



University of Idaho

Children's Center

Parent Handbook



Table of Contents

1.	Program Overview.....	4		Breastfeeding Support	16
1.1	Philosophy, Vision & Mission	4		Bottle & Milk Guidelines	16
	Philosophy	4		Introducing Solids.....	16
	Mission	4	3.4	Nap/Rest	17
	Vision.....	4		Infants (Red Room) & Safe Sleep Policy	17
	Core Values	4		Toddlers and Preschoolers (Orange, Yellow, Teal, and Green Rooms)	17
1.2	NAEYC Accreditation	5		Sleep Considerations and Group Care	18
1.3	Quality Achievers	5	3.5	Toilet Learning Policy	18
1.4	Parent Participation	5	3.6	Drop-off & Pick-Up	19
	Classroom-Level Opportunities	6		Building Access & Parking	19
	Program-Wide Opportunities	6		Communication with Teaching Staff	19
	Open Door Policy	6		Sign-In/Out.....	19
1.5	Structure & Services	7		Authorized Pick-Up	20
	Classroom Age Groups and Ratios	7		Custody & Changes to Family Status	20
	Staffing and Scheduling	7		Release Procedures	20
	Staff Qualifications	7		Late Pick-Up Policy	21
1.6	Food Program.....	8	4	Health, Safety & Behavior	21
	General Guidelines	8	4.1	Handwashing	21
	Income Eligibility Documentation	8		Handwashing Procedure	22
	Allergy & Modified Diet Policies	9		Oral Hygiene.....	22
	Mealtime Practices	9	4.2	Food from Home	23
	Important Reminders	9	4.3	Health Management and Illness Exclusion Policy	23
2	Enrollment Policies	10		When to Keep Your Child Home	23
2.1	Pre-Enrollment Tours & Visits	10		Symptoms That Require Exclusion from Care	23
2.2	Enrollment Process	10		Exclusion Process	24
	Complete and Return Required Forms	10		Medications	24
	Immunizations.....	11		Prescription Medication	24
	Health Examinations.....	11		Topical Products	25
2.3	Tuition & Fees.....	11	4.4	Injuries	25
	Deposit	11		Injury Documentation & Notification	25
	Monthly Tuition	12	4.5	Emergency Preparedness	26
	University Student Tuition Rates	12		Fire Drills.....	26
	Classroom Transitions and Tuition	12		Earthquake & Lockdown Drills	26
	Annual Tuition Review	12		Evacuation Drill (Full Building Evacuation)	26
	ICCP & Child Care Aware.....	12		Building Safety.....	26
	Vandal Financial Support & Assistance	13		Emergency Food Supply	27
	Dependent Care FSA.....	13	4.6	Mandated Reporting and Child Protection.....	27
	Financial Information	13		Reporting Responsibilities	27
	Withdrawing	13		Staff Training Requirements.....	27
3	Operations	13	4.7	Child Guidance & Discipline	28
3.1	What to Bring	13		Positive Guidance	28
	Daily and Rest-Time Essentials	13		Behavior Concerns	29
	Seasonal Items.....	14	5	Learning & Assessment.....	29
	Optional/Family Connection	14	5.1	Pyramid Model	29
	Reminders.....	14	5.2	Curriculum	30
3.2	Classroom Transition Policy & Approach.....	14	5.3	Ongoing Child Development Monitoring & Assessment.....	30
	Transition Considerations.....	15		Agencies and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3):	31
	The Transition Process	15		CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early."	31
	Tuition Adjustment.....	15			
3.3	Infant Feeding & Nutrition	15			
	Feeding Practices	15			

Parent Handbook



University of Idaho

Children's Center

	Conferences.....	31	6.3	Transportation.....	36
5.4	Developmental Concern's & Referrals	32	6.4	Field Trips	36
	Individualized Plans	33	6.5	Holidays & Birthdays	36
5.5	Suspension/Expulsion	33	6.6	Policy Updates	37
	Expulsion/Involuntary Withdrawal.....	34	6.7	Parent Engagement & Support.....	37
5.6	Research & Observation	34		Food Pantry Resources	38
6	Additional Policies, Procedures and Resources	35	7	Program Rights & Feedback.....	38
6.1	Home Toys	35	7.1	Program Feedback	39
6.2	Babysitting.....	35	7.2	USDA Statement	39



1. Program Overview

The Children's Center, located on the University of Idaho's Moscow campus, provides high-quality care for the children of students, staff, faculty, and community members. As part of the University's Division of Student Affairs, the Center supports the broader mission of fostering a thriving campus community. Our child-centered program is designed to help families succeed by offering dependable care while parents attend classes, conduct research, work, or engage in other university-related activities.

1.1 Philosophy, Vision & Mission

Philosophy

We strive to create developmentally appropriate, responsive, and culturally sensitive experiences and environments for every child. We honor the vital role of families, recognizing that each brings a unique history, perspective, and set of priorities and hopes for their child.

We believe the early years are a foundational time - when children begin developing the roots that will support lifelong growth and learning. In partnership with families, we aim to nurture these roots with intention and care.

Our approach is grounded in the wisdom of respected early childhood theorists and practitioners. As our world continues to evolve, so too does our practice. We are committed to continually reflecting, learning, and adapting to best support the children and families we serve.

Mission

UICC supports the academic and professional success of University of Idaho students, faculty, staff and community by providing accessible, and high-quality childcare that is developmentally informed, and built on strong partnerships between educators and families. We nurture belonging through intentional relationships, celebrate curiosity through playful exploration, and support growth by recognizing the unique strengths and needs of each individual within our program.

Vision

We envision a nurturing environment that serves as a trusted extension of the home—where families feel supported, children thrive, and employees are valued and empowered. Through a rock-solid foundation of reliable care and a commitment to work-life balance, we aim to create a community where everyone feels safe.

Core Values

- Child Centered Learning
- Commitment to high-quality best practices and excellence in the field
- Embracing and welcoming community



- Collaborative partnerships
- Health, safety and wellbeing
- Vandals do the safe thing, the kind thing and the team thing

1.2 NAEYC Accreditation

The Children's Center is proud to be accredited by the **National Association for the Education of Young Children** (NAEYC), which sets the highest standards in early childhood education. To earn and maintain this accreditation, our staff have carefully prepared and continue to update comprehensive portfolios for both individual classrooms and the overall program, demonstrating that we meet NAEYC's rigorous criteria.

As part of the accreditation process, the Center undergoes a site visit by the NAEYC accreditation team at least once every five years. Additionally, we submit annual reports between visits to ensure ongoing compliance. The Children's Center first achieved NAEYC accreditation in March 1995 and remains committed to upholding these exceptional standards.

At UICC, we are committed to continuous professional development to ensure our staff remain informed, skilled, and inspired by current best practices and research in early childhood education. We provide our teachers with dedicated time outside the classroom to engage in ongoing training and reflective learning. Our team regularly utilizes high-quality resources through IdahoSTARS and other professional networks to deepen their knowledge and refine their teaching practices. This commitment supports our goal of providing a responsive, developmentally appropriate learning environment for all children.

1.3 Quality Achievers

Quality Achievers—is a voluntary program that supports childcare programs in reaching and demonstrating high-quality practices through personalized growth and recognition. Quality Achievers is especially tailored for Idaho's childcare programs. Rather than forcing everyone into a single mold of "quality," it supports providers in growing their version of excellence—while still maintaining foundational standards. Quality Achievers recognizes programs for meeting the baseline Quality Essentials (a "Growing Star" program) or for their own combination of Quality Essentials and high-quality Achievements (a "Star Achiever" program).

1.4 Parent Participation

At UICC, we deeply value the relationships we build with families and strive to create a welcoming, inclusive community where parents and caregivers feel connected and engaged. We offer a range of informal and formal opportunities for families to interact with one another and with the program throughout the year.



