

UMD

Children's Place

Parent Handbook

Revised January 15, 2009

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Introduction

UMD Children's Place offers a quality care and educational program for the children of its employees, students, and surrounding community. The program is licensed by the State Department of Human Services and meets or exceeds its minimum requirements.

This handbook contains important information and policies about our program. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference. The back page will need to be signed and returned to the Director before enrollment begins at Children's Place. All parents and staff are responsible for being familiar with all the policies and procedures on the following pages. If you have any questions please seek out further information from the program Director.

Vision

To be a model program providing quality, nurturing care and educational experiences for young children and their families of diverse backgrounds and abilities by building on the strengths of our community.

Mission

UMD Children's Place is founded in the belief of the critical importance of the first years of life and the need to embrace the diversity of our world today. The mission of UMD Children's Place is three fold:

- To provide quality, nurturing care of children while their families are at work or study
- To provide interdisciplinary educational opportunities for UMD students in order to enhance their classroom learning with practical experience
- To support the University of Minnesota mission of outreach and public service by providing an inclusive program to serve the greater Duluth area in addition to the UMD community.

Purpose and Charge

In meeting this mission, the staff of UMD Children's Place will:

- keep children as the focus of their work, assisting them to fully develop physically, intellectually, and emotionally in order that they may become future productive leaders in a diverse world.
- provide exemplary field work and student employment opportunities to UMD students and invite campus departments to share their talents with our children.
- be committed to professional growth, to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and to the application of this knowledge to benefit the children of UMD, the state, the nation, and the world.

Services

The program is licensed to provide full time care to 52 children between the ages of 6 weeks and the first day of school. The distribution of children is as follows:

Infants	(6 weeks – 16 months):	10
Toddlers	(16 months – 33 months):	18
Pre-school	(33 months – first day of school):	24

Options for care are as follows:

- Full Time (Monday through Friday)
- Part Time (Monday / Wednesday / Friday)
- Part Time (Tuesday / Thursday)

Drop in days are available to part time enrolled families who may need an additional day of care added to their enrollment contract from time to time. These days, however, are dependent on the availability of classroom space. Any family interested in this option must check with the director to ensure that a drop in day is available for the requested day.

Program hours are 7:30am – 5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

Facility

The child care program is located at 260 Kirby Plaza. Entry to the program space is through the playground on the North side of our facility or entry via Kirby Plaza. There are three classrooms within this space and each are carefully prepared and equipped to meet the needs of the children served there. The health and safety of children is paramount in planning children's spaces.

In addition to facilities and furnishings for resting, eating, washing and toileting, great care is taken to provide space and materials for the developmental needs of each age group. These needs include large and small motor activities, soft and quiet places, opportunities for developing social skills and chances for individual activity. A variety of materials and learning areas are accessible to the children. The planned environment is an integral part of our program.

Staff

The program is supervised by a full time director who has a Bachelors' degree in Early Childhood Education or a closely related field, as well as a Minnesota Pre-kindergarten or Early Childhood teacher licensure. Daily operational needs of the program are provided by the Program Accounts Specialist (referred to in the rest of this handbook as the program assistant).

Each classroom is staffed by a licensed teacher and an assistant teacher for the majority of the day. University students are also employed as aides and will assist us during morning arrival time, afternoon dismissals, and for our regular staff lunch and break times. All staff participate in a program orientation and in-service training workshops and seminars throughout the year.

We maintain the ratios required by the State: 1 adult for every 4 infants, 1 adult for every 7 toddlers, and 1 adult for every 10 preschoolers. University students completing fieldwork in our program are not counted as part of the required ratios.

Philosophy

UMD Children's Place provides nurturing care and quality educational experiences for the children in our care. We draw on the work of child development theorists such as Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky as well as the work by other noted scholars in the field of education such as Maria Montessori and Howard Gardner. We strive to stay current and utilize current theory and research in child care, culture, development, and education through participation in workshops and designated professional development days. Our classrooms serve as model environments to be observed by UMD students and teachers of other programs.

In all areas of development (social, emotional, intellectual and physical), the first six to eight years are critical determiners of the skills, attitudes and values that will guide that person's make-up throughout life. A UMD Children's Place goal is to aid the child in the work of creating the person he/she will be.

Based on a developmental understanding of children, more specific goals leading to the child's total development can be stated. They are:

- **A healthy, coordinated body**, which will support the child's need for physical involvement.
- **Independence**, which enhances the child's feelings of competence and maturity.
- **Self-confidence**, which allows the child to try new things, make decisions, and take risks.
- **Respect for others**, the basis of meaningful human relationships.
- **Internalization of behavior controls** (i.e. self-discipline.)
- **A foundational understanding of academic concepts**, learned through exploration, experimentation, and repetition.
- **Joy of learning**, without which later learning lacks enthusiasm, interest, or meaning.

It is the attitude of the children about themselves, their world and their place in it that is the ultimate goal of our program. Parents and student staff are encouraged to learn more about the normal development of children and to work together with our staff to support this all important work of the young child.

Program Implementation

The implementation of the program begins with teachers seeking to understand the nature of the child and proceed with planning the program with a genuine respect for the developmental needs and individual differences in children. The program is based on the enhancement of the learning modes and activities that are normal and compelling for young children.

