible by a teacher, student teacher, or caregiver so they can give the child immediate, hand-over-hand practice in using appropriate actions. Words teacher may use to speak to a child who has bitten include the following: biting hurts; biting is not ok; and it is not okay to hurt others. The child who was bitten is always comforted and attended to first, with appropriate first aid being administered, as necessary.

Because the reasons children bite are varied there is no "one size fits all" solution to correcting such behaviors. The teacher's actions will depend on the reason the child is biting, the child's individual needs, and the child's temperament of the child. Some possible steps teachers may take include:

- One-on-one caregiving: providing the child with hand-over-hand practice of appropriate strategies.
- Careful observation of the child: including careful documentation of incidents to attempt to determine the causes for the behavior.
- Assessment of the child's individual temperament, strengths, challenges, and preferences to guide the development of an appropriate intervention.



- Careful analysis of the environment (including the daily schedule, room arrangement, toys, and materials) that may be possible triggers to the behavior.
- Partnering with parents by asking them to observe their child and assess their child's environment outside the Learning Center to provide additional input.

Once all necessary information has been gathered, face-to-face meetings with parents will be held to develop a comprehensive plan that will best meet the individual needs of the child.

If a biting incident occurs the family of the child who bit and the child who was bitten will be notified, in writing. Please note, the name of the child who was bitten and the name of the child who bit is confidential information and will not be disclosed. Families' confidentiality is very important to UCLC.

### **Aquatics Policy**

At times, children at the Learning Center will have the opportunity to be involved in activities that include water. Following are examples of activities and the safety policies that are in place as precautions to injury:

- **Sprinklers:** when sprinklers are set out a designated teacher will canvas the area to ensure that there is no debris that could cause injury to children running. Additionally, sprinklers will only be paced in open areas that provide adequate space for the number of children choosing the activity.
- **Wading/Kiddie Pools:** One teacher will be designated as the leader of that pool. That teacher will at no time leave the side of the pool unless the pool water is emptied. If more than one pool is filled a separate teacher will be designated as the leader of each one. The number of children allowed in each pool will be limited to ensure the teacher can adequately supervise the activity.
- **Public Pool:** At times, the Learning Center may take a field trip to the local public pool. Parents will be required to complete a permission form, in which parents will provide the Learning Center with information about their child's swimming abilities. If parents request that a child wear a lifejacket or other swimming aid, the parent is required to provide it. The child/teacher ratio will be determined based on the number of children participating and their parent's disclosure of swimming abilities. Lifeguards and other pool personnel will NOT be included in the minimum child/teacher ratio.

If you chose to have your child not participate in a field trip to the public pool, you will need to make alternate childcare arrangements. Your child may visit another classroom, if there is space, but that is not guaranteed.

Each family will be required to complete an Aquatics permission form at the beginning of each summer.

### **Internal Waiting List**

UCLC families may fill out a waiting list application as soon as they know they may have another child they wish to enroll; this child will be placed on an internal waiting list. Families on the internal waiting list have priority over individuals on the external waiting list.

### **Cellular Phone Policy**

Cellular phone use in the classroom is prohibited by all children. The following policies will always be adhered to:

- If a cellular phone is brought to the Learning Center per a family member's request, it must be kept in a backpack in a child's cubby.
- Failure to follow the cellular phone policy may result in confiscation of the cellular phone. Confiscated phones will be placed in the office and be available to pick up by a parent/guardian only.
- The University Children's Learning Center is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of a cellular phone.

### **Electronic Device Policy**

Use of electronic devices, such as MP3 players or hand-held gaming devices are prohibited for use in the toddler and preschool classrooms. The following policies are to be adhered to at all times:

- If an electronic device is brought to the Learning Center, it must be kept in a backpack in the child's cubby.
- Failure to follow the policy may result in confiscation of the electronic device. Confiscated devices will be placed in the office and available for pick up by a parent/guardian only.

- The University Children’s Learning Center is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage of an electronic device.