Classroom-Level Opportunities

We value and encourage family involvement in our program. Each classroom offers at least quarterly opportunities for families to participate in classroom activities or special events. These may include activities within the classroom itself or in the community. Teaching teams will regularly reach out to families with opportunities to participate in classroom activities, events, and special projects.

Volunteering may include sharing your family's culture, traditions, language, hobbies, or interests with the children. These experiences enrich our curriculum and help build a strong sense of community.

Opportunities to participate will be offered at various times and in different formats to accommodate a range of family schedules and comfort levels. Whether you choose to volunteer in person, send materials from home, or join us virtually, your contributions are always welcome and appreciated.

Program-Wide Opportunities

Across the entire UICC program, we offer one to two larger-scale events each year designed to bring all families together. These events may include family picnics or community-building gatherings that highlight our shared values and diverse traditions.

Open Door Policy

UICC maintains an open-door policy and welcomes families to visit their child's classroom at any time. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to read a story during circle time, share a hobby or aspect of their profession that connects with the curriculum, or simply sit and enjoy a meal or activity with their child.

While we value and encourage family participation, we kindly ask that visiting adults refrain from assisting other children with toileting, mealtimes, or managing behavior. These responsibilities are handled by trained staff to ensure consistency, safety, and respect for each child's needs and routines.

We appreciate your partnership and support in maintaining a nurturing and respectful classroom environment for all children.

By fostering both structured and spontaneous opportunities for involvement, we aim to support strong family partnerships and a vibrant, connected school community.



1.5 Structure & Services

All classrooms at the UI Children's Center are staffed with a Lead Teacher and an Assistant Teacher, ensuring consistent, high-quality care and support tailored to each age group valuing the importance of relationships between families and caregivers.

Classroom Age Groups and Ratios

- **Red Room:** Ages 6 weeks to 12 months with a 1:3 ratio.
- **Orange Room:** Ages 12 to 24 months with a 1:5 ratio.
- **Yellow Room:** Ages 24 to 36 months with a 1:6 ratio.
First classroom with child-accessible toilets
- **Teal Room:** Ages 30 to 48 months with a 1:7 ratio.
- **Green Room:** Ages 3 to 4 years with a 1:10 ratio.
- **Dark Blue Room:** Ages 4 to 5 years with a 1:10 ratio.
- **Child Development Lab Preschool:** Ages 3 to 5 years with a 1:10 ratio, supported by UI student teachers.
Morning preschool only (7:30 am–12:30 pm, Monday through Friday, during fall and spring semesters).

Staffing and Scheduling

We schedule our teaching staff with intention to ensure that a full-time team member, either a Lead or Assistant Teacher—is present during both opening and closing times each day. This approach helps provide consistency and continuity for children and families during important transition periods. Having a familiar and informed staff member available supports smooth handoffs, strengthens communication, and fosters a sense of security and connection at the start and end of each day.

In addition to our full-time teaching staff, classrooms are supported by University of Idaho student employees, including work-study participants. These students balance their work schedules with academic commitments, and we strive to place them consistently in the same classrooms to help foster stable, trusting relationships with the children.

Classrooms may also welcome observation students from early childhood education courses. These individuals support classroom activities under direct supervision as part of their academic learning experience requirements.

We do not permit volunteers to be in direct care of children enrolled in the program.

Staff Qualifications

- Lead Teachers hold a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, or a closely related field.



- Assistant Teachers hold an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field, a CDA (Child Development Associate Credential), or are actively working toward a CDA within six months of hire.
- Student staff and work-study employees are enrolled in degree programs related to Early Childhood Development, Education, or have prior experience working with children.
- University of Idaho observation students may assist in classrooms under direct supervision as part of their required academic coursework in early childhood education.
- All staff members, including student employees and work-study staff, complete a comprehensive onboarding process and are required to pass a state background check prior to working in the classroom. In addition, all staff maintain current certification in CPR and First Aid.
- As part of their training, staff participate in IdahoSTARS coursework, beginning with 12 hours of introductory training focused on best practices in early childhood care and education. Within their first year, team members complete a minimum of 8 additional hours of professional development, with particular emphasis on behavior guidance and our program's implementation of the Pyramid Model. This intentional approach ensures a consistent, informed foundation across the teaching team and supports a shared understanding of developmentally appropriate, relationship-based practices.

1.6 Food Program

The UI Children's Center participates in the **USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**. Through this program, we provide nutritious meals and snacks that support healthy development and encourage positive mealtime habits.

General Guidelines

- Meals are provided for children from the time they are developmentally ready for solid food throughout their enrollment in our program.
- Meals are served without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or disability.
- Weekly cycle menus are posted near the front desk and available for review.

Income Eligibility Documentation

- All families are asked to complete a CACFP Income Eligibility Application at the time of registration. This form helps support meal program funding.
- Student loans, grants, and scholarships do not count as income.
- All financial information is kept confidential.



Allergy & Modified Diet Policies

- If your child has a medically diagnosed food allergy or intolerance, a Food Allergy/Intolerance Form must be completed by a licensed healthcare provider. The form must list foods to be omitted and include safe food substitutions.
- For non-medical dietary preferences or restrictions, parents may submit a written request to the director. These will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis. No outside food can be brought into the center.

Mealtime Practices

- Meals are served family-style to promote independence and social development.
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves when developmentally appropriate and to try new foods, but they are never forced to taste or eat any item.
- Children may request second servings. Teachers guide healthy eating habits by modeling balanced choices and appropriate portions.
- Teachers eat with the children to support conversation and model family style dining expectations
- Visiting parents are welcome to join children at the table during mealtimes. When possible prior notice is appreciated so an additional place setting may be requested of the kitchen.

CACFP Meal Requirements		
Meal	Components Offered	Time
Breakfast	Milk, Fruit or Vegetable, Grain	8:30–9:00 AM
Lunch	Milk, Meat/Meat Alternative, Grain, Two Fruits/Vegetables	11:30 AM–12:00 PM
Snack	Two of the following: Milk, Grain, Fruit/Vegetable	2:30–3:00 PM

Important Reminders

- If your child is absent during a mealtime, please plan alternate arrangements for their meal and let us know in advance when possible, to support accurate meal prep.
- Due to health and safety regulations, we are unable to hold meals for late arrivals or provide meals earlier than scheduled for any reason. (The infant classroom is the exception as they feed on demand in that age group)
- To support program compliance and child nutrition, food may not be taken out of the Center. Please allow your child to finish their meal before leaving.



2 Enrollment Policies

2.1 Pre-Enrollment Tours & Visits

Once you have been offered an enrollment spot for your child, you will be invited to schedule a tour of the Center. Tours are available only after an enrollment offer has been made. Tours can be scheduled through the administrative team. Families are welcome to include the child to be enrolled if they would like.

We understand that beginning group care and separating from parents can be a big transition for young children. To help ease this process, we encourage families to arrange a classroom visit prior to their child's first day. These visits provide an opportunity for you and your child to become familiar with the classroom environment, meet the teaching staff, and begin building a sense of comfort and connection. Visits can be scheduled in coordination with your child's Lead Teacher. Please note that all pre-start visits must include a parent or guardian staying with the child at all times, as we are not able to provide drop-off care before the contracted start date.

2.2 Enrollment Process

To secure your child's enrollment at the University of Idaho Children's Center (UICC), families must:

- Notify the administrative team of their intent to enroll
- Submit a signed enrollment contract
- Pay the \$100 enrollment fee

This payment and completed contract officially reserve your child's spot in the program. An agreed-upon start date must also be confirmed with the administrative team as part of the enrollment process.

Complete and Return Required Forms

All required enrollment documents must be completed, signed, and submitted at least three (3) business days before your child's first day. These forms are essential for compliance with licensing regulations and help us get to know your child—their interests, background, culture, family values, language(s), health needs, and who is authorized for pickup. Keeping this information up to date is vital for your child's safety and success.