We follow the lead of the child in determining his/her activities. The role of the teacher is to prepare the environment and materials that will meet the children's needs. The environment and materials entice the children to explore and try new things. The teacher encourages and invites children into new activities and acknowledges effort and initiative on the part of the child.

We believe that all children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. As a staff, every effort is to be made to be sensitive and responsive to the needs and interests of each child. The teacher's task is to observe carefully and work with parents and staff to provide the means so that those needs can be met. In order to meet the needs of the developing child and provide quality care we strive to:

- Provide a healthy and safe environment.
- Provide a secure, comfortable, enjoyable, and responsive environment.
- Respect, accept, and appreciate each child.
- Provide learning opportunities designed to promote social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth.
- Encourage each child's independence, autonomy, and self-discipline.
- Maintain an environment free of bias, stereotype, or prejudice.
- Provide regular information to parents.
- Encourage parent's questions, opinions, and involvement.

Throughout our program, emphasis is placed on fostering self esteem, developing social and emotional competence, encouraging independence and promoting physical, intellectual and language development within a safe, nurturing environment.

A more detailed program plan is available in the Director's Office. Any parent who would like to review this plan should contact the Director.

UMD Children's Place as a Lab School

An important function of Children's Place is to serve the UMD community as an example of a quality program and as a resource for projects and questions concerning young children. Some ways in which we may collaborate with our UMD community include: students observing in our classrooms, students completing a practicum or student teaching assignment, class demonstrations, and service learning projects. This list is not meant to be all inclusive, merely indicative of the sorts of collaborations we may engage in together. Enrollment in our program implies consent for your child to actively participate in these general learning activities. *Please note that University students who are completing academic experiences in our classrooms are additional staff members and do not take the place of a regular staff member.* Student teachers do take teacher responsibilities in the classrooms but remain under the supervision of the UMD Children's Place teachers as well as their University professor.

Photography is a common means to document learning activities and is used by University students as well as our teaching staff. Photographs taken for these reasons are not used outside the scope of the students' coursework, or UMD Children's Place internal work. Specific permission is not requested from parents for this. If you want to place restrictions on the times your child may be photographed, please indicate that on your child's enrollment forms and speak with your child's teacher. Parents are notified in advance and permission is requested to take pictures which are intended for a larger audience which is more public in nature.

Sometimes, children are needed to assist university students in short testing situations. In these cases an explanation of the procedure is written for parents and permission is requested in writing. Parental permission is also required in writing before any child may participate in a research study. The permission of the child will also be requested to the extent he/she is able to consent. Families are not required to have their children participate in these projects.

Policies and Procedures

Enrollment

UMD Children's Place does not discriminate in admission on the basis of gender, race, religion, creed, national origin or source of payment. Preference is given to members of the UMD community. Priority is given to children enrolled for full time, full year enrollment. Children of the greater Duluth community may be enrolled to meet the program mission as an inclusion program and/or as space allows.

Children's Place accepts children with special needs when, in the opinion of staff, parents and appropriate professionals, those needs can be met by our program. Occasionally our staff have questions regarding assessment, placement, or additional services for children already enrolled in our program. When these questions arise, parents will be notified by mail of the staff concerns and invited to participate in the development of an individual plan to address parent and program concerns. Continued participation in our program is contingent upon a cooperative relationship between Children's Place staff, parents, and appropriate professionals as needed.

Parents or guardians interested in enrolling their children must visit the program prior to registration. Registration forms can be obtained, and a visit scheduled by calling the Director at 726.6727. A completed application form and application fee is required to be considered for enrollment or a place on the waiting list.

Waiting List Policies

UMD Children's Place maintains a lengthy computerized waiting list. The date of application, preferred start date, age of the child, and UMD affiliation determine a child's position on the waiting list. As openings at Children's Place occur, enrollment of a child in any one of our three age groups is determined by these criteria in the following priority order:

1. Internal movement-moving a child from a younger group to an older group on the basis of the child's age, individual readiness, and available opening.
2. Child of a full time UMD Children's Place staff member.
3. Child currently enrolled at Children's Place on a part time schedule returning to a full time schedule or vice versa.
4. Sibling of a child currently enrolled.
5. Child on the waiting list from the UMD community.
6. Child on the waiting list.

Orientation Of New Children

New children are required to participate in an orientation before their first day. This orientation is for children and parents together; it is a time to see the classroom and meet the teachers in a relaxed, quiet environment.

Movement / Transitioning To Older Classrooms

Movement between the classrooms (from Infant to Toddlers or Toddlers to Preschool) is based on the availability of an opening and the developmental readiness and age of the child. Transitions are determined by the director and the classroom teachers and families will be notified when movement is going to occur.

Families will receive a transitioning calendar (days and times a child will be visiting the next classroom) as well as a transitioning folder, which requires some updating and completion of paperwork. Children and parent(s) are required to visit the classroom to which they are moving, prior to movement actually taking place.

Withdrawal of Child Care Services

Parental Notice of Termination

If you wish to discontinue child care services at UMD Children's Place, a written notice must be submitted to the director at least four weeks prior to your child's last enrollment day. Tuition is charged for four weeks following that written notification. All fees for child care services must be paid as well as program keys and parking permits returned on or before the child's last official enrollment day at Children's Place.

Program Notice of Termination of Care

In the event that any of the following situations occur, child care services may be terminated at UMD Children's Place.

