



Philosophy

The VCU Health System Child Development Center's philosophy is based on the belief that all children deserve love, attention, concerned direction, and stimulation to grow and develop physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially.

We believe that it is our responsibility to provide a child development program of the highest quality, one which recognizes each child's individual needs and provides the care, stimulation, and guidance he/she requires to grow and develop to his/her greatest potential. It is our belief that children learn best when

- They experience positive relationships.
- They are allowed to express their feelings.
- They are involved.
- They are able to move at their own speed.
- They can select from a variety of experiences.
- They are confident and feel good about themselves.
- They are recognized for and encouraged in their activities.
- They are able to follow clear, simple, meaningful directions independently.

The words and actions of a teacher or caregiver can stimulate a child to learn, engage in creative activity, and help him/her to establish a sense of self-respect, self-discipline, and concern for others. All interactions with adults should be positive in nature and assist the child in maintaining a positive self-concept. A child and his family have a special relationship, which should be fostered through communication with the family regarding his/her activities and progress. We believe that we have a responsibility to foster growth of the family by providing individual conferences and group programs.

Discipline

We believe that discipline is learning

- ...what is expected (the rules)
- ...how to safely and effectively manage our actions and responses
- ...to identify and define consequences
- ...respect for self, others, and the world around us

We believe that a child should be told what is expected of him/her and what do more frequently than what not to do. They should be given acceptable choices and if his/her behavior has been directed and the consequences redefined.



Health and Safety

Each child must have a preliminary physical examination. A record of this examination and all immunizations must be submitted to the administrative office. This physical examination information must be updated every six months for infants up to two years of age and once a year for other children. The VCU Health System Child Care Center staff will take every precaution to ensure the health and safety of each child. If a child becomes ill while at the center, he/she will be removed from contact with the other children and his/her family will be notified to come for the child within the hour. In this case, the child must not return to the center for a full 24 hours after resolution of symptoms.

Children may not be admitted to the center if they have had any of the following symptoms within the past 24 hours:

- Vomiting Which is not the result of mucous triggering the gag reflex.
- Diarrhea Three stools in several hours which not consistent with the child's normal pattern or a food/drug reaction
- Fever Over 100 degrees axillary or 101 degrees rectally. Children who had Tylenol within the past two hours and whose temperature is 99 degrees axillary or 100 degrees rectally
- Sore Throat
- Communicable Disease Please notify the office immediately so that appropriate notice can be given to the parents of children potentially exposed
- Generalized Rash Not associated with a food allergy or a contact dermatitis
- Nasal Discharge Yellow or green in color
- Ear infections Must be on antibiotics for 24 hour
- Conjunctivitis Conjunctival redness must have subsided and the drainage stopped prior to return the center

Center staff will administer medications for a child each day that a current medication form is on file. Medications to be given "when necessary" may not be given in that format, but parents can put times for the medication and state "if needed." Medication must be in their original containers and clearly marked with the child's name. All medications must be delivered to teachers or the office. Medications that have reached their expiration date will not be given. Our sick policy is designed to protect ALL children enrolled in the center and to promote the highest level of health possible. Your adherence to these policies will benefit everyone.



Making Separation Easier

Every day you and your child say goodbye to one another in the morning and hello again in the afternoon. These hellos and goodbyes are children's first steps in a life-long journey of learning how to separate from and reunite with important people in their lives.

Learning to say hello and goodbye to people we love is a process, not a goal to be achieved in the first week or even year of entering a new classroom. Indeed, after many years of experience, we adults sometimes find it difficult to separate and reunite.

How We Can Work Together

- Try to spend some time each morning and afternoon here with your child. Your presence will help make the transition between home and child care easier for your child.
- Remember always to say goodbye. By saying goodbye, you strengthen your child's trust in you. Your child can count on the fact you will not disappear without warning. When you let us know you are about to leave in the morning, we can help you and your child say goodbye.
- We can work together to create a hello and goodbye ritual. This may be as simple as walking to the door with your child or giving your child a giant hug before you leave. Having a ritual offers you both the comfort of knowing what to do.
- Be aware that sometimes goodbyes and hellos will be "bumpier" than others. As we all know, goodbyes and hellos can stir up many deep feelings. These feelings, combined with your child's stage of development and other factors, such as being hungry or tired, can make saying goodbye and hello difficult at times.
- Bring in family photos and other reminders of home that you want to share. Seeing these special objects will help your child feel connected to you throughout the day.
- By working together, we can help your child feel comfortable, secure, and competent in child care.



Sleeping and Naptime

Having enough sleep makes it more likely that children will enjoy and benefit from learning opportunities throughout the day.

In addition, sleeping and naptime offer important lessons about trust and being competent as children learn to move from being awake to falling asleep and being awake again. As we with you help learn your child's individual style of preparing for sleep and waking up, we can offer the support he or she needs. For example, while some children like to be rocked or have their backs rubbed, others prefer to be left alone as they drift into sleep.

How We Can Work Together

- We can communicate each day. By keeping each other informed about the length of time your child sleeps and any changes in his or her sleeping patterns, we can plan better. For example, if we know your child didn't sleep well the night before, we can offer early nap, if necessary. If you know your child took a long nap and is well rested, you may decide it is all right to stop and buy groceries on the way home. Do you think your child is getting enough rest during the day? Let us know.
- Please share with ways that you help your child fall asleep. If we know, for example, that you sing a certain song or rock your child for a few minutes before placing him or her down to sleep, we can do the same thing. This will help your child experience some of the safe and secure feeling he or she has with you and make it easier to fall asleep.
- Please bring your child's comfort item from home. Having a special blanket, stuffed animal, or other object from home can make falling asleep easier for a child. If your child has such an object, please label it with your child's name and bring it in. We'll take care it doesn't get lost and help you remember to take it home at night. **If your child is under 12 months of age, they will nap in a crib and cannot have a blanket or stuffed animal. If you would like your child to be swaddled for warmth, please provide a swaddle and specific instructions for your teachers.
- Together, we can help make sleeping and naptime a pleasant and restful experience for your child.