Required documents include:

- Full Enrollment Packet (all pages)
- Allergy or Medical Forms (if applicable)
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) – completed online
- CACFP Income Eligibility Form – for participation in our meal grant program (optional)
- Classroom-specific "Getting to Know Your Child" form



If the completed paperwork is not received by the deadline, your child's start date at the center may be delayed. However, tuition will still begin on the date listed in your signed enrollment contract, regardless of the actual first day of attendance.

Families are encouraged to request a meeting with their child's teaching team to support a smooth and personalized transition into care.

Immunizations

Parents are required to provide proof of current immunizations for their child. As immunizations are updated, families must submit updated records to the Children's Center by:

- Bringing a copy to the UICC office
- Emailing: uikids@uidaho.edu
- Faxing: (208) 885-9505

All immunizations must comply with the requirements set by the Idaho State Board of Health and Welfare and follow recognized medical standards for administration and frequency.

If you choose not to immunize your child, you must provide a signed State of Idaho Immunization Waiver for exemption **annually**.

⚠ Failure to comply with this immunization policy may result in immediate dismissal from the Children's Center.

Health Examinations

The Center requires documentation of a recent health examination for each child prior to enrollment. This documentation must then be updated at least annually (every 6 months for children under the age of 2 years) throughout the child's enrollment. This requirement is part of our commitment to meeting both state licensing regulations and national accreditation standards.

When your child has a well-child exam, please have your healthcare provider complete and sign the Center's Health Screening Form. You may also request that your child's medical records be faxed directly to the Center at (208) 885-9505.

Please keep all health and immunization records current and notify the Center promptly of any changes to your child's health.

2.3 Tuition & Fees

Deposit

A \$1,000 deposit is required for each family and will be billed on the first day of enrollment, due over the first 90 days of enrollment. The deposit is held on file while your child attends the Center and is refunded when a written 30-day notice of withdrawal is submitted, and the account is paid in full.



If a family has more than one child enrolled, the deposit is refunded after the last child withdraws from the program.

Monthly Tuition

Tuition is billed monthly, based on the classroom your child is enrolled in as of the first day of the month. Families will receive a monthly tuition statement via email, which includes a link to make payments online through the University of Idaho Marketplace. The Children's Center does not accept payments in person.

Tuition is due on the following schedule:

- By the 5th of each month (full payment), or
- Split Payment Option: Half due by the 5th and the remaining half due by the 20th.

⚠ If payment is not received by the 5th and 20th, a \$50 late fee will be applied.

Please note: Tuition is not prorated or credited for mid-month classroom transitions, illness, family vacations, or program closures. Monthly tuition must be paid within the month it is billed; balances cannot roll over.

University Student Tuition Rates

To qualify for student rates, at least one parent must be enrolled full-time at the University of Idaho; Full time means; 12 undergraduate credits, 9 graduate credits or 10 law credits.

Verification must be provided each semester via email to uikids@uidaho.edu and can be downloaded from VandalWeb. It must show the enrolled parents first and last name, semester and total number of credits. For summer student rates, proof of fall enrollment is required. After graduation, families will be charged the non-student rate beginning the following month.

Classroom Transitions and Tuition

When a child transitions to a new classroom, the new tuition rate will begin on the first day of the following month. Transitions are based on classroom availability, child readiness, and collaborative planning between parents and teachers. Tuition will not be pro-rated for internal transitions to the next classroom.

Annual Tuition Review

Tuition rates are reviewed annually to ensure financial sustainability. If an increase is necessary, families will be notified in July, and the new rates will take effect in September.

ICCP & Child Care Aware

The Children's Center and the Child Development Lab (CDL) are approved providers for the Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP) as well as the Child Care Aware of America (CCA) program. Families interested in using ICCP or CCA benefits should coordinate with the office for required documentation and billing setup.



Vandal Financial Support & Assistance

The Dean of Students Office at the University of Idaho offers financial assistance to enrolled students facing emergency situations that may impact their academic progress. This support is intended for circumstances that cannot be reasonably resolved through other financial resources. In addition, some colleges within the university offer their own assistance programs for eligible students. We encourage families to connect with their academic college or the Dean of Students Office to learn more about available support.

Dependent Care FSA

Families may also request tuition and attendance documentation from UICC for use with employer-sponsored Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) or other programs that offer childcare reimbursement. Please contact the administrative team for assistance with these requests.

Financial Information

The front office will email monthly tuition statements as well as end-of-year statements for tax purposes. If you need a printed copy of any statement, please stop by the front desk and we'll be happy to assist you.

For families participating in the Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP), the Children's Center can complete the provider portion of any required documentation.

Our **Tax ID number** is: **82-6000945**

Withdrawing

Families are required to provide written (hard copy or email) notice at least 30 days in advance of their child's last day of attendance.

Tuition will be charged for one full month from the date the Center receives notice of withdrawal, regardless of the child's actual last day. This policy allows us to plan for staffing and enrollment transitions.

Deposits will be credited to your account on the child's last day of enrollment.

3 Operations

3.1 What to Bring

To help your child feel comfortable and prepared throughout the day, please bring the following items. Most items will remain at the Center and be sent home for laundering weekly or as needed:

Daily and Rest-Time Essentials

- A complete set of extra clothes (labeled): shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. At least one. If you think more would be beneficial, please send additional labeled items.



- A blanket for rest time (please launder weekly and return).
- If applicable: diapers, wipes, diaper ointment (not expired) and lotion (not expired).
- Sunscreen that is not expired and contains NO nut products (including coconut oil)

Seasonal Items

- Winter gear: labeled jacket, hat, snow pants, boots, and waterproof mittens/gloves.
- Summer gear: labeled towel, swimsuit, water shoes or sandals, and a sun hat.

NOTE - Seasonal clothing should be appropriate for outdoor play and will be sent home weekly for washing. Children will go outside each day barring weather related limitations. When children are unable to go outside, each classroom will provide alternative opportunities for gross motor play.

Optional/Family Connection

- Family photos (printed or emailed) are welcome! These help your child feel connected and comforted during the day. We'll include them in a family collage in the classroom.

Reminders

- In the event of an emergency or accident, the Center may provide your child with extra clothing. If so, please wash and return those items.
- The Center is not responsible for lost or unlabeled clothing or personal items, so labeling items is strongly encouraged.
- Children in group care are active, curious, and regularly engaged in hands-on, often messy experiences—such as painting, water play, outdoor exploration, and sensory activities. We encourage families to dress their children in comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that they can move freely in and that you don't mind getting messy.
Learning through play can be wonderfully messy, and we want children to fully enjoy those moments without worry.
- UICC will periodically send program-wide emails. There is a monitor in the lobby, featuring photos, reminders, etc that is updated frequently. You will also receive monthly emails from your teaching team with documentation, photos and reminders.

3.2 Classroom Transition Policy & Approach

Children transition from one classroom to the next based on a combination of developmental readiness, timing, and space availability. Our approach is thoughtful and individualized to support each child's success and comfort. We aim to keep infants, toddlers, and twos with their teaching team for 9 months or longer to support strong relationships and continuity of care.



Transition Considerations

Classroom transitions are considered based on the following:

- Age of the child (not necessarily following birth order)
- Individual needs and developmental level
- Time of year, including alignment with UI academic semesters
- Availability of space in the next classroom
- A transition plan created in collaboration with the current and next classroom teachers, program supervisor, director, and parents
- Child social dynamics to promote healthy relationships

The Transition Process

Once all criteria have been addressed and it is agreed that transitioning is in the child's best interest:

- The child will begin visiting the next classroom based on the transition plan as staffing allows. These visits allow the child to become familiar with the new environment, teachers, and routines at their own pace. If a child needs additional time or adjustments to the plan, we will modify the timeline accordingly.
- Transitions are handled individually and respectfully, honoring the time each child needs to feel confident and secure.