- Non-payment of fees by parent or legal guardian, i.e. 60 days in arrears or breach of established payment plan contract.
- Failure to provide the required health, immunization and/or emergency information.
- Inappropriate behaviors such as menacing and/or verbal threats toward staff, children, other parents or property of the program.
- Lack of cooperation from parents or legal guardians with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/teacher meetings or conferences.
- Chronic lateness in picking up child at end of the day (see Late Pick-Up policy).
- Failure to pick up an injured or ill child within an hour of being notified, for the third time in a calendar year.

A written notice from UMD Children's Place will be sent to the parent as soon as possible after the occurrence of any of these events. UMD Children's Place will also communicate this decision to the management team (members are: the Dean and Administrative Director of CEHSP, and the director of Children's Place). A parent may grieve the notice of termination within two working days of its receipt-see grievance procedures page 22.

Regardless of the duration of the grievance process, the child or children of the parent who has received the notice of termination shall remain in UMD Children's Place for a period of not more than two weeks after the parent has received the notice of termination.

Financial Policy

Payment Policy

UMD Children's Place is a non-profit University department. We rely on revenue from parent fees for the majority of our operating expenses. Although we try to keep our expenses down, it is essential that parents pay fees promptly and regularly. By enrolling your child in UMD Children's Place, you agree to pay the fees as set out in this Policy.

The semester is the base unit of time for consideration of the fee structure. Tuition is billed in four week blocks. You will receive a statement for each billing period at the start of the four-week cycle. These statements will be distributed on site. Please let us know if you require a statement to be mailed to a home address. Fees must be paid in advance on a four-week cycle. Tuition due dates are noted on your statement. A schedule of billing and payment due dates is given to you upon enrollment, and posted on the bulletin board by the payment drop box.

- Because we need to keep Children's Place running whether your child is here or not, fees are based on enrollment schedule, not on actual attendance. Sick days, vacation days, holidays, staff development days and emergency closings are considered to be part of the enrollment schedule.
- If payment is not received by the posted due date, we will apply a \$25 late fee on each tuition statement until the balance is paid in full.
- Drop In days are available to children already enrolled in the program and will be allowed if there is space available and the account is current.
- UMD will accept payment from childcare assistance programs. Families (sponsors) receiving such assistance are responsible for all charges not paid by the funding source.

- If a child is withdrawn from the program, the sponsor must provide WRITTEN NOTIFICATION to the director of Children's Place. Tuition is charged for four weeks following that written notification.
- Occasionally a class may go on a field trip. Such trips may require an additional fee. Participation in such an activity is optional, although if you elect to have your child not participate, you will have to make other arrangements for child care, as alternate care will not be available on site.

Accepted Methods of Payment:

- Cash
- Checks, made payable to UMD Children's Place
- Cashier's check or money orders

Note: UMD Children's Place does not accept credit cards or payroll deduction payments. We will charge a \$20 handling fee for the processing of any check returned to UMD Children's Place due to insufficient funds. Upon receipt of the second NSF check, all future child care tuition payments must be paid by cash, cashier's check, or money order.

Payment Submission:

Payments may be deposited in the drop box located in UMD Children's Place. Receipts will be provided by the account specialist after payments have been posted to accounts.

Employee Flexible Spending Accounts:

The employee forms for the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account allows you to pay for charges that you incur for the care of your dependents. The forms may be found online at the following URL: <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/forms/#F>. The forms may be signed by the account specialist or the director.

Calendar Year Account Activity:

UMD Children's Place account specialist will provide one end-of-year account activity statement for each sponsor for annual tax preparation purposes. Additional account activity statements will be provided for a fee of \$5.00 per copy. For individual tax purposes, the University of Minnesota Federal Tax 10 # is: 416007513.

Collection of Delinquent Accounts:

If special circumstances occur and you cannot follow this fee payment policy, you must discuss this matter with the account specialist and director immediately. An account is considered past-due when the balance is delinquent more than 30 days from the posted due-date.

The following steps will be taken when an account becomes past-due.

1. A notification letter will be sent via certified mail to the sponsor's home address identifying the delinquent charges owed to UMD Children's Place and date when the fees must be submitted.
2. If charges become more than 60 days past-due, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. Meeting with all parties (sponsor) responsible for payment to determine a payment schedule, such as a promissory note or payment contract.
 - b. In the case of a UMD student, a hold will be placed on academic records, so the student will not be able to register for courses, obtain official transcripts, graduate or obtain a diploma, etc.

- c. In the case of a UMD employee, the employee may consent to garnishment of wages for payment.

If a delinquent account is not paid as agreed upon in the payment plan, the account will be turned over to a collection agency and enrollment will be terminated. You will be responsible for all costs of collection, including fees charged by the collection agency, and legal fees.

Program Closures

Children's Place is closed for all national and university holidays {New Years Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, and Christmas Day}. These days are considered as part of the scheduled billing and are included in tuition fees. The university also may schedule "floating" holidays that occur most often around some of the national holidays. Families will be notified well in advance to these days as they occur.

Children's Place will also be closed for the week between Christmas and New Years.

Twice a year the program will close to allow for staff professional development (most often one day in the spring and one day in August). This time will be used for staff to attend early childhood conferences, participate in on-site trainings as well as take part in long range planning and team building opportunities. Families will be notified of these dates at least two months in advance and will be billed for these two days.