### **Families Use of Social Media**

Although the University Children’s Learning Center cannot prohibit families from using social media sites, we respectfully request adherence to the following policies:

- No discriminating, derogatory, or otherwise negative remarks be made against the University Children’s Learning Center, enrolled children or families, teachers, caregivers, student teachers, or any person connected to UCLC.
- If the content of the post is questionable, you are asked to err on the side of caution and not post it.
- University Children’s Learning Center families are given the option to allow photographs to be taken for use in the classroom, the UCLC website, and/or classroom social media sites. From time to time, group photographs may be taken and shared with families. While we cannot prohibit families from sharing these photographs on social media sites, UCLC advises caution.
- Please do not “tag” photographs, which will help keep photos more secure.

### **UCLC’s Use of Social Media**

UCLC Color Families may decide to use social media to communicate with families in their classroom. If your child’s Color Family decides to create a social media page, the following policies will be adhered to:

- Be notified in writing and asked to sign an acknowledgement form.
- The privacy settings will be as restrictive as the site allows.
- No child or family will be tagged in a photo.
- The page will not be searchable.
- Parents will be invited to join the page and will not be able to view the page without “administrator” (the experienced teachers, director, and/or assistant director) approval.

### **Family Involvement**

UCLC strives to be a partner with families in providing high quality care and early education for children. To help us achieve that goal, family involvement and interaction with children is welcomed and encouraged throughout the day. Some simple ways for you and your family to be involved at the Learning Center include:

- Visiting the Learning Center to play with children or join in a group activity; no reservations or advance notice is required.
- Join your child’s Color Family for breakfast, lunch, or snack. Please make a reservation at least 2 days in advance to ensure we have an extra meal ordered. There is a small fee that will be charged for your meal.
- Join your child’s family on field trips or when a special project is scheduled; volunteer help by a family member of the child’s family will be very much appreciated.
- Come and share special hobbies, interests, and talents you may have. Please let your child’s teacher know because they would love to have you share with the children in your child’s Color Family.

Two Family Nights will be scheduled throughout the academic year. These events will occur in the evening and provide a chance for families to enjoy some time together at the Learning Center and for teachers to interact in a more relaxed setting with families. If you would like to help organize one, this would be a great way to get involved.

### **Family-Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are held two (2) times per year. These are times set aside to discuss strengths and areas of concern regarding your child, or answer questions that you may have. In the fall, teachers and families share information about the child’s interests and strengths, allowing goals to be set for the upcoming academic year. Parents will receive a written report that includes the goals set and the teacher’s plan for helping your child reach those goals.

During the spring Family-Teacher conference, goals are reviewed, noting successes, and addressing challenges. A written report generated by the teacher from the documentation gathered throughout the year will be provided to parents.

Parents or teachers can request meeting with one another at any time. The director and/or assistant director will participate as requested. If a teacher or parent have a concern about any aspect of your child's growth and development, a meeting may be scheduled. This provides an opportunity for an in-depth, focused discussion about the noted concerns. Both the teacher and parent will have an opportunity to share their perspective of the child's strengths and challenges; together a plan to help the child succeed can be developed.

### **Parent Advisory Board**

Currently, The Parent Advisory Board is not active. It is UCLC's plan to re-instate The Parent Advisory Board.

The Parent Advisory Board consists of a minimum of one parent representative from each Color Family, one experienced teacher, and the assistant director. The purpose of the group is to provide advisory support to the Learning Center about a variety of matters. Such matters may include working with budgetary concerns, specific policies, or procedures, and generally to offer the parent perspective on decisions that impact the Learning Center. The Parent Advisory Board has a page on the UCLC webpage that includes the representatives contact information.

## **Concerns and/or Questions**

### **General Concerns**

If you have general concerns about the Learning Center, please feel free to email one of the Parent Advisory Board members, email or speak to the director, or speak with your child's teacher. In whatever manner you choose to communicate your concerns or questions, please know the teachers and administrative team at the Learning Center want to hear from you. Your feedback is what makes the University Children's Learning Center a high-quality program.

### **Specific Concerns and/or Questions about your Child**

If you have a specific concern or question about your child's development, behaviors, or actions, arrange to talk with your child's teacher at a time that is convenient for both of you. Please remember that it is difficult for teachers to give their full attention at drop off or pick up time because this time of transition is often very busy. Your concerns are important, and the teachers want to be able to give you the attention and time that is necessary to fully address your concern or question. If your concern requires immediate attention from your child's teacher, please tell the teacher about the urgency and arrangements will be made for the teacher to step away from the classroom for a few minutes. However, please provide enough time for arrangements to be made to ensure the safety of all children in the classroom.