Tuition Adjustment

Tuition rate changes take effect on the next billing cycle (the 1st of next month) after a child transitions to a new classroom. Tuition will not be pro-rated for internal transitions to the next classroom.

3.3 Infant Feeding & Nutrition

Our infant team partners closely with families to support each child's individual feeding needs and routines. We are committed to providing responsive care that honors each family's preferences and supports the healthy development of every infant.

Feeding Practices

Infants are fed on-demand based on their individual hunger cues and schedules.

Parents are encouraged to introduce bottles and any nutrition provided by the center at home first before it is offered during care.

We provide daily communication about feedings through the family app and direct conversation with teachers.

Breastfeeding Support

We fully support breastfeeding families. Nursing parents are welcome to breastfeed at the center in a variety of settings with different levels of privacy based on parent preference.

We are happy to serve expressed breast milk using bottles or closed-top containers for infants who are developmentally ready. For children who are still receiving breastmilk after transitioning to the toddler classroom may receive the expressed milk at breakfast and lunch in a closed, labeled container.



USDA

Bottle & Milk Guidelines

Parents are responsible for bringing sterilized bottles each day. Families may choose from the following options:

- Expressed breast milk (fresh or frozen). All expressed milk must be labeled with:
 - Child's first and last name
 - Date milk was expressed
 - Number of ounces per bag
 - Please bring breast milk in milk storage bags or sterile, labeled, sealed containers.
- Enfamil NeuroPro infant formula (provided by the center)
- Alternative formula (provided by the family)

Introducing Solids

In the Red Room, families may provide their own food from home—such as purees or other appropriate items—for their infant. Please note that we are unable to warm or heat food items brought from home.



The Center also provides single-ingredient baby food purees and infant oatmeal for enrolled infants as they begin eating solids. As infants show signs of readiness and with parental approval, they may begin trying foods from the Center's daily menu. Meals and snacks can be cut or modified to ensure they are safe and age-appropriate.

Once a child transitions to the Orange Room, meals are provided entirely by the Center, and families may no longer bring meals from home. **Children must be eating primarily from our menu for at least 2 weeks before transitioning to Orange room.** This policy supports consistency with licensing regulations and food safety practices as children begin eating group meals.

We are committed to open communication with families throughout each child's feeding journey. Please connect with your child's teachers regularly about feeding updates or changes.

3.4 Nap/Rest

The UI Children's Center offers a supervised rest period for all children in the Red through Green Rooms. Rest practices are designed to support each child's developmental needs while maintaining a calm and respectful group environment.

Children will never receive sippy cups or bottles at naptime.

Infants (Red Room) & Safe Sleep Policy

- Infants follow individual sleep schedules based on their unique needs and routines.
- Infants are always placed on their backs in a crib for sleep, in accordance with **NAEYC standards and Safe Sleep Guidelines**.
- Only a loose pacifier may be placed in the crib with the child—no heavy quilts, pillows, stuffed animals, or other items are permitted.
- The Center provides and uses wearable sleep sacks for infants 12 months and younger in place of blankets.
- Infants may not sleep in car seats or other devices which are not approved for safe sleep. If an infant arrives at the center asleep in a car seat, the teachers will remove the child from the seat with intent to keep them asleep, either through transitioning to a crib or sleeping in a caregivers arms for the remaining nap.

Toddlers and Preschoolers (Orange, Yellow, Teal, and Green Rooms)

- A quiet rest period is observed daily from 12:30–2:30 PM following lunch.
- Each child is offered a cot and a quiet, dim environment to rest.
- Children are not forced to sleep but are provided with the opportunity to rest their bodies.
- If a child does not fall asleep within 30 minutes, they may participate in quiet activities on their cot, such as looking at books or drawing, so as not to disturb resting peers.



Sleep Considerations and Group Care

- In a group care setting, we are unable to honor parent requests for no nap prior to a child's placement in the Dark Blue Room.
- If a child appears tired during rest time, we will not prevent them from falling asleep.
- Children will not be woken early from rest but may be supported in falling asleep later or simply allowed to rest quietly.

These practices help support each child's physical and emotional needs while balancing the structure and routines of the classroom. If parents have concerns about their child's sleep, please reach out to your teaching team for support.

3.5 Toilet Learning Policy

Toilet learning is an important developmental milestone that many children will work on during their time at our program. At the Children's Center, we believe in supporting each child's unique process, and we approach toilet learning as a partnership between families and educators.

We watch for signs of readiness—such as interest in the toilet, staying dry for longer periods, and awareness of bodily cues—and understand that readiness at home may not always translate to the group care setting. If a child is not showing consistent signs of readiness at school, we will not force the process. Instead, we will continue to provide a respectful, supportive environment and maintain open communication with families.

It is normal for children to make progress and then regress during the toilet learning journey. We approach accidents with empathy and reassurance, reminding children that everyone has accidents sometimes. Shaming or punishment is never part of our response; instead, we support children by helping them clean up and encouraging them to try again.

We do not prompt children to use the toilet more than once an hour, as overly frequent reminders can be disruptive to their play and intrusive to their daily experience. Our goal is to balance consistency with respect for their autonomy and engagement.

Until a child demonstrates readiness at school and the teaching team and family mutually agree to transition, families are expected to continue supplying diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and extra clothing. Children should not come to school in underwear until this decision has been made together.

In alignment with NAEYC guidelines and developmentally appropriate practice, we do not use food or treats to reward toileting success. Instead, we celebrate progress through encouragement, patience, and consistency.



3.6 Drop-off & Pick-Up

To ensure the safety of all children and the smooth operation of our program, we ask families to follow the procedures below when dropping off and picking up their child each day. Please be aware that staff will conduct a visual health check per section 4.2.

Building Access & Parking

- Vandal Cards are required for building access. If you do not already have one, you will be issued one upon enrollment. Vandal Cards are programmed for secure access to the Center. For safety and security, **do not** share your card with anyone else.
- Authorized adults who are here to drop-off or pickup your child should ring the doorbell and prepared to show ID
- When using the Children's Center parking lot turn off your vehicle engine while parked. Do not leave children under the age of 12 unattended in a parked vehicle.

Communication with Teaching Staff

We value and encourage frequent two-way communication between families and our teaching teams. Sharing details about your child's morning, weekend, or anything that may affect their day helps us provide the best possible care and support. We do our best to communicate any concerns or challenges privately, away from your child, and we kindly ask families to do the same. This helps us support all children in feeling safe, confident, and successful. When possible, we love to share positive moments and celebrations in front of children to reinforce their growth and accomplishments!

You may share updates:

- In person at drop-off
- Through the 1Core Parent App
 - Child meals/bottles, toileting/diapering, incidents/accidents, daily activities, photos, and child file updates can all be accessed through this app
- Via classroom email
- By calling the classroom phone
- Scheduling a time to meet with the teachers

If in-person communication isn't ideal for your schedule or your child's needs, please feel free to use one of the other available options.

Sign-In/Out

All children must be signed in and out daily using the 1Core Parent App. You may sign in by scanning the QR code posted near classroom doors or by entering your unique four-digit code at a



designated check-in station. Each authorized pickup person is assigned a unique code—codes should not be shared and each individual should use their code to keep our record keeping accurate.

Authorized Pick-Up

Children will only be released to individuals who are:

- Listed on the initial enrollment paperwork
- Added via Authorized Pick-Up forms submitted after enrollment
- Included in the annual enrollment update

Individuals picking up a child must be prepared to show photo identification at any time.

If you are unsure whether someone is listed as an authorized pick-up, please check the app or contact us @ uikids@uidaho.edu or 208-885-6414-0

Custody & Changes to Family Status

At UICC, we recognize that family dynamics can be complex and may change over time. In situations involving custody agreements, separation, or divorce, our primary responsibility is the well-being, safety, and support of the child while they are in our care.