Leave Of Absence

A 30% holding fee of the current tuition rate will be charged to ensure an enrollment slot for families who wish to withdraw their child (minimum of 6 weeks). This change in enrollment requires a form to be completed and is due to the director within 30 days of effective date. The holding fee is due before the leave begins and is based on the number of weeks per semester.

Medical Emergency Enrollment / Attendance Policy

In the event a child enrolled at UMD Children's Place becomes seriously ill or injured with a medical emergency condition preventing him/her from attending Children's Place on a regular basis, the director may waive the requirement that child care fees be charged for all days in the enrollment schedule. Instead, the fee will be based on actual attendance during the health crisis period.

A written statement from the child's health care provider will be required, indicating the date of onset, the nature of the health crisis as well as clearance to resume attendance at Children's Place.

Arrival and Departure

Parents must "sign in" their child each morning upon arrival in order to transfer responsibility of care from parent to authorized Center staff. Upon departure parents must "sign out" their child. Once the child is signed out, he/she is no longer the responsibility of the UMD Children's Place staff.

Children are expected to arrive at Children's Place between 7:30 and 9:00 each morning to enable them to participate in the full program. To ensure the safe arrival into our program, children must accompany their parents into the classroom together. Children cannot arrive in their classroom before 7:30 a.m. since this is the teacher's time to set up activities and prepare the room for the day. The building is accessible by keycard at 7:30am.

If for some reason you will arrive after 9:00 a.m., call your child's classroom and leave a message for your child's teachers. If your child's group is on a field trip when you arrive, it is your responsibility to await their return or to take your child to the field trip site. Parents must sign in and out each day in his/her child's classroom and must accompany children into and out of the building at all times. Signing your child in and out is extremely important. Teachers use the sign-in sheets to keep track of the number of children present.

Out of respect for your child and our staff, we ask that you are prompt in picking up your child at the scheduled time. Our programs end at 5 pm and all children MUST be picked up by 5:00 pm. If you have more than one child enrolled, all must be picked up by 5:00 pm. To ensure the safety of the children and families we do require that families exit the program space by 5:10 pm so that the breakdown of the classrooms can occur. Our playground is open until 5:30pm and can be used as a gathering space for families until that time.

If a child is not picked up within ten minutes of the scheduled dismissal time, we will attempt to reach the parent(s) by phone. If we are unable to reach the parent(s) after thirty minutes, we will telephone the emergency contact numbers listed on our form. It will be considered an emergency and the police will be called if a child has not been picked up within one hour of the school closing time.

Late Pick-Up Policy

A fee of \$1.00 per minute is charged for each child being picked up after 5:00 pm. There are no exceptions to this and the fee is assessed as of 5:01 pm. Late fees will be added to your statement. Families picking their child up past 5:00 pm more than four times a semester may be asked to leave the program. A semester is defined as the first day of the semester until the last day before the new semester begins. Summer counts as one semester.

Authorization To Pick-Up A Child

Any parent/guardian or other people who will regularly pick up your child, or anyone listed on your child's emergency card is considered authorized to pick up your child from Children's Place. If a new or unauthorized person will be picking up your child from the program you must notify the staff in writing. Also, please inform that person that we will require seeing a photo identification card. We cannot release any child to an unauthorized person.

Any parent denying pick up authorization to a non-custodial parent **must** submit a court order supporting that denial to the director. Families involved in visitation schedules with children must have specific date and time information submitted to the program office by the child's legal guardian. We will make every effort to comply with these schedules. We ask that families involved with special conditions regarding custody and visitation meet with the director to be sure that all needed information is in place.

Emergency Closing

Program closings due to weather, such as severe storms or blizzards, are announced following the UMD emergency closing policy. If there is not adequate time or another circumstance prevails, each parent will be notified by telephone and e-mail. The voice mail message for UMD Children's Place will be changed as soon as possible to inform you of such closings as well.

In the event of a pandemic outbreak, upon request, Children's Place will cooperate with state and local government agencies.

Health and Safety

Required Forms

The State of Minnesota requires that we have on file a Health Care Summary for each child within 30 days of enrollment. It is required that normal immunizations be up to date. The list of immunizations and an Emergency Information Sheet must be on file when the child begins enrollment at Children's Place. As children receive additional immunizations, parents need to keep the health forms current.

The Emergency Information Sheet also asks for parental permission to administer Syrup of Ipecac in case of accidental poisoning. Although use of Ipecac is decreasing, it still may be administered with parental permission. This can only be administered by the staff after consulting with the Poison Control Center AND ONLY IF PARENTAL PERMISSION IS GRANTED. Please be sure to indicate your consent (or lack of consent) on the Emergency Information Sheet EMERGENCY INFORMATION SHEETS MUST BE SIGNED.

Sick Children

If a child becomes ill while at Children's Place, the parent is immediately called and the child is separated from the other children until the parent arrives. A staff person will attend to the needs of the sick child. You must make necessary arrangements with someone who can care for your child in case of sickness or emergency, if you are unable to do so yourself or if you cannot be reached. Children must be picked up within the hour of notification of an illness. The Emergency Information Sheet filled out at the time of enrollment must include names and phone numbers for **two people** who can be expected to assume care of your child immediately upon notification. Please be sure to list people who can be reached, have transportation, and will be able to care for your child.

