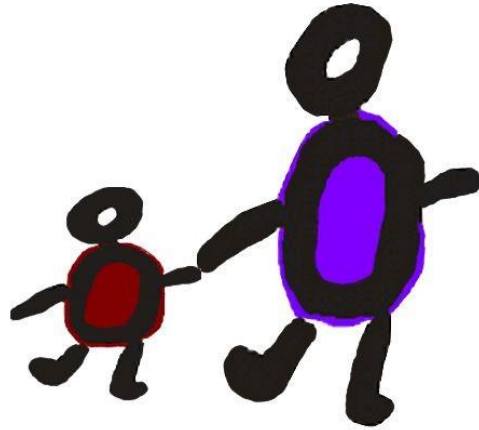


# UConn Child Development Laboratories



## Family Handbook Policy

Department of Human Development and Family Sciences

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

University of Connecticut

Updated 2026

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### Handbook Revisions

No handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about program policy or procedures. As circumstances, state mandates, or university requirements change, policies must accompany them. The CDL, therefore, reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind portions of the handbook when necessary. The handbook is intended as a guide to support successful programming for children and successful partnerships with families.

## **Information**

UConn Child Development Laboratories

Human Development Center

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Support staff provided by college students learning in the Child Labs classrooms

## **Programs**

**Willow Room** serves 8 children ages 6 weeks-2 years

State minimum ratio adult to child 1:4

**Dogwood Room** serves 8 children ages 6 weeks-3 years

State minimum ratio adult to child 1:4

**Maple Room** serves 12 children ages 18 months-3 years

State minimum ratio adult to child 1:4

**Sassafras Room** serves 18 children ages 3 years -5 years

State minimum ratio adult to child 1:10

**Birch Room** serves 18 children ages 3 years – 5 years

State minimum ratio adult to child 1:10

## **Schedule Options**

Core Day 8:30am-4:30pm

Core Day + AM 7:30-4:30

Core Day + PM 8:30-5:30

Extended Day 7:30-5:30

Preschool Half Day 8:30-12:30 (Sassafras and Birch room only, when space allows)

Program operating hours are 7:30-5:30

## **Mission/Purpose**

The UConn Child Development Laboratories (CDL) serves the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, UConn, the community and the state of CT as a model demonstration laboratory center. The primary purpose of the CDL is to teach university students to work with young children and to provide a site for research in the field of child development.

In order to fulfill this mission, the CDL offers programs for young children ages six weeks to five years. The CDL is committed to providing developmentally appropriate curriculum that is based on current research and knowledge of child development. The CDL's primary goals are to foster the optimal development of children, to set an example for other early childhood programs, and to impart to students' high ideals and goals. Each CDL teacher holds a minimum of a Bachelor's degree with expertise in the field of early childhood education. Students participating in Early Childhood Specializations provide support to the professional teaching staff.

The CDL has three components:

Training Students- The CDL provides undergraduate and graduate students with supervised experiences and training. Besides training Human Development and Family Sciences students to work in early childhood programs, the CDL serves as a placement site for observations, projects and field placements for many other UConn departments.

Conducting Research- One of the primary missions of the CDL is to encourage and facilitate research. The CDL staff is committed to working cooperatively with researchers interested in issues of family, child development, and early childhood education. Requests to do research involving young children in CDL programs are screened for their appropriateness to the welfare of the child and CDL program.

Services for Children- A safe, supportive and nurturing environment is provided together with a commitment to developmentally appropriate programming which promotes the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of young children. The CDL is licensed by the State of CT and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and is a member of the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers.

These three components result in a rich experience in which learning occurs on many levels: university students and CDL children are scaffolding their learning in an academically rich and professional learning community.

## **Philosophy**

The CDL philosophy is to provide an enriching play and exploration-based learning program in a nature focused environment to promote growth and development in young children and Early Childhood Specializations college students. We believe that by establishing a feeling of trust and safety, children will grow and develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. At the Child Labs we believe that children develop best when provided consistent boundaries, secure relationships and the opportunity to explore their environment. We establish consistent routines and promote kindness and inclusion. Children are provided with appropriate outdoor gear and safely participate in regular outdoor activities in all kinds of weather. We believe this supports a strong connection to nature and the natural world as well as supporting the life skill to manage discomfort and build resiliency.

At the CDL, we believe that children learn best in an environment where they feel safe and welcome and have strong, trusting relationships with their caregivers. We want children to feel empowered and self-assured. We use trauma-responsive practices to engage with children in respectful, reciprocal relationships. Our main goal is to build trust and provide a safe environment for children to explore their interests and build upon their skills.

## **Statement of Non-Discrimination**

The Child Development Laboratories uphold all state anti-discrimination laws that promote equal opportunity and prohibit discrimination. We believe that children, families and volunteers benefit from the diverse experiences, perspectives and cultures of those that attend, participate in or visit our center.

## **Statement of Confidentiality**

Each family that is enrolled at the CDL has the right to expect confidentiality from the staff. This includes interactions and information related to health, assessment, and other sensitive or private information. Children are not discussed outside the center, and exchanges of information are not encouraged between families. In the CDL classroom settings, children's identifying characteristics are kept confidential when describing incidents that have occurred during the school day. Confidentiality implies trust and respect; all staff and UConn students sign and follow confidentiality policies.

## **Commitment to Diversity**

Appreciation and understanding are fostered by positive exposure to a variety of ages, genders, lifestyles, family structures, race, cultures, religions and abilities. Therefore, we emphasize an environment that welcomes diversity and challenges bias and discrimination.

## **Ethics**

The University of Connecticut Child Development Laboratories is committed to offering high quality early childhood education predicated on the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment. This organization recognizes that any daily decisions required of those who work with young children are of a moral and ethical nature, thus the guidelines identify responsible behavior and provide a common basis for resolving dilemmas encountered in early childhood programs. Because of our philosophy and beliefs, the center is committed to:

- Appreciating childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle;
- Basing our work with children on a knowledge of child development;
- Appreciating and supporting the close ties between the child and family;
- Recognizing that children are best understood in the context of family, culture and society
- Helping children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and positive regard.

A statement from the NAEYC, 2005, summarizes the intent and outcome of employee conduct:

*Above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally damaging, or physically harmful to children.*

## **Licensing**

The CDL operates in compliance with building, fire and health regulation codes for the state of CT Department of Public Health. The license is posted in the main hallway next to

Room 141, and licensing rules and regulations are available to those who wish to review them at the OEC website.

### **Supporting Children's Growing Independence and Behavior Guidance**

At Child Labs we focus on the development of prosocial behavior and skills. Our classroom rules revolve around creating physical and emotional safety for all and promoting kindness and inclusion. We encourage the development of a strong sense of self for all children that revolve around the social skills **respect, kindness, cooperation, self-control** and **understanding and expressing emotions**. We guide behavior through modeling and stating clear guidance and expectations for safety with peers, teachers and classroom materials as well as self. Strategies and techniques used by classroom teachers are individualized according to age, development, and individual temperament. All children are allowed to safely express emotions in the classrooms and all community members are allowed and encouraged to make amends. Children are learning and growing and will have space to make mistakes, practice social skills and learn from teachers and one another. Prosocial behavior guidance occurs through community and relationships building within classrooms and across the program.

### **Enrollment and Tuition Information**

The CDL admissions policy is different from other childcare programs because our purpose and mission are more complex. We strive to provide quality programs for young children and their families while training college students, facilitating research and serving the state and the community as a model lab school. Our admission policy reflects this by striving to maintain a balanced and diverse child population while supporting the involvement of families that most need our services. All children are eligible for enrollment regardless of race, religion, gender, disability or national origin.

### **Waiting List**

Applications can be found at [www.childlabs.uconn.edu](http://www.childlabs.uconn.edu). The CDL maintains a waiting list for all programs from which openings are filled. A cultural and economic cross section of children is desired to provide a diverse population for the students being trained, the research being conducted and for the benefit for all families.

Priority is given to UConn families, single parent families, families with all adults in the household working, and siblings to children currently enrolled in a CDL classroom.