We remain neutral in all custody matters and do not take sides in disputes between parents or guardians. Any information shared with us regarding custody or family circumstances is treated with confidentiality and respect. However, as mandated reporters, we are legally required to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

Children will only be released to individuals listed as authorized for pick-up on the child's enrollment records. If custody arrangements change, or if a court order restricts a parent or guardian's access, we must receive a copy of the legal documentation in order to comply. Without legal documentation, we are required to treat both parents or legal guardians as having equal access.

Requests for information or documentation from attorneys or third parties must be accompanied by written parental permission or a subpoena or court order.

We encourage families to inform us of any changes that may impact a child's experience at the Center as early as possible so we can continue to provide consistent and compassionate care.

Release Procedures

It is the responsibility of our teaching staff to ensure that children are only released to individuals who have been formally approved by a custodial parent or guardian. If someone other than the usual caregiver will be picking up your child, please notify both the front office and your child's



teacher in advance and ensure the individual is authorized to pick up your child. If not, you will need to add them in the app or complete paperwork for temporary authorization.

The authorized individual should ring the doorbell upon arrival. They will be required to show a photo ID and sign the child out before leaving the building. Each approved pick-up person will be assigned their own unique sign-in/out code for the 1Core system.

For your child's safety and to maintain secure access to the building do not share your personal access code with others. If an authorized person does not yet have their code, we are happy to provide it when they arrive for pick-up.

Late Pick-Up Policy

The Children's Center closes at 5:30 PM during the academic year (5:00pm during the Summer), and the Child Development Lab (CDL) morning preschool class ends at 12:30 PM. If a child is not picked up by closing time:

- Staff will immediately attempt to contact the parent/guardian.
- If unreachable, we will begin contacting individuals listed on the emergency contact form.
- A closing administrator and a teacher will remain with the child until they are picked up.

A late pick-up fee of \$5.00 per minute per child will be applied to the family's account. We ask all families to make every effort to pick up prior to closing time to avoid this charge and minimize disruption to the child and staff.

4 Health, Safety & Behavior

4.1 Active Supervision by UICC Staff

Staff will maintain constant, active supervision of children throughout the day. This means being alert, engaged, and attentive to the environment and needs of all children at all times—both indoors and outdoors.

- Children must always be within both sight and sound of supervising staff.
- Supervision requires active scanning, positioning, and interaction—not just being physically present.
- Staff should avoid turning their backs to children, becoming distracted, or clustering in a way that limits visibility or response time.
- Dark blue students are provided privacy for toileting and changing as long as staff are still within earshot.



4.2 Handwashing

Proper handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of illness. At the UI Children's Center, children and adults follow consistent hygiene practices throughout the day.

Handwashing Procedure

1. Wet hands with clean, running water.
2. Apply soap and lather thoroughly—scrubbing palms, backs of hands, between fingers, and under nails.
3. Scrub for at least 20 seconds.
4. Rinse well under running water.
5. Dry hands with a clean paper towel.

Children are required to wash their hands:

- Upon entering the classroom
- Before eating or handling food
- After using the toilet or having their diaper changed
- After blowing, wiping, or picking their nose
- After outdoor play or messy activities
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Adult Handwashing Expectations

To support a healthy environment, all adults—including staff and parents—are expected to wash their hands:

- Upon entering the classroom
- After assisting with toileting or diapering
- After helping a child blow or wipe their nose
- As needed to minimize the spread of germs

Note: Parents and guardians do not assist with meals or snacks while in the classroom. Handwashing requirements related to food handling apply only to staff.

These practices help us maintain a clean, safe, and healthy environment for everyone at the center.

Oral Hygiene

To support oral health, children with teeth are given the opportunity to brush their teeth at least once per day while at the center.

For children over the age of three, toothpaste provided by the center will be offered only with parent/guardian consent.



Please note - we are unable to accommodate toothpaste brought from home. If you prefer your child not use toothpaste with fluoride, let the classroom teaching team know and we will have them brush with water.

4.3 Food from Home

To help ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our care, we ask that families **do not bring food from home into the classrooms**. We have children with food allergies and dietary restrictions, and limiting outside food helps us maintain a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.

4.4 Health Management and Illness Exclusion Policy

Upon arrival to the classroom, teachers will complete a daily health check as they sign the child in. The classroom teacher will greet the child and observe the following:

- **Skin color:** Pink / Pale / Flushed
- **Skin temperature:** Warm / Cold / Feverish to the touch
- **Skin appearance:** Rashes / Lesions / Bruises / Abrasions / Swelling
- **Illness symptoms:** Runny nose / Cough / Goopy eyes / Red eyes / Wheezing / Labored breathing / Croup / Fever / Rash / Tummy ache
- **Behavior and mood:** Tired / Fussy / Sad / Angry

If the teacher has any concerns about the child's ability to participate in group care, they will discuss these concerns with the parent before the parent leaves at drop-off.

To protect the health and well-being of all children, families, and staff, we ask that children who are ill remain at home until they are no longer exhibiting symptoms of illness. Keeping children home when they are sick helps prevent the spread of contagious illnesses within the classroom and throughout the Center.

When to Keep Your Child Home

If your child is exhibiting symptoms of illness, please do not bring them to the Center. Instead, monitor them at home and consult with your healthcare provider if needed. The UI Children's Center follows evidence-based health practices for early care settings to determine when a child must be excluded from care and when they may return.

Symptoms That Require Exclusion from Care

Children will be excluded from the Center if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

Excludable Symptom	Return Stipulation
--------------------	--------------------



Fever: 100.1 or higher taken under the arm	Fever is below 100 degrees for 24 hours WITHOUT fever-reducing medication (Tylenol, Motrin, Advil etc)
Vomit: Any time a child vomits	No vomiting for 24 hours while on a normal diet.
Diarrhea: Sudden onset of loose stools or more than one abnormally loose, runny, watery or blood stool.	No diarrhea for 24 hours and a regular bowel movement while on a normal diet.
Skin Lesions or Rashes: Severe, weeping or pus-filled.	Free of severe, weeping or pus-filled lesions or rashes, OR a medical diagnosis from a Physician so UICC can determine when the child can return to group care.
Head Lice: Lice and/or nits observed in child's hair.	Louse and Nit free.

Exclusion Process

- If your child develops symptoms during the day, teachers will document observations using the Health Management Form. You will be notified to pick up your child as soon as possible. If we are unable to get ahold of a parent, we will reach out to those listed as emergency contacts.
- Return to care is based on the type and severity of the symptoms, in alignment with childcare licensing, public health recommendations, and Center policies.
- In some cases, a doctor's note or additional clearance may be required before your child may return to the program; however, a doctor's note will not supersede our return to care criteria.

Medications

To ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our care, the Children's Center follows strict guidelines regarding the use and administration of medications.

Prescription Medication

The Children's Center does not administer medication unless it is required for a life-saving purpose and has been prescribed by a licensed healthcare provider. This includes, but is not limited to, EpiPens, inhalers, and seizure medications. If a child enrolls with a medication that the center team is not trained to administer, program administration will arrange for training by a medical professional for all staff who may be responsible for administering the medication prior to the child's first day of attendance.

If your child requires life-saving medication, the medication must be prescribed by a healthcare provider and must be accompanied by:



- The original prescription label
- Written instructions (safety action plan) from the physician regarding dosage and administration
- Completed Medication Permission Form on file with the front office before the medication is accepted into care.

Parents may choose to come to the center to administer non-emergency medications (e.g., antibiotics, over-the-counter pain relievers) during the day, as needed.

Topical Products

Staff may apply the following items with written parent permission per the Acknowledgement of Risk and Waiver of Liability document signed upon enrollment.