Maintaining a sanitary and healthy environment is a challenge in a group setting. It is our obligation to try to ensure the health of everyone. We are unable to care for ill children at Children's Place. Therefore it is important that you have alternate care arrangements for those inevitable times when your child will be ill.

A child should not be at Children's Place if they have any of the following:

Fever	An elevated oral temperature above 101 degrees F. within the last 24 hours (fevers controlled by medications are still fevers; children must stay home until free of fever without the use of medication).
Respiratory Infections	Until child is without fever for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in normal activities.
Diarrhea	Until uncontrolled diarrhea stops. (uncontrolled diarrhea is an increased number of stools, compared with a person's normal pattern, along with watery stools, and/or increased stool that cannot be contained by the diaper or use of the toilet).
Vomiting	Until vomiting stops for 24 hours.
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)	Until at least a full 24 hours after treatment begins.

Rash with or without Fever or Behavior Change	Until a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not that of a communicable disease (i.e. fifth disease, roseola)
Streptococcal Sore Throat	Until at least a full 24 hours after treatment begins and the child is without fever for 24 hours.
Chicken Pox	Until all the blisters have dried into scabs (approximately 6 days after rash onset).
Impetigo	Until child has been treated with antibiotics for a full 24 hours.
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Until after the first treatment and no live lice are seen.
Ringworm	Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
Scabies	Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.

Parents must notify Children’s Place staff of such illnesses within 24 hours in order that the program may notify parents and other applicable health sources. A list of reportable diseases is available in the program office.

If a staff person notices any of these symptoms when a child arrives, the parent will be instructed that the child cannot remain. If a child becomes ill at Children’s Place, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child within an hour of notification.

If your child is absent because of a communicable disease please notify us so that we can watch for symptoms in others and notify other parents of possible infection. Notice to parents regarding their child's exposure to a communicable disease is posted in the program.

Remember, we cannot discuss another child’s health or care with you.

First Aid:

All teachers and assistant teachers are trained in first aid and basic emergency care. The UMD Children’s Place maintains first aid kits for use in the program and on field trips. At least one person trained in CPR is in the program at all times. University Police officers are also certified in first aid and CPR and may be called on if the situation warrants.

Accident/Injury

Great care is taken to provide a safe environment and children are taught safe practices within the classrooms and playground areas. However, sometimes accidents or injuries will occur. All teachers and assistants are trained in first aid and will care for the injured child. Parents will receive a written report on any injury or accident taking place at Children’s Place. Parents will be informed as soon as possible of any injury requiring additional medical attention, and asked to report back to the program the results of that medical visit in order that appropriate reports may be made to our licensing officials.

Medical Emergencies

In life threatening situations, a staff member will be designated to immediately call 911. In other cases of injury or illness first aid will be administered by the most qualified, available staff person while the remaining staff members attend to the children.

If emergency transportation is necessary it will be provided by the paramedics.

Emergency phone numbers will be kept for each child. This information will also be taken on field trips.

Emergency phone numbers are posted on or near all phones in the program space.

Medications

If your child is on medications which must be administered during the time he or she is at UMD Children's Place, the medicine must be in the original prescription bottle (with the child's name, the doctor's name and the date on the label). A Medication Form must also be filled out by a parent or guardian. Over the counter medicine (tylenol, cough syrup, cough drops, lotion etc.) can only be administered when provided in original container and according to manufacturer's dosage printed with that medication. Written permission of the parent and a Medication Form filled out by a parent or guardian is also required.

Diversity

UMD Children's Place strives to honor, support, and celebrate the diversity of its children, families, and staff. Diversity is interpreted in the broadest sense and includes race, language, faith background, family structure, sexual orientation, physical ability, and economic status.

We will not celebrate any specific holiday, however, we do welcome families to share their traditions and rituals with us throughout the year. It is these elements of community which make celebrations more real to young children and enhance the development of appreciation for diversity.

Parking

Parking for drop off and pick up of children is provided for parents. You will be provided with two parking permits for your family. The permit must be displayed on your dashboard. There are four spaces near our playground. This is ONLY for arrival and departure. Any parent parking in a space other than those designated for UMD Children's Place are in violation of parking regulations and may be issued a University parking ticket. These tickets will not be forgiven.

Insurance

The UMD Children's Place carries liability insurance through the University of Minnesota for its employees and children enrolled. The level of insurance meets or exceeds levels mandated by the state.

Safety Drills

The UMD Children's Place conducts regular monthly fire drills, and periodic tornado drills depending on the season. In this way we practice being ready should an emergency situation occur.

Diapering

Children in diapers shall be kept clean and dry. Only disposable diapers will be used in the program. Parents are responsible for keeping a supply (at least two days) of diapers labeled with the child's name available at all times. If provided by the parent, single service disposable wipes will be used to wash the child before putting on a clean diaper. Pre-moistened paper towels will be used if wipes are not available. A permission form for use of diaper wipes and ointment must be filled in and signed by parents before we can use these items.

Personal Belongings

Each child is asked to bring 2 complete sets of clothing, including socks, to Children's Place. Please have each piece clearly marked with the child's name. These clothes will be used if there is a toileting mishap or other wet play experiences that require a change. Please check your child's box periodically to see that it is complete with clothes appropriate to the season and your child's growth. All clothing the child wears to Children's Place should be labeled with the child's name. This is especially important with outerwear such as boots and coats, jackets, and sweaters. Similar outerwear is common and creates a confusing problem for the child and teacher. Children should wear clothing to school that is comfortable and appropriate for floor activities and messy experiences (paints and markers may stain).