### **Specific Health and Safety Concerns**

If you have an immediate or specific concern related to health and/or safety, please share it with the director or assistant director. If neither the director nor the assistant director is available, please leave a written note indicating the urgency of the message and the director will contact you as soon as possible, hopefully within two (2) hours. You can also call Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Care Licensing at 701-787-8540 to report any health and safety concerns, please see Abuse and/Neglect Concerns.

### **Specific Concerns about the Leadership of the Learning Center**

If you have concerns regarding the leadership, please contact Chris Suriano, Director of UND Wellness and Health Promotion; [christopher.suriano@und.edu](mailto:christopher.suriano@und.edu) or 701-777-0729..

## **Employee Background Checks**

All employees, along with any volunteer that has responsibility for the "care and education" of the children enrolled at UCLC must complete a comprehensive background check. The following process is completed with each individual that may provide care and education at UCLC:

- Each individual must complete the Criminal History Records Check Authorization form. University of North Dakota Human Resource personnel completes a background check BEFORE the individual is authorized to be hired.
- Upon hire, the individual must complete and submit fingerprints and forms for a Criminal History Background Check Inquiry – Early Childhood Services and SFN 377: Criminal History Background Check

Address Disclosure/Release of Information. The fingerprints and appropriate forms are submitted by the director to the Department of Human Services, Criminal Background Check Unit. The fingerprints are processed through the ND Bureau of Criminal Investigation as well as the FBI. An individual is NEVER left unsupervised with children until the letter with the fingerprint results are returned to the Learning Center.

The director completes the web-based public records search annually. Additionally, every employee submits to the fingerprint background check every five (5) years.

While the background check process is extensive, it is not a guarantee that an individual is always going to make appropriate and safe choices with regards to working with young children. Therefore, it is the exception for a staff member to be alone with a child. For children's protection and the protection of the teachers and caregivers, they will work in full view and sound of one another. Rarely, if ever will an adult be alone with a child. All the classrooms are open. Everyone can see into each classroom and hear what is being said. The bathrooms are located between two classrooms and a half-door on the changing rooms allows for the person to be seen and heard by others.

The Learning Center takes your child's safety and security very seriously. If a family should ever suspect physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child, they are asked to please discuss their concern with the director immediately. Any suspicions of child abuse or neglect can (and should) be reported directly to Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Protection Services or Child Care Licensing at 701-787-8540.

If allegations of child abuse or neglect are made against an employee or volunteer of UCLC, that individual will immediately be placed on administrative leave, with or without pay as determined by UND Human Resources as soon as UCLC is made aware of the allegations. Parents will be notified, in situations when required by ND law, of the allegation being made, however, no details will be released to protect the integrity of the investigation. Full cooperation of all employees is expected throughout the investigation.

If the allegations are substantiated, through a service recommended/required by Child Protective Services, the individual will be released of all duties. If allegations are not substantiated by Child Protective Services but there is corrective action taken by Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Care Licensing, further disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be determined after a review of the facts by the UCLC administrative team, the Director of the UND Wellness Center, and/or the Vice President of Student Affairs and Diversity.

All early childhood education professionals (teachers, caregivers, student teachers, etc.) are mandated by ND Law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. We at the University Children's Learning Center take this mandate seriously and are dedicated to protecting all children.

### **Accountability Policy**

Children are not allowed to come to the Learning Center unaccompanied. Parents may not drop their child off in the parking lot and allow the child to walk into the Learning Center alone. Each child must be properly signed in by a parent/guardian or other adult authorized by the parent. Responsibility for the child's health and safety becomes the Learning Center's upon the child being signed in. Parents assume responsibility of the child upon the child being signed out by a parent/guardian or other adult authorized by the parent.

### **Equal Opportunity**

The Children's Center is operated on a nondiscriminatory basis. Equal treatment and access to services is given without regard to race, color, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, national origin, or sexual identity.