- Sunscreen
- Diaper cream
- Lotion
- Chapstick

These products must:

- Be provided by the parent
- Be unexpired
- Be labeled with the child's full name

Teachers will routinely monitor expiration dates and notify families when replacements are needed. Expired products will not be applied under any circumstance and must be taken home by the parent.

4.5 Injuries

The safety of children in our care is a top priority. If a child is injured while at the Children's Center, the following procedures will be followed to ensure prompt, appropriate care while keeping families fully informed of any incident involving their child.

Injury Documentation & Notification

All UI Children's Center staff are certified in pediatric CPR and first aid and will use their training to provide appropriate care in the event of an injury.

If a child is injured while in care, teachers will document the incident in detail for families. A written accident/incident report will be completed and sent home at pickup. For injuries beyond a typical bump, scratch or scrape, teachers may also upload additional details—and a photo, if appropriate—to the 1Core Family app. In these cases, a staff member will call the child's parent or



guardian to alert them to check the app, in case they wish to visit the center or seek medical attention.

In the case of **serious injuries**, including those involving the **head, face, or mouth**, an administrator will respond to the classroom to assess the situation and provide support or additional direction.

If the teaching team or administrator believes an injury may require medical attention, parents will be contacted and may be asked to come to the center to evaluate the injury and determine next steps.

After any injury, the UICC team will evaluate the circumstances in which it occurred—including the classroom environment and supervision—and, when applicable, take steps to reduce the risk of future injuries.

Note: Photos will only be taken if the injury does not involve the diaper area.

4.6 Emergency Preparedness

The UI Children's Center follows the emergency and disaster response protocols established by the University of Idaho to ensure the safety and well-being of all children, staff, and families. To help children and staff respond calmly and appropriately in emergency situations, the following drills are conducted on a regular basis:

Fire Drills

Conducted monthly to practice building evacuation. Children and staff exit the building quickly and safely, following designated routes.

Earthquake & Lockdown Drills

Conducted monthly. Each classroom completes these drills on a rotating schedule, practicing how to respond safely during an earthquake or lockdown situation.

Evacuation Drill (Full Building Evacuation)

In the event that a full evacuation of the building is required we will follow our regular fire drill procedures. In addition, classrooms will proceed through the playground gates and across the street to the UI Transit Center front lawn, which serves as our designated evacuation site.

This extended evacuation procedure is practiced annually during the summer.

Building Safety

Routine safety inspections are conducted with campus and community partners to ensure the facility continues to meet all safety and licensing standards.



Emergency Food Supply

The Children's Center maintains a three-day supply of non-perishable food for all enrolled children in the event of an emergency or natural disaster that prevents normal dismissal or food service.

4.7 Mandated Reporting and Child Protection

All employees at the UI Children's Center are mandated reporters under Idaho law and are required to take immediate action if they have reason to suspect a child is experiencing abuse or neglect.

Reporting Responsibilities

Staff are required to report immediately to the appropriate authorities in the following situations:

- **Suspected child abuse or neglect** (including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, exploitation, or endangerment): A report is made directly to the Idaho Child Protection Services (CPS) intake line.
- **Immediate danger to a child**: A report is made directly to local law enforcement.

The UI Children's Center has a **written internal protocol** that staff follow in the event of suspected abuse, neglect, or injury, which includes documentation, notifying the Director or Assistant Director, and completing required reports. In accordance with licensing regulations, **serious injuries or incidents are reported to state licensing within 24 hours.**

As a licensed childcare facility, we are also required to cooperate with child protection authorities or law enforcement if they come to the center to visit or speak with a child. In these cases, we will request that a trusted teacher be present to offer comfort and support during the interaction.

Staff Training Requirements

To support child safety and fulfill mandatory reporting responsibilities, all UICC staff complete the following training upon hire and as required per University of Idaho policy:

- IdahoSTARS Training:
 - Preventing Children from Getting Hurt
 - Responding to Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect (RARCAN)
- University of Idaho "Protecting Minors" training
- UE EduRisk online training modules:
 - Shine a Light (10-minute video)
 - Hiring Staff Who Work with Minors (30-minute course)
 - Identifying and Reporting Sexual Misconduct (30-minute course)

These trainings help ensure that all UICC staff are prepared to protect the children in our care and uphold our commitment to providing a safe and secure environment.

4.8 Child Guidance & Discipline

At the UI Children's Center, we recognize that children are developing at their own pace—socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively. Our intention is to meet each child where they are and to support their individual growth as they learn how to interact with peers, teachers, and their environment. Our top priority is to ensure that children are safe with their own bodies, with the bodies of others, and with the environment around them.

Across all classrooms, UICC uses consistent expectations to support a safe and respectful learning environment. These program-wide expectations are:



These expectations are communicated clearly and positively to help children understand how to be part of a caring classroom community.

Positive Guidance

We use a positive guidance approach rooted in **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** to help children develop self-regulation, empathy, and problem-solving skills. Teachers facilitate the development of self-control and emotional understanding by:

- Modeling and encouraging expected behavior
- Praising positive behavior when it occurs naturally
- Redirecting children to more appropriate activities
- Setting clear, developmentally appropriate limits
- Using positive “do” statements (e.g., “Let’s use gentle touches” instead of “No hitting”)

Expectations are tailored to each child's individual needs, temperament, and developmental stage. We incorporate adaptive forms of communication when beneficial to a child's understanding and success.

Behavior Concerns

In some cases, a child's behavior may require further observation and collaboration between staff and families. This may occur when the frequency, duration, or intensity of a behavior:

- Impacts the child's learning or development
- Affects the safety or well-being of others
- Disrupts the classroom environment despite consistent support

When this happens:

- The Lead Teacher will document behaviors and consult with the Assistant Director
- The Assistant Director will observe in the classroom and work with the teaching team to identify additional strategies and possible environmental or schedule adjustments.
- Behavior tracking may be implemented to help identify patterns and triggers.
- The Lead Teacher will schedule a family meeting to discuss observations, strategies used, and how home and school can collaborate to support the child.
- If needed, and after a conversation with the family for agreement and alignment, a **referral** may be made to the local school district or early intervention services for further support or evaluation.

5 Learning & Assessment

5.1 Pyramid Model

The UI Children's Center (UICC) is proud to be a Pyramid Model program, meeting the individual needs of our children with diverse abilities. This means we prioritize the development of social and emotional skills as the foundation for all learning. Our approach centers on nurturing, responsive relationships, creating supportive, high-quality classroom environments, and teaching these essential skills proactively.

As part of our commitment to the Pyramid Model framework, we strive to:

- Keep children within their classroom community whenever possible.





- Avoid soft suspensions, or the removal of children from their peer group due to challenging behavior.
- Support children through challenges by modeling, redirecting, and teaching appropriate replacement skills.
- Collaborate as a team, including classroom staff, support personnel (Assistant Director, IdahoSTARS consultants, etc.), to identify behavior patterns and implement individualized positive behavior support plans.

We aim to send a clear message to all children: *every child is capable of learning, growing, and solving problems with support*. We celebrate successes and actively include families in any conversations around concerns, goals, or support strategies.

5.2 Curriculum

At the UI Children's Center, our curriculum is rooted in best practices in early child development and informed by ongoing observation, collaboration with families, and the CDC Developmental Milestones. Our goal is to provide developmentally appropriate, responsive learning experiences that support the whole child—socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively.

Teaching staff serve as intentional observers, who strive to understand each child's unique background, identity, culture, family values, and home language. Through daily observation of children's play, language, and interactions, teachers:

- Identify individual strengths, needs, and interests
- Guide the planning of meaningful learning experiences
- Foster inclusive and engaging classroom environments

Each classroom creates weekly curriculum plans based on current group interests, extending learning through hands-on exploration, play, and project work. Lesson plans are created using Teaching Strategies Gold Creative Curriculum and are thoughtfully adapted to meet the developmental needs of the children in each classroom.