We also ask that children have a pair of "indoor" shoes to leave in the classroom. Shoes should be easy to get on and off since children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. The indoor shoes should also be soft-soled or rubber; they are quieter in our environment. These shoes also help us keep our classrooms cleaner.

Rest Time

All children participate in a time of rest or sleeping during the day. Blankets are provided for infants. Parents of toddlers and preschooler children should bring a blanket with his or her name. Each napping child is provided their own cot and their blanket is kept on it. Each child will be expected to remain quietly on their cot during the rest time. Restful music is played during this time and a staff member will give backrubs to the resting children.

It is our policy that if a child falls asleep, he or she will be allowed to sleep without adult interruption until the end of the group's nap period. When a child falls asleep during our quiet rest period we believe it is because his or her body is tired and needs the rest. Therefore we will make no efforts to keep a child awake during this time.

If the child's parent(s) are concerned the child is sleeping too much at UMD Children's Place, we will help the child wake up gently but only after 1 hour of sleep and only if the child awakens to a gentle approach of awakening by the teacher. If the child does not awaken with the first try, another gentle approach will be tried after another 15 minutes of sleep. Staff will not forcibly awaken a child because it may look and/or feel abusive, not only to the individual child, but to other children and adults, as well.

Please note that pacifiers are not used in our toddler or pre-school classrooms, even at nap time.

Blankets and naptime materials (pillow, stuffed animal and etc.) will be sent home weekly for laundering.

Outdoor Activity

Daily outdoor activity is very important for young children and is planned whenever possible. In the winter we will go out as long as the temperature or wind-chill is 0 degrees F. or above. It is our policy that children who are well enough to come to the program are well enough to participate in outdoor activities. Most health professionals recommend a daily dose of fresh outdoor air for young growing children, and if children are dressed appropriately, weather conditions should not pose an illness risk to them.

Please supply appropriate labeled clothing allowing for the weather extremes found in Minnesota.

In winter, children should have available mittens, boots, shoes, hats, snowsuits, or snow pants with coats. In the summer, they should have available cool tops, shorts and shoes.

Meals

Nutrition is a major factor in the physical, social, mental, and emotional development of children. Nutrition education is integrated into our program through regular cooking projects and by serving meals family style. This provides an understanding of appropriate eating habits as well as an opportunity for social conversation.

Morning Snack: A nutritional snack is served each day at 9 am in all of the classrooms.

Afternoon Snack: A second nutritional snack is served each day at 2pm in the Infant classroom and at 3pm for the Toddler and Preschool classrooms.

*All other food, candy, and gum should be left at home. If your child has special food needs due to allergies or family preference please inform the director, in writing. Parents are welcome to bring a store bought snack to school for their child's class. The cost of snacks is included in your tuition.

Lunch: Lunch is served at 11:00am (Infant Classroom) and at 11:30am (Toddler and Preschool Classrooms) and is catered through the UMD Food Service. Lunches will provide 1/3 of the USDA food requirements for children of each appropriate age group. Cost of lunch is included in your tuition.

In the event that a family chooses to provide their own meals for their child we ask that these guidelines be followed to assist the staff in the mealtime preparations:

- The food is labeled with a first and last name and for which meal it is to be served (breakfast, snacks, lunch).
- The meals are simple and ready to serve (any meal that requires extra preparation such as heating and/or multiple steps can make it difficult and time consuming for the classroom teachers).
- Leftovers will be discarded that same day if not picked up by the parent.
- Empty food containers will be placed in your child's cubby after each meal.

Menus are posted in each classroom as well as distributed to our Infant and Toddler families.

Guidance and Discipline

It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to protect and promote each child's welfare, while preserving self-esteem and assisting efforts to internalize values and discover appropriate behaviors.

This is done in a number of positive ways including:

- Providing an appropriately challenging and independent environment.
- Maintaining a secure, orderly, and respectful atmosphere and environment.
- Providing clear, consistent, and developmentally appropriate ground rules and expectations.
- Using observations as a way of determining responses to the child's behavior.
- Modeling appropriate behavior.
- Anticipating problems and providing redirection, prompts, and reminders.
- Encouraging and acknowledging effort and positive behavior.

- Intervening when necessary to help children work through difficulties and to find acceptable solutions.
- Involving children in problem solving and establishing ground rules.

It is imperative to intervene in the rare occasion that a behavior becomes dangerous, destructive, and disruptive in order to protect people and property without loss of self-esteem and to help a child understand the problem with certain behaviors. Different children and different situations will call for different responses. Under the direction of the teachers the staff will enforce ground rules, employ logical consequences for unacceptable behavior, and deal with specific problems in as caring, consistent, and positive a manner as possible. In general the staff will emphasize positive behavior, offer reasonable choices, recognize feelings, and make clear when a child's behavior is unacceptable. The staff will not bribe, use false threats, moralize, shout or talk from across the room, humiliate or use physical force.

Any behavior which requires an increased amount of staff guidance and time shall be observed and recorded by the teachers. If deemed necessary, the teachers will work with the child's parent(s) and other staff members to develop a plan to address the behavior. Teacher's observation records shall be used as the basis for this discussion. Other professionals may be consulted when appropriate.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Conferences are scheduled on a regular basis. At conference times the teaching staff will be prepared to discuss the child's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development. Parents are welcome to contact their child's teacher(s) at other times during the year if needed or desired. It is in your child's best interest that you take advantage of the conferences offered so that you and the teachers have the opportunity to share your child's strengths, interests, and successes, as well as to plan for areas in which your child needs to strengthen his/her skills.

Parent-teacher conferences along with a written report of the child's progress are scheduled twice a year. Opportunities are also available for parents to visit the program whenever possible.

Field Trips

UMD Children's Place is committed to integrating with the University community and for this reason we will consider the campus as an extension of our classrooms in implementing curriculum and 'real world' exploration. Parents will be notified of significant trips on campus, although permission slips will not be sent for these on campus trips. When teachers take shorter, more spontaneous trips on campus, a sign will be left in the classroom as to the whereabouts of the group. Enrollment in our program is considered permission to use the greater campus.

Occasionally off-campus field trips are planned for children in our program. Parents will be notified in advance of all scheduled field trips and asked to give their written permission for their child to attend. The permission form will note the day, date, time, and location of the trip. Children who do not have this written permission will not be allowed to go along on the field trip. We are not able to provide alternate care for those not attending scheduled trips. Parents may be asked to pay additional fees for some field trip opportunities.

Missing Child Policy

The following procedures will be followed in the unlikely circumstance that a child is discovered to be missing:

- Immediately upon discovering that a child is missing one staff member will keep the remaining children together and the other(s) will notify all available staff and search the area.
- One of the searchers will be designated to keep time and do telephoning if and when it is necessary.
- If the child is not found after 3-5 minutes (but no longer) the designated staff person will call University Police.
- If the child is not found after 5-10 minutes (but no longer) University Police will be asked to notify the Duluth police.
- The designated staff person will notify the child's parent(s)/guardian.
- A written report of the incident including whom, when, where, and what happened will be done following the incident. One copy of the report will be filed in the accident log.

Pets

We currently have a fish tank in our Infant and Toddler Classrooms. Parents will be advised via newsletters of additional pets. Occasionally a child's or staff member's pet may visit the program. Please be sure we know of any allergies to animals.

Our program also has a worm composting bin where the children are taught the importance of caring for our environment by feeding the worms our vegetable and fruit scraps once a week.

UMD Children's Place as a Peace Site

We incorporate peaceful play as an integral part of our program philosophy. Fantasy play with "weapons" is not allowed. Children are reminded that we are a peace site and a safe place to be. We appreciate parent support in this matter.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations are a regular part of our classroom activities. If you would like to bring a birthday treat please keep in mind that we can only serve store bought products as well as check with the classroom teacher whether there are any food allergies that need to be considered. If you would like to consider an alternative to bringing a food treat, we would like you to consider presenting a birthday gift to your child's classroom or the program. The teachers have developed a "wish list" for the classrooms and the program. This list has a variety of items of varying cost and covers a number of interest areas. Your child can bring this gift, wrapped, to Children's Place. He/she will be able to unwrap it at group time and present it to the program.

Sharing Time

Language development is important, as is the opportunity to speak in a large or small group. Teachers plan ways to incorporate children's speaking opportunities in our group time. If your child is interested in sharing items which may be of special interest to our class (i.e. items relating to the classroom theme, special items from other countries, **not toys**) please talk to his/her teacher.

Miscellaneous Toys

The prepared environment is a vital aspect to our classrooms. We provide many and varied working materials for your children during the hours they are with us. **We ask that children do not bring toys from home to Children's Place.**

Mandated Reporting Responsibility

Children need a safe, nurturing environment that assists them to grow, learn, and feel loved by their caretakers. In order to grow and learn, children's minimum needs for good nutrition, shelter,

medical care, bathing, clean clothes, intellectual stimulation, appropriate discipline, love, a feeling of importance and a safe, non-violent home setting must be met. When these needs are not met, a child cannot grow and learn as easily.

UMD Children's Place expresses a commitment to provide an environment that encourages the child's safe growth and learning. As mandated reporters, UMD Children's Place staff are required to make a report if there is reason to believe or suspect that a child is being neglected or abused or subjected to witnessing domestic abuse, or has been within the past three years.

The State of Minnesota, in Minn. Stat. Section 626.556, mandates that a professional or his/her delegate who is engaged in the practice of child care or education, who knows or has reason to believe a child is being (or has been within the past three years) neglected or physically or sexually abused, must report such information to the St. Louis County Initial Intervention Unit within 24 hours.

It is the staff member who is mandated to report rather than simply a member of the administrative staff. In addition, any person may voluntarily report such information to the local agency if he/she knows, has reason to believe or suspects a child is being neglected or subjected to physical or sexual abuse. The UMD Children's Place, through the teaching and administrative staff, will comply with the letter and spirit of this law.

Minn. Stat. Section 626.556 is on file in the Program Assistant's office. A copy is available to you upon request.

ST. LOUIS COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICE'S REPORTING POLICY FOR PROGRAMS PROVIDING SERVICES TO CHILDREN

Who should report child abuse and neglect?

- ⇒ Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect
- ⇒ If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to report?