In-house registration takes place in February for the following school year. Open spots are filled from the waitlist beginning in early spring and ending when spots are filled.

## **Registration**

Registration is held in the spring for the upcoming school year. Spots are filled for the entire school year, unless discussed with the director prior to enrollment. Registration involves an initial tour with the director, completing enrollment paperwork (including providing mandatory health forms), meeting with classroom teachers, and attending Open House. A non-refundable fee of \$75 per family is due at the time of registration for all new and returning families. Families sign recognizing that they have read and agreed to the policies in the Family Handbook during the registration process.

## **Fees**

Child Labs has a yearly tuition fee that is charged based on the age of the child, the schedule chosen, and the household income. This yearly tuition is then divided into 10 equal payments that are due on August 15<sup>th</sup>, then the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month October-June. Current fee scales are available on the Child Labs website. Tuition payments are made by credit/debit card through UConn Marketplace. All families are responsible for the yearly tuition (all ten payments).

Child Labs accepts Care4Kids and Early Start, programs that support tuition payments for families. More information regarding these programs can be found on the CT Office of Early Childhood website. <https://www.ctoec.org/>

Families with multiple children enrolled receive a 5% discount on tuition.

## **Withdrawing Prior to the End of School**

Families sign an annual contract agreement. If families choose to withdraw children prior to the last day of school, they are responsible for monthly tuition payments for the rest of the year or until that space can be filled by a child off the waitlist. Please discuss any plans for withdrawing early with the director at the time of enrollment.

## **Program Descriptions**

### **Willow Room**

The Willow room serves children aged 6 weeks to 2 years old. Children are enrolled in the Willow room for a complete school year or two, depending on their age at enrollment. Mid-year transitions are not made. Children remain with the same primary caretakers at school during this stage of development. Young infants are on individual schedules based on their needs. Teachers follow the cues of young infants and work with families to meet the needs of young infants.

### **Dogwood Room**

The Dogwood Room serves children aged 6 weeks to 3 years old. Children are enrolled in the Dogwood Room until on or around their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. At the time of turning 3, children transition to Preschool. Careful attention is paid to making this transition successful for all individual children. The children in the Dogwood Room remain with the same primary caretakers at school during their stage of development. The Dogwood room provides children and college students with a model of early care often found in other high quality early childhood programs with a focus on meeting the needs of children at various ages and stages. Young infants are on individual schedules based on their needs. Teachers follow the cues of young infants and work with families to meet the needs of young infants.

### **Maple Room**

The Maple Room serves children aged 18 months to 3 years old. Children are enrolled in the Maple Room for a complete school year or two, depending on their age at enrollment. Mid-year transitions are not made.

### **Sassafras Room**

The Sassafras Room serves children 3-5 years old. Children turning 3 prior to the end of December can be enrolled in the Sassafras Room and begin school on the first day of the fall semester.

### **Birch Room**

The Birch Room serves children 3-5 years old. Children turning 3 prior to the end of December can be enrolled in the Birch Room and begin school on the first day of the fall semester.

## **Classroom Curriculum, Schedules and Routines**

The Child Labs uses a process of observing, developing individual goals and creating curriculum on a cycle in all classrooms with all age groups. This is known as emergent curriculum and is based on the interests and needs of individual children. All children are involved in developmentally appropriate play and exploration-based experiences.

Teachers look at the interests and skills of individual and groups of children and utilize the CT Early Learning and Development Standards to ensure that children have opportunities to explore, learn and develop across domains at their individual pace. The curriculum at the Child Labs focuses on social emotional development and an appreciation of nature and the natural world.

Child Labs classroom schedules follow this format:

-Arrival 8:30-9:30 play experiences and snack offered

-Morning exploration and learning:

A variety of indoor and outdoor explorations that may include sensory experiences, dramatic play, block play, large and small motor experiences, language and literacy experiences, math and science experiences, creative expression experiences, small or large group experiences that may include reading together, singing and exploring music together and peer and teacher interactions. We believe play and exploration is the work and learning of young children and teachers bring learning objectives to children in their preferred play experiences.

-Midday lunch, toileting/diapering and rest

-All part-time preschoolers must depart the classroom by 12:30, please arrive for part-time pick up at 12:15 to allow transition time

-Afternoon exploration and learning:

A variety of indoor and outdoor explorations that may include sensory experiences, dramatic play, block play, large and small motor experiences, language and literacy experiences, math and science experiences, creative expression experiences, small or large group experiences that may include reading together, singing and exploring music together and peer and teacher interactions. We believe play and exploration is the work and learning of young children and teachers bring learning objectives to children in their preferred play experiences.

-All Core Day children must depart the classroom by 4:30, please arrive for Core Day pick up by 4:15 to allow transition time

All children have access to bathrooms at any time of the day. Toileting happens within routines several times during the day. Infants and toddlers in diapers are changed every two hours and immediately following a bowel movement. Toilet learning is supported in all classrooms; children are not required to be toilet trained to enroll in any classroom at Child Labs.

Young infants are on individual schedules based on their needs. Teachers follow the cues of the infants and work with families to meet individual schedule needs of young infants within the scope of what is feasible in group care.

Child Labs makes every effort to consider family childrearing practices as part of our daily routines. Please consider sharing your familiar practices, interests, and cultural practices with teachers.

### **Family Involvement and Community Building**

Families enrolled at Child Labs are invited to be involved in their children's experience through a variety of ways. During the enrollment process and at the beginning of every school year families and teachers have individual meetings to discuss children. Open House is held the Thursday before the start of every new school year. Child Labs hosts two family picnics each school year as opening and closing ceremonies. Child Labs has an open-door policy, providing the opportunity for families to come into the classrooms during the school day. We ask only that families are respectful of the needs of their child and the routines of the school day. The Child Labs director has an open office door policy. Families are welcome to stop in the office anytime the door is open. Meetings can be made by arrangement as well. Families are encouraged to share aspects of their family life, culture, and work with the teachers and their children's peers. For more information, speak to classroom teachers about developmentally appropriate ways to share with various age groups. To support community building among families, Child Labs helps to create a voluntary family contact list as well as a list of student workers who are available to babysit outside of school hours.

### **Family Teacher Communication**

Child Labs teachers and families communicate in various ways. Families drop off and pick up their children in the classroom and speak with teachers at those transitions. Child Labs uses a messaging app with families during the school day. Teachers post about classroom

experiences at the end of each week. Newsletters are sent out monthly to share information about the community. All classrooms have landlines, and families are given those phone numbers. Twice a year, Child Labs offers Family Teacher conferences where discussions are held about individual children's development with their family to support consistency and sharing information between home and school.

### **English Language Learners**

Child Labs is an English-speaking program. Frequently we have children and families whose home language is something other than English. We want families to feel comfortable and will arrange for interpretation support if requested. In our classrooms, teachers support children's language learning in developmentally appropriate ways. Some strategies used to support children learning English include using pictures and signs to communicate, using translation apps to communicate and using college students and peers to help translate to children. Teachers work with families for support in how to say important phrases in children's home language as they learn English.

### **Transition to Kindergarten**

The transition from preschool to kindergarten is an exciting time for children and families. It can also be anxiety provoking, and families may have many questions. We aim to support children in this transition without overwhelming them. To support families with this transition we can do the following:

- alert families to kindergarten registration
- answer questions and address concerns during spring semester conferences for transitioning families
- provide a spring semester family meeting where information about supporting yourself and your child during this transition for all interested families who are transitioning to kindergarten
- after school ends, if requested by families in writing we can share records with children's kindergarten school

### **When Conflicts Arise**

At Child Labs, we believe the key to a strong family-school partnership is relationship building and trust. We understand that it takes time for relationships between home and

school to be built. If you have concerns or questions, you are encouraged to bring these to the attention of the appropriate staff member. This may be the classroom teaching staff or the director. Suggested resolution procedures are:

- Attempt to resolve the issue directly with the staff member

- If satisfaction is not reached, bring it to the attention of the CDL director

- Attempts will be made to solve the problem in a positive way for benefit of children, families and staff

Sometimes conflicts occur at home. When appropriate, please share information regarding any changes in the adults who care for your child in your household. If there is legal action such as custody agreements or restraining orders that may impact your child while at school, Child Labs must have a copy of those documents.