Plans are:

- Reviewed by the classroom's assistant director
- Posted in the classroom for families to view
- Flexibly adjusted as needed to follow the children's lead and deepen engagement

5.3 Ongoing Child Development Monitoring & Assessment

At the UI Children's Center, teaching teams continuously monitor each child's strengths, needs, and interests to create intentional, individualized weekly curriculum experiences that support developmentally appropriate skill-building—when each child is ready.

To support this ongoing assessment, UICC uses multiple tools to screen and monitor developmental progress:

Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3):

At enrollment, families receive a link to complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3), an online, developmental screening tool. Completed ASQs are reviewed by classroom teachers and used alongside classroom observations and documentation to help set individualized goals for each child. ASQs will be completed at enrollment and then prior to parent teacher conferences so they may be included in the conversations during conferences. Conferences happen twice per year additionally as needed.

Screening documents can be provided in families preferred/home language and/or interpretation services can be provided.

CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early."

- Used by teachers to guide observations and ensure alignment with developmental expectations.
- Combined with ASQ data and classroom documentation, this supports accurate developmental assessments.

Through the tools of the CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." that our program's teaching teams use, the ASQ's completed by families at least 2x per year, along with ongoing observation, teachers will identify where along the developmental continuum that children are currently at. This information can inform our teaching practices and curriculum to build on skills. Throughout the whole program year, teaching teams observe and document observations they make about children's development with specific measurable details, which measure the child's progress. These observations are entered into a system called SmartTeach by Teaching Strategies. Teaching teams review documentation and identify developmental levels which are then shared with families at parent teacher conferences.

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences occur twice a year—in October and April. These conferences are a time for:

- Reviewing ASQ scores and teacher observations.
- Discussing each child's strengths, growth, and areas for support.
- Setting individualized goals for continued development.

Additional conferences may be requested by either families or staff at any time if there are questions or concerns.



5.4 Developmental Concern's & Referrals

At UICC, we use the CDC's *Developmental Milestone Checklist* to monitor each child's growth from 2 months to 5 years of age. This tool tracks progress in key areas including social-emotional, cognitive, language and communication, and physical development.

Within the first six weeks of enrollment, the teaching team will complete an initial milestone checklist for each child using the CDC's Milestone Tracker app, which is available on each classroom's iPad. Teachers will revisit and update the checklist quarterly to reflect the child's developmental progress and ongoing milestone achievements.

When a child transitions to a new classroom, the new teaching team will review the existing checklist to understand which milestones the child has already mastered and which they are still working toward.

This information helps teachers plan meaningful activities that support each child's growth and skill development. Teachers use milestone data to guide observations, create opportunities for practice, and collaborate with families. If developmental concerns arise, the teaching team will partner with the Assistant Director to meet with the family and, if appropriate, make referrals for additional support.

- There may be times where an observation or concern by either the family or teaching team may warrant a conversation outside of the standard scheduled conference. It is the programs intention to partner with families, provide resources, and advocate for the child's individual needs. If the teaching team feels that a child may benefit from additional supports, they will respectfully communicate their observations with families and discuss the referral process based on the concern.
- For families under 3 a referral will be made to the Infant Toddler Program. For a child near or over 3 years of age, a referral will be made to the Early Childhood Special Education Program. Referral protocols and contacts are state specific and will be discussed with families prior to being submitted.

UICC will partner with families and outside professionals to support the child's continued growth.

If teachers observe any potential developmental concerns based on classroom observation or interaction, the following process is followed:

- A meeting is scheduled with the family to share observations and discuss next steps.
- The Center will provide **referrals** to outside resources (e.g., early intervention, school district services) for further assessment and support.
- If support from an external provider is needed:
 - Parents are responsible for initiating contact with those professionals.
 - A release of information form must be signed for the Children's Center to collaborate with external providers.
- Teachers and leadership staff will work as a team with families and external professionals to support the child's developmental needs within the classroom environment.



Children with special needs are welcomed into our program in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Requests for reasonable accommodations will be promptly and thoughtfully considered to support full participation in our program.

Individualized Plans

A written individual health care and/or education plan must be provided by the parent or guardian and signed by a physician and/or education specialist. This plan should clearly outline the child's needs, including (but not limited to) medication, food or feeding requirements, life-threatening allergies, treatments, special equipment, and/or any required staff training. Parents are expected to work in partnership with center staff to ensure appropriate training for teachers—either directly or through a medical professional, depending on the situation.

Teachers will receive updated training as needed to support the specific needs of children in their classroom. The Children's Center encourages parents to include our staff in IFSP/IEP meetings to support consistency and collaboration in care. These meetings may be held at the center; please contact the Program Director or Assistant Director to schedule.

Children with special needs will be given the opportunity to participate in the program to the fullest extent possible. When appropriate, the center will coordinate with external service providers to offer support on-site. Written parental consent will be obtained before consulting with or sharing information with outside agencies.

5.5 Suspension/Expulsion

It is our intention to keep children within their classroom community whenever possible, if that is what is determined as the best interest of the child. There may be times where a child is expressing big emotions about something that has happened. A teacher may ask a child, if they would like to step outside or go for a walk as a way to provide a safe space for the child to process their feelings and help navigate self advocating for what they need.

UICC will avoid the use of soft-suspension whenever possible. Soft-suspension is when a child is removed from their classroom community or peer group as a result of their behavior. As a pyramid model program, it is our intention to teach and model whenever possible. We are intentional with our actions and want to avoid sending the message to a child that we don't think they are capable of working through their challenging moment with their peers. We also want to avoid sending the message to the peer group that we do not think the child capable of resolving their challenging moment with their peers either. These messages could impact how the individual feels about themselves as a problem solver as well as their peers feel about their skills as well. We want to model positive, solution based, resolution and celebrate when its successful.

If a classroom team is struggling with a disruptive, non-preferred behavior in the classroom, they will work together as a team to make observations and intentional support for teaching replacement skills as



outlined in our pyramid program commitments. As data is collected, if the behavior persists, the teaching team will engage their classrooms supervising Assistant Director. If additional support is warranted, the Assistant Director will engage with Idaho Stars or other outside providers for support. Data is collected and monitored for the program if a child is asked to leave for the day.

Expulsion/Involuntary Withdrawal

The Center reserves the right to dis-enroll a child for reasons of non-cooperation, delinquency in payment of fees, or inability of a child or parent to adjust to the program including but not limited to behavior that puts children, staff or the programs safety in question, as determined by the Director. Substantial effort will be made to avoid this if at all possible, however parent engagement, cooperation and partnership is required for enrollment to be successful in these circumstances. Data is collected and monitored and University leadership is informed in advance if a family is asked to find alternative care.

In alignment with our commitment to what is best for the child, UICC commits to the following:

- Professional, prompt communication that involves the parent/family in the process (ex: as a team a safety plan may be created with clear and measurable goals with committed time frames to revisit)
- A warm hand off to another program, if we are unable to support the child's needs within our program while maintaining safety for children and staff
- Providing documentation, screenings, or supports (visuals created to support the child) that the program has implemented in order to provide a smooth continuation of support for the child in their next setting.

5.6 Research & Observation

As part of our partnership with the University of Idaho, students from a variety of academic programs observe and participate in the Children's Center to fulfill coursework and field experience requirements.

All participating students:

- Complete background checks through their university department
- Follow all UI Children's Center policies and procedures
- Maintain confidentiality in all assignments and observations, typically referencing the classroom as a whole

In some cases, students may request to observe or engage more closely with an individual child for an assignment or project. In these instances, written parent permission will be obtained prior to the start of the activity.

Occasionally, the Center may participate in research studies conducted by University faculty or students. Information about these projects will be posted at the Center and/or shared by classroom teachers.



Participation in research projects is always voluntary. Parents will receive a detailed explanation and be asked to sign a consent form if they choose to have their child participate.