- ⇒ If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.
- ⇒ All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at 651.297.4123.
- ⇒ Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the St. Louis County Initial Intervention Unit at 726.2012 or local law enforcement at 727.8770.
- ⇒ If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at 651.296.3971

What to report?

- ⇒ Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and are available in the UMD Children's Place administrative office.
- ⇒ A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the reports should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- ⇒ An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.

Parents who suspect their child is being abused or neglected by UMD Children's Place staff should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at 651.297.4123.

Internal Review

In the event that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment by a Children's Place staff member has been made, an internal review will be completed by the director and corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care will be implemented.

The internal review will include an evaluation of whether:

- Related policies and procedures were followed
- The policies and procedures were adequate
- There is a need for additional staff training
- The reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved
- There is a need for corrective action by the program to protect the health and safety of children in care

The internal review will be completed by the director. If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, an outside consultant will be responsible for completing the internal review.

Upon completion of the internal review, documentation will be provided to the commissioner upon the commissioner's request.

Based on the results of the internal review, the program must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or the director, if any.

Grievance Procedure

In the pursuit of our mission, the UMD Children's Place staff are committed to the protection of individual rights for all members of the UMD Children's Place community. Parents who believe they or their children have been treated unfairly with regard to classroom procedures or program policies have recourse through the following grievance procedure.

1. The parent or authorized representative (the "complainant") should inform the teacher or other staff member (the "respondent") against whom the parent has the complaint of the nature of the complaint and discuss it with him/her. Most concerns are resolved this way.
2. If it is not possible for the complainant to discuss the complaint with the respondent or if discussion with the respondent does not resolve the complaint, the complainant should inform the program director of the complaint
3. The Director and/or management team (the Dean and Administrative Director of CEHSP) will meet with the complainant to discuss their concern as quickly as possible but at least within 10 working days after being notified of the complaint.
4. The Director will meet with the staff member concerned within 10 working days after meeting with complainant.
5. The Director's and/or management team's decision will be communicated to the complainant and the respondent as promptly as possible, generally within 10 working days after meeting with respondent.
6. In the event that the program director is the "respondent," the Dean of CEHSP will hear the grievance. The decision of the Dean is final.

Parent Education and Resources

UMD Children's Place will offer regular discussions or presentations on topics of interest to families with young children. Additionally, printed resources will be made available to parents related to healthy parenting practices and support services available to families. Should you need assistance or support in ways not already being addressed by the program please talk to your child's teacher or the program director for additional information. Some helpful phone numbers are listed below.

St. Louis County Public Health Division (WIC): 218.725.5211
Parent Warmline: 218.525.3242
First Call for Help: 211
Family and Children Services: 218.726.2075

Parent Communication

It is our conviction that parent communication is essential to a successful program for young children. It is important that we find ways to establish and maintain open communication.

Arrivals and departures can be useful times for exchanging **brief** information or concerns. Please communicate to us, verbally or in writing, any information that may help us relate to your child that day and any concerns or questions you may have.

Twice a month we will be putting out newsletters which will focus on the UMD Children's Place, and activities, events and concerns associated with the program. At the beginning of the month, the classroom teachers will provide a newsletter telling of classroom plans for the upcoming month. Mid-month, the newsletter will focus more on necessary reminders and updates from the director. Newsletters are distributed via e-mail. If any parent does not have access to the internet or would rather receive a paper copy, please notify the classroom teacher or the director.

The telephone is also a good means of communication. You are welcome to call your child's teacher to talk about your child, the program or any concerns you may have. The contact numbers at Children's Place are as follows:

Directors Office:	726.6727
*Program Operations/Enrollment	
Administrative Assistant & Account Specialist:	726.6635
*Program Financial Aspects/Key Cards	
Infant Classroom:	726.6421
Toddler Classroom:	726.6422
Preschool Classroom:	726.6423
Fax Machine:	726.6654

Please feel free to call and leave a message to have a call returned at a convenient time if your child's teacher is unavailable.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is another vital aspect of our program. Throughout the year, we offer parent meetings in various formats. A parent advisory group has also been established to oversee parent volunteers participating in various task forces which have been developed to support our program. Your participation is strongly encouraged.

It is expected that parents will donate at least five hours of their time to our program. There are multiple ways in which you can help. Please see the director to see how you can become involved.

Parents are always welcome to visit their child at any time!

Thank you and welcome to UMD Children's Place.

Parent Acknowledgement Of Parent Handbook

I (We) have received and read the UMD Children's Place Handbook. I (We) understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures as stated in this handbook. I (We) also understand that the program director may implement or change policies as needed. I (We) understand that I/(We) will be notified prior to such changes.

I(We) know that the policies included in this handbook include:

- Enrollment and Withdrawal policies (p. 6-8)
- Financial policy (p. 8-10)
- Late Fees (p. 8)
- Program Closures (p. 10)
- Arrival and departure (p. 11)
- Emergency Closing (p. 11)
- Sick Children (p. 12)
- Medications (p. 14)
- Mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect (p. 18)
- Grievance policy (p. 20)

Other critical information to be aware of

- UMD Children's Place as lab school (p. 6)
- Children being photographed
- University students doing academic work
- Field Trips (p. 17)
- Use of UMD campus as an extended classroom

BOTH PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD SIGN THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO UMD CHILDREN'S PLACE OFFICE

Parent/Guardian Name (print)

signature

date

Parent/Guardian Name (print)

signature

date