## Community Resources for Families

Consultation in Child Labs:

Child Labs works in collaboration with various departments within the university. Consultants are available to support families and teaching staff on concerns related to health, social services, and education.

United Way	<a href="https://www.ctunitedway.org/">https://www.ctunitedway.org/</a>
Care 4 Kids	<a href="https://www.ctcare4kids.com/">https://www.ctcare4kids.com/</a>
Office of Early Childhood (OEC)	<a href="https://www.ctoec.org/">https://www.ctoec.org/</a>
Husky Health Insurance	<a href="https://www.huskyhealthct.org/members.html">https://www.huskyhealthct.org/members.html</a>
Eastern Highlands Health District	<a href="http://www.ehhd.org/">http://www.ehhd.org/</a>
CT Birth to Three	<a href="https://www.birth23.org/">https://www.birth23.org/</a>
UConn Speech and Hearing Clinic	<a href="https://clinic.speech-language-hearing.uconn.edu/">https://clinic.speech-language-hearing.uconn.edu/</a>
Town of Mansfield services	<a href="https://www.mansfieldct.gov/">https://www.mansfieldct.gov/</a>
Town of Willington services	<a href="https://www.willingtonct.gov/">https://www.willingtonct.gov/</a>
Town of Coventry services	<a href="https://www.coventry-ct.gov/">https://www.coventry-ct.gov/</a>
Town of Windham services	<a href="https://www.windhamct.gov/">https://www.windhamct.gov/</a>
UConn Work Life Balance	<a href="https://hr.uconn.edu/employee-wellness/">https://hr.uconn.edu/employee-wellness/</a>
Hands and Voices	<a href="https://www.handsandvoices.org/">https://www.handsandvoices.org/</a>
CT department of social services	<a href="https://portal.ct.gov/dss?language=en_US">https://portal.ct.gov/dss?language=en_US</a>
Husky Harvest (UConn Food Pantry)	<a href="https://huskyharvest.uconn.edu/">https://huskyharvest.uconn.edu/</a>
CT Foodshare	<a href="https://www.ctfoodshare.org/">https://www.ctfoodshare.org/</a>
Early Start	<a href="https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct/">https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct/</a>
Play Sparkler (Developmental Screening)	<a href="https://playsparkler.org/">https://playsparkler.org/</a>

## **Curriculum**

Child Labs uses emergent curriculum. The teachers follow a cycle of observing, creating goals, and developing curriculum based on individual goals and interests for all children in all age groups. The Child Labs uses the CT Early Learning and Development Standards to support goal development and guide assessment.

## **Assessment of Child Progress**

Purposes of assessment at the Child Labs include:

- Documenting and evaluating the overall development of each child
- Making informed curriculum decisions
- Connecting families to the school environment
- Developing an individualized learning plan for each child that will support learning
- Improving the overall programming for young children at Child Labs

Procedures for assessment methods at the Child Labs include:

- Confidentiality of assessment information; all Child Labs teachers and students sign agreement
- Family and child records are kept in secure One Drive
- Only those who need to have access to the information regarding a child/family to engage appropriately will have that information
- Family involvement in this process includes sharing child's interests, parenting practices, cultural practices and participating in information gathering and sharing (ASQ/Family Conferences)
- Daily communication and more formal conferences are used to communicate with families regarding child assessment
- Staff have been trained to use assessment tools and interpretation will be made available

## **Developmental Screening**

All children enrolled at the Child Labs will have a developmental screening within 3 months of enrollment. The Child Labs utilizes the Ages and Stages Questionnaires as well as the Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire. These questionnaires are highly reliable and valuable. The state of CT Office of Early Childhood utilizes these screenings in childcare settings across the state. More

information on the ASQ developmental screening can be found on the Play Sparkler website. <https://playsparkler.org/>

### **Referrals**

Child Labs and families work together to support the best interest of the child. Sometimes teachers or families may have concerns about a child's behavior or development. Child Labs will work with families, having confidential conversations about concerns and will offer support appropriate to the classroom setting.

### **Children's Learning Needs**

The Child Labs will provide programs appropriate for children with special needs within the mainstream of their existing programs whenever possible. Referrals to outside agencies will be made only with permission from the family. In conjunction with the public school system and/or state agency, an individualized education plan will be designed and implemented with an interdisciplinary approach. Placement and/or programming will be determined at the Planning and Placement Team Meeting (PPT).

### **Staffing and Student Training**

#### **Professional Teaching Staff**

The professional teaching staff at Child Labs all have a bachelor's or master's degree in child development or a related field as well as experience working with young children. The role of the professional teaching staff is varied and includes:

- Supporting the learning of ECS college students
- Remaining current with research on Best Practice for teachers of young children
- Remaining current with research on Best Practices for coaches of novice teachers
- Caring for young children within nurturing/trusting relationships
- Curriculum planning
- Assessment
- Communicating with families
- Working collaboratively with HDFs on college student curriculum and assessment
- Supporting research at UConn
- Working within the UConn community on committees
- Leading tours for interested groups within the Child Labs

- Creating and presenting workshops for teachers of young children in the childcare workforce
- Leading the field as teachers in a model lab school

To fulfill these roles and various other responsibilities, the Child Labs professional teaching staff have scheduled times out of the classroom to work on tasks. Teachers also participate in mandatory professional development training throughout the school year to comply with licensing regulations and keep abreast of changes in the field of early childhood education and to grow as professionals. Professional development is spread across the school year to reflect on best practice of learning and implementing new ideas and practices. Teaching staff participate in professional development at the beginning and end of the school year as well as during 5-6 early closing days spread throughout the school year for children and families. In addition, professional teaching staff work on tasks and professional development during inclement weather closings.

### **Staff Coverage and Supervision of Children**

Children will never be left alone for any period of time. Teaching staff will stay within state required ratios at all times; indoors, outdoors and on walking fieldtrips. The CDL ratio of adults to children typically exceeds the state minimum requirement.

Infants and Toddlers (children 6 weeks to 2.9 years/3years) are supervised by sight and sound at all times.

Preschoolers (children aged 2.9/3 years and older) are supervised by sight and sound at most times, occasionally a child may be out of sight of staff for a short period of time (for example while using the restroom independently) and staff will position themselves in such a way as to be able to supervise by sound for that short period.

### **Supervision of College Student Staff**

Student staff at the CDL is comprised of practicum students in HDFS Early Childhood Specialization courses as well as students working in paid positions. The students are at the CDL learning from the professional teaching staff and working under the supervision and guidance of the CDL professional staff. The students working and learning at the Child Labs are a critical part of the programming provided. With their support, Child Labs offers excellent adult-to-child ratios in the classrooms. The students bring a diversity of

experiences and cultures to our classrooms as well as an enthusiasm to engage, play, and explore with the children.

## **Research**

One of the principal missions of the CDL is to encourage and facilitate research. To this end, the CDL staff is committed to working cooperatively with researchers interested in issues of family, child development, and early childhood education. Dozens of projects, from student observations associated with class projects to large-scale faculty research programs are supported by the CDL. At the same time, the CDL serves as an advocate for both families and children who participate in research projects. To ensure that participation in research projects enhances a child's educational experience at the CDL, prospective projects must receive approval by the Director, and prospective researchers must demonstrate competence at working with young children. Prospective projects are reviewed for compliance with professional ethics codes and for the degree of disruption generated for CDL educational programs. We believe that teaching and research programs share a joint interest in improving the lives of families and children and encourage researchers to distribute their findings to families and teachers as well as to other researchers. Below are guidelines for research involving the children, families, and staff of the CDL.

Research projects are required to be in a naturalistic setting and play based. All researchers working with children at the Child Labs must be background checked, including fingerprinting through the State of CT OEC's BCIS. Proposals are reviewed by the CDL Director as well as the CDL research review committee. The following are taken into consideration:

- Compliance with professional ethics codes for conducting research

- Degree of disruption to the program

- Number of research projects currently taking place

Our requirements are slightly more stringent than that of IRB and include the following:

- All researchers must be in the OEC BCIS (background check)

- All research sessions must be limited to 20 minutes or less per child (multiple sessions are allowed)

- No external rewards (ex. Candy, toys)

Research with infants and toddlers occurs in the classroom

Research with preschoolers occurs in the classroom or in the designated research space and must follow these restrictions:

Signed guardian permission form

IRB and CDL approval

A list of children with written guardian permission is given to teachers

### **Collaborations with UConn Departments**

The CDL collaborates with several departments at UConn to provide experiential learning to their students. Some examples include DPT Graduate students providing developmentally appropriate motor experiences for children under the guidance of faculty and CDL staff, SPLH Graduate students providing pre-literacy groups for children under the guidance of faculty and CDL staff, and Nursing students providing handwashing lessons to children with support and guidance. These experiences, in addition to the experiences with the HDFS ECS students, are part of programming at the CDL, and all children participate in them and do not require additional written permission from guardians.

### **Policies and Procedures**

#### **Smoking, Firearms and other significant hazards:**

Smoking is not permitted at the Human Development Center, on the playground or outside the entrances that lead directly to the Child Development Labs. No smoking is allowed in the presence of children. Firearms are PROHIBITED at the Child Labs, as are other significant hazards that pose risks to children and adults.

#### **Discipline Policy**

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop self-control and move toward appropriate social behavior. The CDL uses positive guidance, redirection, and teaching socially appropriate and acceptable skills to young children. In cases where a child poses a threat to themselves or others, teachers will remove the child from the shared play spaces to a quiet corner of the classroom and support that child in co-regulation. CDL teachers set clear limits and expectations with children and impose boundaries on aggressive behaviors. When children are engaged in a conflict, teachers will support conflict resolution skills, providing children with developmentally appropriate ways to express their emotions and work towards resolutions.

Child Labs staff will never engage in abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening treatment or punishment including, but not limited to spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, hitting, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, excessive tickling, pulling or striking a child under any circumstances. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety or health of the child or others, using least restrictive methods, as appropriate. No child will be required to remain inactive for a long period of time.

Child Labs staff will never engage in psychological abuse of any kind, including shaming, name calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, threatening, withholding affection, ostracism, exclusion, cursing at or frightening.

Child Labs staff will never engage in coercion of any kind including rough handling, physical restraint (unless necessary to keep everyone safe, and then in the least restrictive way possible) or physically forcing a child to perform an action such as eating or cleaning up.

Children who are experiencing continual behavior incidents or exhibiting other developmental concerns will be referred to the director.

All behavior serves a purpose, and we always attempt to determine what purpose or function a challenging behavior may be serving. Behavior that is chronically disruptive may be an indication that further support or assessment is needed. This support may include a referral process for further assessment and additional outside services. Behaviors that cannot be managed in the classroom are defined as a danger to self or others. Some examples include head banging, excessive biting that breaks the skin, hitting, pulling hair, kicking, using objects to inflict harm, etc. Chronic disruptive and challenging behaviors that interfere with classroom experiences and routines in a persistent manner will be handled in the following way (complying with federal and state civic law):

- Conference with family, teachers and director to converse about the concern and shared documentation

- Requests may be made of family to allow outside consultations with a goal of working together to meet the needs of the child and the classroom

- Partnership between home and school to develop an individualized plan to address behavior

- Plan will focus on positive support strategies

- If families do not cooperate or there is not a resolution that works for all parties, the CDL will require a change of services. This step is only taken when all other steps have been exhausted.

-In this event, families are given two weeks' notice to make new arrangements. The CDL director will work with families and share resources to access services

-After the two-week period the child will no longer be enrolled at the CDL

-It is the hope of the CDL that through open communication, shared goals and use of community resources that this is an absolute last resort

## **Arrival/Drop Off Policy**

Child Labs drop off window is 8:30-10:00. Drop off for families utilizing the Extended Day or Core + AM option is 7:30-10:00.

Often teachers are in the building preparing the classrooms for the day prior to 8:30. Please respectfully wait until 8:30 to enter the classrooms.

When dropping off multiple children, please drop off the oldest child first.

We require arrival during the drop off window for the following reasons:

-Separation from families and transitioning to school can be challenging for young children. Arriving during the drop off window provides the opportunity for families to settle children in and connect with classroom teachers. Teachers are available during this window to help children transition to school.

-After 10:00 the teachers are fully engaged in supporting children's experiences and supporting the learning of college students. When children arrive late, teachers cannot help the child transition to school without impacting the rhythm and routines of the school day.

-Teachers are invested in engaging with your child in learning experiences. Arrival by 10:00 allows for your child to participate in all that is planned for their school day.

When making health appointments for your child, we request that you make those appointments for the afternoon. If this is not possible, please make appointments to allow for arrival at Child Labs by 11:00 am. This allows children to have a short period of time to participate in the routines of the day prior to lunch and nap. Arrival at school after the morning exploration, learning and routines have occurred, while also being expected to eat and sleep upon arrival is challenging for the children and the classrooms.

**In extenuating circumstances, please speak to the director.**

An adult must accompany a child into the classroom, help the child settle into their school day, and greet the teacher.

## **Departure/Pick-Up Policy**

Children are required to be picked up and exit the classrooms by the end of their scheduled day (12:30, 4:30, 5:30). Please allow enough transition time to arrive at your child's classroom, greet your child, connect with their teacher briefly about the school day, gather their belongings and exit the classroom by the end of the scheduled day.

When picking up multiple children, please pick up the youngest child first.

When exiting the classroom, please hold your child in your arms or by the hand, walk through the hallways and remain vigilant in the parking lot. Gentle reminder that the Child Labs shares the Human Development Center building with several other UConn programs. When you are entering and exiting the building, please be respectful of the labs, offices and classrooms in the building and encourage your child to walk quietly with you to the parking lot. The hallways and the parking lot are NOT appropriate play spaces for children.

We will release your child only to the people we have your written consent to pick up your child. Please communicate any alternate pick-ups with the teachers prior to the pick-up occurring. Alternate pick-ups will be required to show a picture ID (such as a driver's license) for identification before picking up your child.

We will not release your child to anyone who seems impaired in any way. In these circumstances, teachers are required to consult with the state police to determine the best course of action to ensure the child's safety.

### **Late Pick Up Policy**

You are required to pick up your child at your scheduled pick-up time. Half-day preschool by 12:30, Core Day by 4:30, Core Day +/-Extended Day by 5:30. Failure to pick up by scheduled time will result in a late fee of \$25 for first late pick-up and increases to \$50, \$100 if late pick-ups continue. Continued failure to arrive for pick-up on time may result in expulsion from the program. Fees are imposed uniformly regardless of the reason for the delay or contact made informing teachers of the delay.

### **Dismissal Policy**

The CDL reserves the right to cancel enrollment of a child for non-payment of tuition fees, frequent late arrival for pick-ups or in special circumstances where it is not possible for the program to meet a particular child's or families' individual needs, or when a particular enrollment no longer serves research or training needs. In all instances, we will work with families to strive to find mutually agreeable solutions other than dismissal whenever possible.

### **Inclement Weather and Emergency Closings**

Like all childcare centers and schools for young children, Child Labs has unique circumstances due to the nature of caring for and educating young children. To be open

with children in attendance, and in compliance with state licensing regulations for childcare centers, the state of CT requires that programs for young children have electricity (including heat in cool weather), running water and can maintain, at least the minimum staff to child ratios, always. If at any time Child Labs is without power, heat, running water or not within ratio, we must close. Young children thrive on routine and known expectations and consistent adults. Children in group care have schedule needs unique to their age and development.

Child Labs follow UConn's full day closure schedule

Delayed Openings: If UConn opens on or before 11:00, the Child Labs will open when UConn opens

If UConn opens after 11:00, Child Labs will remain closed for the day. Teaching staff will work remotely.

Early Dismissals: The Child Labs follows UConn's early closing.

All Child Labs employees are UConn faculty, staff or students and therefore can use their discretion when determining if it is safe to travel. Messaging from UConn:

***Keep safety first when traveling:***

- *Always consider your safety first. Weather and road conditions may vary considerably across the state and from one UConn campus to another.*
- *With that in mind, all members of the University community must evaluate the circumstances they face, plan extra time for their commute if necessary, and take other common-sense measures.*
- *Even when the University remains open for business, individuals may appropriately decide not to come to campus or to leave campus early.*
- *In these situations, employees may use a vacation day, personal time, or other accrued time without advance approval, but they must notify their supervisors that they are doing so.*

Any CDL full day closing when UConn does not close for at least part of the day will be made up in June.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance provides the best continuity for children and our college students learning about child development from the children. We understand that circumstances come up that will require children to miss school days due to holidays, cultural events, travel, family time, and illness. Children who are picked up early from school may not

return later that same day. If your child is going to be absent, please communicate with the classroom teachers.

## **Parking**

UConn has provided Child Labs with a small drop-off/pick-up parking lot. This lot can be utilized for short periods of time. There is no all-day parking at Child Labs.

The State of CT Law requires all children to be supervised in cars. No children under 12 can be left unattended in a car. All children need to ride in appropriate child restraint seats. Children need to be buckled into the seat prior to leaving the parking lot even for very short drives. This is a state law for your children's safety.

When in the parking lot, hold children in your arms or by the hand. Watch for other drivers and families walking to their cars.

No playing in the parking lot. The teachers will also review parking lot safety with the older children.

Drive very slowly in and out of the parking lot, being mindful of small children. Do not leave cars idling in the parking lot.

Thank you for keeping our community safe.

## **Entrance**

Everyone will enter the Human Development Center through the main door off the parking lot. Enter Child Labs through the double black door by using your UConn One Card. If you do not have a UConn One Card, speak with the director.

Walk with your child through the hallways to their classroom. Greet the teacher upon arrival to ensure they document your child's attendance.

## **Field Trips/Walks**

Child Labs takes walking field trips around the UConn campus, using sidewalks and crosswalks. Families will be informed anytime children are on a walking field trip with their classroom. Children will sometimes take a field trip with a teacher to The Nest, a room within our building with sensory materials for quiet play when the classroom is overstimulating. Another way we engage in field trips is having vetted groups come to our classrooms to present. Examples include animal rehabilitation, nature centers, and UConn student clubs. Children are always supervised by their teachers during field trips.

Teachers bring first aid supplies, emergency medicine and a phone whenever leaving Child Labs for a walking field trip on campus.

## **Health and Safety Policies/Sick Child Policies**

### **Children's Medical and Enrollment Files**

The Child Labs maintains a file containing each child's enrollment and medical information. This information is kept confidential but is immediately available to administrators and teaching staff with family approval, family, and regulatory authorities (state licensing specialists). All children must have up-to-date family contact information, a yearly health assessment form including vaccinations and a yearly flu vaccine.

All Child Labs professional staff are trained in CPR/First Aid, Medications Administration and aware of health and safety policies.

### **Handwashing and Disinfecting**

Handwashing occurs throughout the day and in the following situations, upon arrival, before serving/eating food, after diapering/bathrooming, after handling body fluids, after handling pets, upon moving from one group to another, after playing in messy materials including water table. Additionally, adults wash hands before and after feeding a child, before and after administering meds, after handling garbage or cleaning. Mouthed toys are cleaned after every use as well as all eating utensils. Classroom materials and surfaces are cleaned throughout the day. Deep cleaning occurs each evening.

Staff wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur. Staff do not use hand washing sinks for bathing children or removing fecal matter.

In situations where sinks are used for food prep and handwashing, sinks are sanitized between uses.

### **Special Health Care Needs**

When necessary, an individual health care plan is created and used by families and teachers under the supervision and guidance of director, nurse consultant, educational consultant and other needed parties (medical doctor, therapist). Such plan will include appropriate care of a child to prevent and respond to a medical or other emergency and shall be signed by the family and teachers.

## **Health Insurance, Health Forms**

If you need any support in learning about health insurance options and finding a primary care physician or other health care provider, Child Labs administration can assist with finding resources. All children in group care in CT are required to have a health form and vaccination record on file prior to enrollment. All children are required to have an unexpired (health forms expire after a year from exam date) health form on file at all times including update vaccination records. All children 6 months and older are required to get an annual flu vaccination. All health forms are kept locked in a file and are considered confidential. All health forms will be reviewed by Child Labs nurse consultant and may be reviewed by state accessors.

## **Screenings**

Child Labs utilizes the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and the Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire for all children within 90 days of enrollment. Families are encouraged to complete these screens as well. Screenings are utilized throughout the program as an opportunity to learn about individual children as well as a learning tool for UConn college students enrolled in coursework at Child Labs.

## **Infectious Illness**

Despite all efforts, children in group care will inevitably acquire colds, viruses, and illnesses in the group setting. Children with minor illnesses such as a cold are NOT excluded from attendance as long as they do not present symptoms requiring exclusion and can participate in the school day, including outdoor activities.

In the event that a child is under-immunized and a vaccine preventable illness occurs in the program, the child will need to be excluded from the program until one of the following occurs: the child is vaccinated and documentation is provided, or the Department of Public Health declares that the illness has passed and it is safe for the child to return.

**All children 6 months of age and older are required to have an annual flu vaccination and provide documentation by the end of December each year.**

## **Exclusion for Illness**

Children need to be able to participate in the school routines including outdoor time to be well enough to attend school. Families will be called to pick up children if they are not well enough to participate in all aspects of the school day.

Exclusion is required under the following circumstances:

-Temperature of 100 or above and/or symptoms such as lethargy or irritability, excessive tiredness, headaches, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours without medication and returning to normal routines including food routines/eating to be well enough to return to the program

-Discolored drainage from eye, can return when symptom free or in case of diagnosed conjunctivitis when have been on medication for 24 hours

-Suspicious rash or lesions, may return with doctor's note clearing them for group care, (this does not include diaper rash, food rash, prickly heat rash, poison ivy rash)

Other circumstances for exclusion due to illness:

-Chicken pox- lasts approximately 7 days, all lesions must be crusted and dry

-Impetigo

-Ringworm

-Scabies

-Coxsackie virus (hand foot and mouth)- lesions must be crusted and dry

-Pin worm- can return 48 hours after medication is given

-Diarrhea- this does not apply to food/drug allergies if can be contained by diaper or child can make it to toilet, if child is uncomfortable and can't participate in routines family will be called to pick up child. Diarrhea of more than 5 days must be evaluated by physician to determine the cause

-Strep throat- may return once have been on medication for 24 hours and all criteria for participation is met (fever free, etc.)

-Head lice

Please notify Child Labs if:

-Your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease/illness

-If your child has been ill over the weekend

-If medication has been administered before school

Children requiring acetaminophen, ibuprofen or other antipyretic to maintain functionality throughout the day are considered too ill to be at the center

## **When a Child Becomes Ill During the Day**

Teachers are trained to recognize common symptoms of childhood illness. Teachers will evaluate children upon arrival and throughout the day. Many illnesses of childhood come on suddenly. If a child becomes ill during the day, teachers will contact families. When it is required for the child to be excluded from group care, families will be required to arrive within 30 minutes of contact from Child Labs regarding a child's suspected illness. If family cannot be contacted, Child Labs will use the emergency contacts provided. In the event of extreme, acute illness, Child Labs will call 911.

The Child Labs classroom teachers and director are not medical professionals. We make decisions with the best interest of individual children and the class group in mind. Please be respectful of the decisions we make regarding exclusion. For the safety of all, Child Labs director and your child's teacher make the ultimate decision regarding whether a child needs to be excluded or not based upon our policies and the information we have available to us using observation of the child and the tools we have (thermometer). These decisions are not made lightly but are made in the interest of the group care dynamic, the ability of staff to meet the needs of individual children as well as the group and to keep our classrooms as healthy as possible.

## **Medications**

CDL professional teachers receive medications and injectables trainings on the required schedule. Oral medications, prescription topical medications, as well as topical medications with antibiotics can only be given to children with medical permission from the doctor. Child Labs must receive a new, unopened box of the required medication (for any oral antibiotics, pharmacy needs to split dose and we are required to keep the medication at Child Labs during the duration of its use) and the Medication Authorization Form completed by the prescribing doctor. We are not able to administer homeopathic remedies.

The following can be administered with parental permission (no doctor's note required). All must be sent to Child Labs in a new, unopened container. Appropriate documentation must be completed with the classroom teacher, and we cannot accept any sprays. These items need to be handed directly to teachers and cannot be stored in children's cubbies or pockets.

-Diaper cream

-Lotion insect repellent

-Lotion sunscreen

-Lotion

-Lip balm

### **Medication practices at Child Labs**

All medications, except those listed above or emergency medication (example Epi-Pen) must be stored in a locked container out of the reach of children. All medications will be stored out of reach of children.

Before administering medications, teachers will receive required trainings, verify the right child, right medication, right dose, right time and by the right method. All medications given will be documented, and families will be notified.

Medications are labeled with child's name, and the completed prescription label including date filled, recommendations from doctor, expiration date or end of prescription order.

Families will be immediately notified of any medication error and in writing no more than 72 hours after the medication error occurred. Significant medication errors shall also be reported to the OEC by telephone and in writing no later than the next business day.

### **Safe Sleep Policy for Infants under 12 months**

General Sleep Arrangements • Infant Position: Infants shall be placed in a supine (back) position for sleeping unless a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse provides written documentation specifying a medical reason for an alternative sleep position or alternate piece of equipment. • Turning Over: When an infant can easily turn over from their back to their stomach, they will still be placed on their back to sleep but will be allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer once they have turned over. • Approved Sleep Surfaces: Infants shall only be placed to sleep in a well-constructed, freestanding crib or other equipment specifically designed for infant sleeping and appropriate for the particular child. • Prohibited Sleep Surfaces: No infant shall be placed to sleep on a sofa, bed, couch, soft mattress, waterbed, or other soft surfaces. Additionally, infants shall not be put to sleep or allowed to remain asleep in a car seat, infant carrier, swing or any place that is not specifically designed to be an infant bed unless a medical provider has given written documentation for its use. • Swaddling is not permitted unless a medical provider provides written documentation with specific instructions and a timeframe for swaddling. Crib and Equipment Safety • Mattress and Sheets: The mattress must be snug-fitting and covered by a tightly fitted sheet. • No Loose Items: No items, including but not limited to, pillows, soft bumpers, toys, and blankets (including weighted blankets, sleepers, or swaddles\*) or other pieces of equipment designed for sleeping, shall be placed with an infant in a crib or hung over the side. The only

exception is a pacifier without attachments unless a medical provider has given written documentation for the use of another item. • No Attached Objects: No toys or objects shall be attached to the cribs or other sleeping equipment. • Clothing: Bibs and garments with ties or hoods must be removed from infants before placing them down to sleep. • Jewelry: No child under three years of age shall have access to teething necklaces, bracelets, or other jewelry that could present a choking or strangulation hazard. Supervision and Documentation • Observation: Infants will be physically observed by a provider or staff member at least every fifteen minutes to assess their breathing, color, temperature, and comfort. • Parent Acknowledgment: These sleep arrangement standards will be discussed with parents prior to enrollment and reviewed as needed throughout their child's time at the facility. Documentation will be maintained to confirm that parents have been informed of these policies. \*

## **Outdoor Play**

The children at Child Labs spend time outdoors in all types of weather. Child Labs provides rainsuits, snowsuits, boots and mittens for children to wear to keep them safe and comfortable in all types of outdoor play situations in our outdoor classrooms/playgrounds. Teaching staff monitor the weather and modify the amount of time children are outside based on the temperature, windchill, sun, etc. All children spend at least 60 minutes outside each day, depending on weather conditions and group ages. The older children spend much of their time exploring the outside classroom when the weather is appropriate. On an average day, children enrolled in the Core Day at Child Labs will spend approximately 1-5 hours outdoors. Emergent curriculum is planned for outdoor spaces just as it is for our indoor spaces. Being outdoors allows children to develop a connection with nature and the natural world. It provides children with opportunities for large motor play. It provides children with the experience of building resiliency and working through discomfort, skills that will support them as they move through life.

## **Safety, Accidents and Injuries**

Throughout childhood it is important to allow children to safely explore and discover at both home and at school. Scratches, bumps, pinches, and bites do happen and are all part of experiencing the world. In the event of slight injuries or minor accidents at the CDL, a staff member will administer first aid, and an accident report will be written as soon as possible and shared with families via messaging ap prior to pick up that school day. If a more serious injury occurs, an attempt will be made to notify families immediately, and necessary steps will be taken to obtain immediate medical attention. Your child's

emergency form will serve as a guide during these times. Please make sure to keep that form up to date.

Additionally:

- Emergency plans are posted at the end of this handbook and in all classrooms
- CDL professional staff are certified in CPR and First Aid and will provide this care if needed
- Teachers will complete an accident report which will be shared with the family and kept on file
- Teachers are trained in universal precautions and will take these measures anytime body fluids are involved
- A site safety checklist is completed monthly to ensure the safety of the center
- First aid boxes are kept in all classrooms and brought to outdoor spaces and checked monthly

## **Telephones**

The center has working telephones in all classrooms and posted emergency numbers at each phone for emergency personnel and poison control.

## **Diapering Procedures**

- Changing tables in each room are used only for the children enrolled in that classroom.
- Diapers are checked at least every 2 hours and changed whenever soiled or wet. Teachers check for and change wet or soiled diapers when a child wakes up from a nap.
- The time, number, and nature of changes are recorded. Parents must provide disposable diapers or follow the "Cloth Diaper Protocol" below. Children are washed and dried with individual washing materials, such as single-use disposable wipes (also supplied by parents) during each diaper change.
- Diaper changes are recorded for parent(s)/guardian(s), including information on the number of changes, BM's and/or any diarrhea.
- The hands of staff and all children, including infants, are washed thoroughly with soap and running water before and after each changing. Infants' hands may be cleaned with a wipe. Individual paper towels are used to dry hands.
- The changing table, or diapering surface, is intact, impervious to water, and used for no other purpose. It is adequately covered by a disposable covering. After each use, the surface is disinfected. Soiled, disposable diapers and

other contaminated materials are bagged and placed in a “hands-free” waterproof container with a tight-fitting cover and plastic liner. The container is emptied and sanitized at least daily.

- Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit, or blood is “double-bagged” in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items and usually sent home, since rinsing or laundering these items at the Center could spread germs and disease. However, if any clothing contaminated with body secretions is laundered at the Center, it is done so in hot water with a suitable amount of bleach to disinfect. Parents are asked to **always** have a change of clothing at the Center. Clothing should be clearly marked with names.

### **Cloth Diapering Procedures**

- Parents will provide a “hands free,” airtight container with a washable liner bag.
- Parents will provide all-in-one diapers that have a waterproof cover and an absorbent inner liner and built in closures (such as BumGenius Brand). They are fastened with Velcro.
- After every change, the soiled diaper will be placed into plastic bags and then into the airtight container.
- Soiled diapers and bag liner will be taken home by parents every night.

Staff will sanitize the container every evening

### **MAINTAINING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**

- Staff use barriers such as disposable gloves and practice Universal Precautions to reduce the possibility of infectious body fluids coming in contact with an opening in their skin or mucous membranes.
- Spills of body fluids are immediately cleaned with detergent followed by a water rinsing. When cleaning is complete, staff sanitize surfaces by cleaning with detergent, rinsing with water, and then disinfecting.
- All carpets and rugs will be cleaned by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant and requesting a shampoo or steam cleaning by University of Connecticut Facilities personnel.
- Ventilation and sanitation, rather than sprays, air freshening chemicals, or deodorizers, control odors in inhabited areas of the facility and in custodial closets.

### **Willow and Dogwood Shoe Policies**

To ensure the cleanliness of the floors where infants play at all times, the Dogwood and Willow rooms are shoe free. Before walking on surfaces that infants use specifically for

play, all adults and children should remove their shoes or cover their shoes with disposable booties. If children or staff are barefoot in such an area, their feet must be visibly clean.

### **Pets**

Any pets located in or visiting CDL are certified by a licensed veterinarian as being free of illness or any other hazards to children. They are handled by children only with close supervision. They are cared for in a safe, sanitary manner. Any class pets have a care plan in place.

### **Transportation**

Child Labs does not provide transportation.

### **Clothing**

Children engage in messy learning and play. Children should come to school in clothing appropriate for active play and the weather. Non-skid, toe-covered shoes should be worn to school. Please keep changes of clothing at school for your child in case of an accident or need to change.

### **Sunblock/Insect Repellant**

Lotion sunblock and insect repellant can be provided in a new, unopened container labeled with your child's name. NO SPRAYS. Please apply lotions prior to drop-off; teachers will reapply as needed and for afternoon outdoor play. All lotions must be given directly to a teacher, and appropriate forms must be filled out giving your permission for its use.

### **Food**

In order to ensure the safety of all of the children at the Child Labs, including those with life-threatening food allergies, the Child Labs is committed to being a "nut free" center.

#### **The following foods CANNOT be sent for lunches or snacks:**

- **Nuts**
- **Nut butters**
- **Foods containing nuts (breads, granola bars, yogurt etc.)**

**Should any of these foods be in the child's lunch, we are unable to offer them to your child.**

Candy and soda are not allowed at Child Labs.

Teachers model healthy eating habits and a positive attitude towards a variety of foods. Families' food choices for their children are valued.

For children 1 and older, families provide lunch, and Child Labs provides 2 school snacks.

For children under 1 year, families provide all the food for infants.

At Child Labs, we strive to promote healthy attitudes toward food. We do not use food to calm children or to encourage appropriate behavior. Families choose what foods to send for a child to eat, the child chooses what order to eat their lunch foods and how much food they consume.

Guidelines for lunch foods for children 1 and older:

- Classrooms can warm previously cooked foods in the microwave for 90 seconds or less.
- All foods should come to school prepared for consumption, fully cooked and cut into small pieces when appropriate.
- All foods being warmed should be sent to school in a glass container
- Child Labs provides utensils
- Water will be available to all children
- Foods served to toddlers must be ½ inch square or smaller

School snack

- Snack is served in the AM at drop-off and in the PM at nap wake-up
- Snack foods include 2 food groups (ex. Dairy and fruit)
- Examples of snack foods offered: cereal, fresh fruit, yogurt, cheese, crackers, milk

Guidelines for feeding children under 1:

- Families provide all foods
- Breast milk can be stored in classroom freezers or brought daily
- Formula must be provided in an unopened factory sealed container
- Infant foods should be provided in factory sealed containers, or a note should be on record describing families choice to send "home cooked meals" for infants
- Bottles/foods are warmed slowly in a slow cooker
- Foods served to infants must be ¼ inch square or smaller
- We cannot offer solid foods or fruit juice to children under 6 months

Breast Milk

- Breast feeding in all Child Labs spaces is welcome
- A quiet family room (HDC 114) is available
- Child Labs teachers will work with families to coordinate breast feeding as much as possible
- Breast milk can be brought in ready-to-feed, sanitary containers (bottles) or in individual storage containers for the freezer
- Breast milk and bottles should be labeled with child's name and date expressed
- Breast milk will be stored in fridge for up to 48 hours (24 if previously frozen)
- Breast milk will be stored in freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for up to 3 months
- Breast milk will be slowly warmed in water no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Breast milk will be gently mixed, not shaken to preserve all components
- Breast milk will be discarded after 2 hours if not consumed or refrigerated

#### Formula Feeding

- Clean bottles should be provided daily, enough bottles should be provided for the day, and labeled with child's name
- Formula must be in a factory sealed container and labeled with child's name
- Bottles will be warmed slowly in water no warmer than 120 degrees Fahrenheit

#### All bottle feeding

- No solids in bottles without healthcare providers written instructions and reason for medical intervention
- Feeding for all infants is documented in ProCare app

#### Special feeding plans

- Should any child require a medically necessary special feeding plan by a health care provider, documentation of all foods given will be kept and shared with families daily

#### **Birthdays**

We know that birthdays are special milestones in the life of a child. As we have children enrolled with serious food allergies and food restrictions, and families with various practices around celebrations, we do not celebrate birthdays with food or parties at school. We will acknowledge your child's birthday and ask that you keep the celebrations for home.

## **Nap Policy**

Regular sleep is needed for growth, development, and self-regulation. All children will be provided with a quiet space to rest each day.

### **Infants**

Younger infants are on individualized napping schedules. They sleep in cribs. We follow a safe sleep policy including putting all infants on their backs and using sleep sack wearable blankets.

### **Toddlers**

Nap time is approximately 2 hours. Toddlers will be allowed to sleep for the entire 2 hours. If a toddler awakens on their own, they will get up and play quietly.

### **Preschoolers**

All children are provided with a cot after lunch. Children are encouraged to rest quietly and sleep if needed. Even older children who do not need to sleep midday, benefit from quiet down time on their cots. Any child who falls asleep on their cot will be allowed to sleep. Preschoolers who do not sleep, rest for a period of time and are provided with quiet materials to explore independently. After a period of time, non-nappers explore calming activities in the classroom while allowing their sleeping peers to rest.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy**

All Child Labs staff are required to attend Mandated Reporter training and are Mandated Reporters. CDL is required by law to report concerns of abuse and neglect. The goal of these reports is to keep children safe and provide adults with necessary supports.

Child Abuse includes:

- Any non-accidental physical or mental injury (shaking, beating, burning)
- Any form of sexual abuse
- Neglect of a child (failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, supervision)
- Emotional abuse (behavior that impairs a child's psychological growth)
- At risk behavior (putting a child in a situation which may result in harm)

Child Abuse is defined as a child who has had:

- Non-accidental physical injuries inflicted upon them
- Injuries which are at variance with history given of them
- Is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment, such as but not limited to malnutrition, sexual exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment

Child neglect is defined by a child who has been:

- Abandoned
- Denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally or morally
- Allowed to live under circumstances, conditions or associations injurious to his well-being (CT statutes 46b-120)

Child Labs staff responsibilities:

Mandated by law to report any suspicion that a child is being abused, neglected or at risk as soon as there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect may have occurred. Reports are made to the Department of Children and Families hotline, and a reporter form is completed within 12 hours of suspecting abuse. Teachers report the suspected abuse to the director for support with this process.

Child Labs has zero tolerance for abuse and neglect and will immediately implement action if there is an allegation against a staff member. The administration will protect the child and immediately notify the family. Any staff member accused of abuse will be immediately removed from their position until the results of DCF's investigation. Based on the results of the investigation, a decision will be made regarding the ability to return to work or not.

Provisions for informing families of abuse or neglect policy:

This policy will be outlined in the Family Handbook provided to all families and available on our website. A copy of this policy will be posted on the Family Board.

When an accusation of abuse or neglect by a staff member is made, the Director must immediately notify the family that a report has been made to DCF. Health care providers may need to talk to a child's family to access the cause of the child's injuries and offer support and guidance.

The Child Labs will:

- Ensure that all staff are informed of this policy, of their duty as mandated reporters and that failure to report can result in a fine \$500-\$2500

- Submit required information for background check, including fingerprints, to the office of Early Childhood (done through BCIS)
- Following a background check, will not employ any staff with a record rendering them unsafe to work with children
- Provide staff with trainings on preventing and identifying abuse or neglect; staff participate in mandated reporting as required by law
- Cooperate with the Department of Children and Families and State Police in any investigation involving the center’s families and/or personnel

Any person/institution or agency reporting in good faith is immune from any liability, civil or criminal (17-38(a)h). There is a penalty for NOT reporting, fine of \$500-\$2500 (17-38a(b))

## Emergencies

### Emergency Preparedness Plans

Facility Name	UConn Child Development Laboratories
Facility Address	6 Alethia Drive Storrs, CT 06269
Facility Phone	860-486-4490
Facility Main Contact	Marianne Legassey, Executive Directo
Emergency Kit Locations	Each classroom has 2 fully stocked kits, 1 located by door to outside play spaces
Number of Children	66

### Emergency Contacts

Fire Rescue (911)	Cpt. Steve Garwin	860-486-4925	uconnfire@uconn.edu
Police (911)	Cf. Gene Lobotain	860-486-4800	PDStartTeam@uconn.edu
Fire (911)	Cpt. Steve Garwin	860-486-4925	uconnfire@uconn.edu
Hospital	Windham Hospital	860-456-9116	
Poison Control		800-222-1222	www.poison.org
Office of Emergency Management	William Shea	860-486-5174	oem@uconn.edu
Facilities	Operations Center	860-486-3113	FO@uconn.edu

### Evacuation

In case of need to evacuate our site, the following procedures will be followed:

Evacuation routes/exits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation and exits are designated and posted by the director and classroom teachers</li> <li>• Teachers check that routes are posted during monthly safety check</li> <li>• Children are cared for on the Child Labs section of the building and are not permitted down the central hallway or lever level. Exits are checked regularly to ensure opening. Each classroom has a door that exits out of the building.</li> </ul>
Evacuating Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will be evacuated together by classroom; teachers follow each classrooms' evacuation procedures</li> <li>• Each infant room has an emergency evacuation crib designed expressly for evacuation.</li> <li>• Teachers take attendance prior to evacuation and when safely out of the building.</li> <li>• Ratios will be maintained</li> </ul>
Notification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once all children are safely evacuated, 911 will be called by teacher or director</li> <li>• Families will be notified of the evacuation by classroom teachers/director</li> </ul>
Emergency Kit Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers evacuate with emergency kits and medications</li> <li>• Teachers bring emergency carts (food, water, diapers, books)</li> <li>• Teachers take emergency binders with them</li> <li>• Teachers take personal cell phones</li> <li>• Quiet activities for children (paper crayons, books)</li> </ul>
Evacuation Sites	<p>Immediate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dogwood and Willow rooms evacuate to parking lot</li> <li>• Maple, Sassafras and Birch evacuate to playgrounds</li> </ul> <p>Out of Neighborhood (Explosion, flooding) Evacuate to Graduate Storrs Hotel 855 Bolton Road, Storrs CT 06269</p> <p>UConn Art Building (875 Coventry Road) is secondary site If required to move off campus, UConn will provide transportation to an alternative site and families will be notified; teachers and director will remain with children</p>

Transportation to Evacuation Site	Walk and pushed in evacuation cribs, less than a quarter mile away
Release and Reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When cleared by emergency personnel</li> <li>• When family or authorized contact arrive and show appropriate identification</li> </ul>

### Shelter in Place

In case of the need to stay put due to a tornado, other-weather related conditions or notification from authorities the following procedures will be followed:

Decision	As directed by emergency personnel, UConn notification system, local official, weather forecast, common sense
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will be taken to interior rooms/halls of the Child Labs away from doors and windows</li> <li>• Teachers will pull down shades, covering windows</li> <li>• Infant teachers will use evacuation cribs</li> <li>• Teachers will take attendance before and once sheltered in place</li> </ul>
Emergency Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency kit with food (including formula), toys, and water are stored in each classroom</li> <li>• Teachers will bring classroom first aid kits, emergency medicines and emergency contact binders</li> <li>• Teachers will bring personnel cell phones</li> <li>• Materials to occupy children (books, paper crayons, etc.)</li> <li>• Tape to seal the room in case of a contaminated scenario</li> </ul>
Notification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once all children are safely sheltered, 911 will be called by teacher/director</li> <li>• Families will be notified of the sheltering by teachers/director</li> <li>• Families will be notified when immediate threat has passed by teachers/director</li> </ul>
Release and Reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When cleared by emergency personnel</li> <li>• When families or authorized contact arrives and shows appropriate identification</li> </ul>

## Active Threat

In case of need to stay safe due to an active shooter threat the following procedures will be followed:

Decision	As directed by emergency personnel, UConn notification system, director, information from officials, common sense
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each classroom has an emergency lockdown place in the room known by all Child Labs professional staff, UConn Fire/Rescue and Police</li> <li>• All children and staff will move to the lock down space, teacher will take attendance and close the door, door locks immediately from outside, door will be barricaded by furniture and children will be moved away from the door</li> <li>• Lights will be turned off</li> </ul>
Emergency Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency kits including food, water, diapers, and quiet materials to occupy children (books, paper crayons)</li> <li>• Teachers will have personnel cell phones on silent</li> <li>• Teachers will provide children with pacifiers or lollipops to help them remain quiet</li> </ul>
Notification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once all children are safely sheltered 911 called by teachers/director</li> <li>• Families notified once the immediate threat has passed</li> </ul>
Release and Reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When cleared by emergency personnel</li> <li>• When family or authorized pick up arrives and provides appropriate identification</li> </ul>

## Multi-Hazard

In case of need to stay safe due to a multi hazard threat the following procedures will be followed

Decision	As directed by emergency personnel, UConn notification system, director, information from officials, common sense
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each classroom has an emergency lockdown place in the room known by all Child Labs professional staff, UConn Fire/Rescue and Police</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children and staff will move to the lock down space, teacher will take attendance and close the door, door locks immediately from outside, door will be barricaded by furniture and children will be moved away from the door</li> <li>• Lights will be turned off</li> </ul>
Emergency Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency kits including food, water, diapers, quiet materials to occupy children (books, paper crayons)</li> <li>• Teachers will have personnel cell phones on silent</li> <li>• Teachers will provide children with pacifiers or lollipops to help them remain quiet</li> </ul>
Notification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once all children are safely sheltered 911 called by teachers/director</li> <li>• Families notified once the immediate threat has passed</li> </ul>
Release and Reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When cleared by emergency personnel</li> <li>• When family or authorized pick up arrives and provides appropriate identification</li> </ul>

**Weather Emergency with Prior notice**

Follow early closing for inclement weather procedures

**Injury to a Child**

- Professional teaching staff member will perform first aid and comfort child
- An additional staff member calls 911 if appropriate, then family

**Illness of a Child**

- Remove child from group setting to cot if needed
- Make child comfortable
- Additional staff calls 911 if needed, then calls family
- Teacher remains with child until family arrives
- If family can't be reached, treatment will be obtained on emergency basis, child will be transported by ambulance if needed; a teacher will remain with child until family arrives

**Fire Drill Procedures**

Willow and Dogwood Rooms

Exit	Exit classroom door into main hallway, turn right, exit through door, down ramp to sidewalk next to parking lot
Alternate Exit	Exit classroom to porch, exit porch through gate to parking lot
Any other location	Exit from closest door and meet up with group in parking lot
Staff Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional teachers check all areas of classroom and are last outdoors, making sure door closes</li> <li>Bring attendance (app in phone) and emergency contact book</li> <li>Bring emergency medications</li> <li>Once evacuated take attendance</li> </ul>
Staff behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take fire drills seriously</li> <li>Use calm, firm voice</li> <li>Pick up reluctant children</li> <li>Do not stop for coats and shoes</li> <li>Return to building once “all clear” is called and alarm is off</li> </ul>
True Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow directions from fire/rescue personnel</li> <li>Notify families</li> </ul>

Maple, Sassafras, Birch Rooms

Exit	Exit classroom door to playground, meet at fence
Alternate Exit	Exit classroom into hallway, head to the closest door to parking lot
Any other location	Exit from closest door and meet up with class
Staff responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional teachers check all areas of classroom and is last outdoor, making sure door closes</li> <li>Bring attendance (app in phone) and emergency contact book</li> <li>Bring emergency medications</li> <li>Once evacuated take attendance</li> </ul>
Staff Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take fire drills seriously</li> <li>Use calm, firm voice</li> <li>Pick up reluctant children</li> <li>Do not stop for coats and shoes</li> <li>Return to building once “all clear” is called and alarm is off</li> </ul>
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