At the University of Idaho Children's Center, all families are treated with dignity and respect, honoring their individual needs, values, and differences. We are committed to maintaining confidentiality and fostering an inclusive environment for every child.

6 Additional Policies, Procedures and Resources

6.1 Technology

The University of Idaho Children's Center is a technology-free program. Screen media is not used in classrooms, except for brief, intentional curriculum-related purposes. For example, a short (under two-minute) video may occasionally be used to support learning—such as slowing down a clip to demonstrate how a cricket makes its chirping sound, in direct response to children's interests or ongoing studies.

In these rare instances, staff must preview the entire video beforehand to ensure it is appropriate, directly relevant, and contains no passive or non-educational media.

Families are welcome to share photos or short videos of meaningful experiences their child may want to talk about at school. These can help support storytelling and connection between home and school in a developmentally appropriate, media-minimal way.

Classrooms will listen to music of varying types that is age-appropriate, culturally sensitive and free of passive media.

6.2 Home Toys

Children are welcome to bring a toy or comfort item from home; however, **all home toys must be small enough to fit in the child's cubby for storage during the day**. Please do **not** send toys that are irreplaceable, highly valuable, or that resemble or function as weapons. Each classroom will have its own guidelines for when and how children may access their home toys during the day. Teachers will communicate these expectations directly with families.

6.3 Babysitting

Families may choose to employ UI Children's Center staff for private babysitting outside of program hours, **provided both the staff member and family agree to the arrangement**.

However, because this occurs outside of UICC programming and oversight, a **Babysitting Waiver and Release Form must be completed and submitted to the center office before any babysitting occurs**. This form acknowledges that the arrangement is a private agreement and that the Children's Center and



the University of Idaho are not responsible for the supervision, conduct, or liability associated with the babysitting relationship.

Please contact the front office to request the waiver form or with any questions about this policy.

6.4 Transportation

The UI Children's Center does not provide routine transportation to or from the Center.

In the event of an emergency that requires relocation, the Center will follow its Emergency Evacuation Plan and utilize the Emergency Transportation Agreement signed by families at enrollment. This plan outlines the procedures for safely transporting children away from the Center, if necessary.

Please contact the front office if you have questions about the emergency transportation procedures.

6.5 Field Trips

Parents are an integral part of the UI Children's Center community and are welcomed and encouraged to participate in field trips when their schedules allow.

Field Trip Guidelines:

- Infant and toddler classrooms use buggies for walking field trips around campus.
- Preschool classrooms regularly take walking field trips around the University of Idaho campus.
- Occasionally, preschool classes may ride the city bus for local field trips. Parents will receive advance notice of these trips.
- If a field trip requires children to leave the University campus, a signed permission slip will be required for your child to participate.

If you choose not to have your child attend a specific field trip, your child will be placed with another classroom remaining at the Center during that time.

We appreciate parent support and involvement, as it enriches the experience for all children. If you are interested in volunteering, please speak with your child's Lead Teacher.

6.6 Holidays & Birthdays

In recognition of the diverse values, religious views, and family traditions within our community, holidays may be celebrated differently in each classroom. Some holidays may not be developmentally appropriate for certain age groups, and we strive to honor the unique needs and backgrounds of all children.

We welcome families to share traditions and celebrations that are meaningful to them. Teachers will provide information through classroom newsletters about upcoming celebrations and related activities.

Birthdays are important milestones, and we love celebrating them with children at the Center. Each child will receive special classroom recognition on their birthday.



To maintain a safe and inclusive environment:

- Birthday parties are not held at the Center
- We do not allow outside food items
- Families are welcome to celebrate with non-food options such as:
 - A parent reading a special book to the class
 - A bubble or dance party
 - A simple art or cooking project (with center-provided materials)

We aim to make each child feel special while keeping all children safe and included.

6.7 Policy Updates

UICC reserves the right to modify policies, procedures, or schedules as needed. While we strive to provide consistency, unforeseen circumstances may require adjustments to the information outlined in our handbook or center forms. Families will be notified of any changes as far in advance as possible.

6.8 Parent Engagement & Support

We are committed to ensuring clear and meaningful communication with all families. Any materials used in our program—including developmental screening tools, classroom documentation, forms, and other communication from teaching teams—can be provided in the language that is most comfortable for your family upon request.

Additionally, if you would like language support during meetings, conferences, or other conversations, a university-provided translator can be arranged. Please let us know in advance so we can coordinate this support.

We welcome donations of diapers and children's clothing (including shoes, winter gear) that are clean and in good condition. These items are distributed to families in our program as needs arise.

If your family is in need of clothing or diapers, please feel free to speak with a member of the administrative team. We will do our best to share from the donated items we have available. All requests are handled with care and confidentiality.

In our lobby, you'll find a designated Parent & Community Resource Area designed to keep families informed and engaged. This space includes:

- Flyers for local family-friendly events and services
- A Book Swap shelf for both children and adults—take a book, leave a book!
- A QR code to easily share feedback with our program
- Brochures and information on child development, parenting topics, and community supports and parent training opportunities



We encourage you to visit this area regularly, browse available materials, and participate in the book swap. If you have resources or events you'd like to share, feel free to talk with the administrative team!

Food Pantry Resources

We understand that food insecurity can affect anyone, and we want families to know about the supportive resources available both on campus and in the community.

Vandal Food Pantry

Located in Shoup Hall, Room 105, the Vandal Food Pantry is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This donation-driven resource is free and open to all offering a variety of non-perishable foods, hygiene items, and household supplies.

No personal information is required to access the pantry—only a Vandal number, which is used solely to help track the reach and effectiveness of this outreach resource. Parking is available on Sixth Street (metered), and in nearby Gold, Orange, and Silver lots.

West Side Food Pantry

The West Side Food Pantry, located in our local community center, is available to anyone who needs groceries to feed themselves or their families. We recognize that the Palouse region experiences high rates of poverty and food insecurity, and we are here to help. All are welcome to access this resource—no questions asked.

Swipe Out Hunger – Emergency Meal Support

The Swipe Out Hunger program, part of Idaho Eats, offers short-term meal assistance to current students, staff, and faculty experiencing food insecurity.

Eligible individuals may receive a limited number of free meal swipes to use at campus dining facilities. To request support, please submit a VandalCARE referral, and a representative will connect with you to assist.

6.9 Confidentiality

All staff are expected to uphold the highest standards of confidentiality and professionalism at all times, both in person and online. This includes:

- Refraining from sharing or discussing sensitive or identifying information in any digital space
- Respecting the boundaries of families and coworkers
- Referring to UICC's confidentiality policies for further guidance

All enrollment documents and child files are stored securely in a **locked file cabinet** with **limited access** to protect the confidentiality of children and families.



Copies of documents relevant to a child's daily care (e.g., allergy information, care plans) are provided to teachers and kept in a **classroom binder**. This information is to be used **solely for the purpose of supporting the child's care and development** within the assigned classroom.

Staff are expected to maintain strict confidentiality and may not share or remove any child-specific information outside of the Center or with unauthorized individuals.

7 Program Rights & Feedback

7.1 Program Feedback

Throughout their enrollment, families may have questions, concerns, or ideas related to their child's classroom experience, teachers, or the care provided at UICC. Families agree to engage in open, respectful communication and to begin these conversations directly with the teaching team. When possible, these discussions should take place outside of classroom time and may require scheduling a follow-up meeting.

If, after making a reasonable and respectful effort, a concern cannot be resolved with the teaching team, families agree to follow the communication pathway outlined below:

1. Assistant Director supervising the specific classroom
2. Program Director
3. Student Affairs Business Officer

This process is designed to support collaborative problem-solving and ensure that all voices are heard in a constructive manner.

You may also submit feedback anytime via this QR code:



7.2 USDA Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.



Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider