Family Handbook

Child Development Program
Pre-Kindergarten and School-Age Programs

SFUSD
SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Revised November 2007
Tips For Using This Handbook

We have arranged this booklet so that you can easily find answers to questions you may have about our program. We are sure you will want to keep this on hand as a reference guide.

The best way to find the information you need is to skim the Table of Contents. For example, you may need to know:

❖ How can I help my child learn? See Chapter 3.
❖ What do I do if I have an emergency and cannot pick up my child on time? See Chapter 4.
❖ What do I do if I need to change the hours my child receives services at CDP? See Chapter 5.
❖ What do I do if my child needs medication or requires a special diet? See Chapters 4 and 6.

Reading this handbook you will also find some administrative language that may be unfamiliar at first. We have provided a short glossary of terms to help you find your way.

**Contract Hours** – Refers to the number of contractual hours your family qualifies for based on the parent’s/guardian’s work, school or training hours.

**Notice of Action (NOA)** – This is a written statement for approval or denial of services. A NOA is also used for re-certification or to update your application, when the need or eligibility requirements are no longer being met, or the fee or amount of service needs to be modified.

**Parent/Guardian Contract** – Document signed by every parent/guardian agrees to certain contract responsibilities.

**One last note** – you will find mention of various forms and documents throughout this book. If you need help understanding the term, just ask the Site Manager at your child’s Center. He/she will be happy to help you.
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CHAPTER 1 Program Description

Overview
The Child Development Program, established in 1943, is the largest provider of early child care and educational services for young children in the City and County of San Francisco. We also provide School Age programs, which provide after school care and education.

Mission
The mission of the Child Development Program is to provide a high-quality Early Childhood Education Program for children in a safe, caring, and nurturing environment that promotes each child’s social-emotional, physical, and cognitive growth and competency through appropriate experiences. The program validates the cultural and linguistic heritage of each child and supports families in maintaining their children’s physical and mental health.

Our Children
We serve approximately 4,600 children in our infant/toddler, pre-kindergarten and school-age programs. Our children reflect San Francisco’s rich ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity.

Our Parents and Families
Our children’s parents/guardians are working, attending school or are in job training and meet federal and state income guidelines. They make valuable contributions to our program as decision-makers and volunteers.

Our Centers and Services
We operate sites throughout the City. Our programs are based on a sliding-fee scale determined by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division. All Centers are open five days a week 7:30a.m. -6:00p.m throughout the year. Center hours vary from 9-12 hours daily. (Ex. 7:30a.m. – 6:00p.m.) Some sites we offer a full cost, Tuition Based Program.

Our Funding and License
The California Department of Education Child Development Division of the San Francisco Unified School District, the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program and parent/guardian fees funds our program’s instructional services and supports.

A HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW IT WILL NOT MATTER
WHAT MY BANK ACCOUNT WAS, THE SORT OF HOUSE
I LIVED IN OR THE KIND OF CAR I DROVE...
BUT THE WORLD MAYBE DIFFERENT BECAUSE
I WAS IMPORTANT IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD

Kathy Davis
Each of our pre-school and some of our school-age sites is licensed by the Department of Social Services; Community Care Licensing.

Non-discrimination Policy
The San Francisco Unified School District Child Development Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender, color, or ethnic origin in the administration of education policies and opportunities. CDP welcomes the enrollment of children with disabilities, understands the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make reasonable accommodations for such children, and implements those accommodations. CDP refrains from religious instruction or worship.

SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
The mission of the San Francisco Unified School District is to provide each child with an equal opportunity to succeed by promoting intellectual growth, creativity, self discipline, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, civic responsibility, economic competence, physical and mental health so that each child can achieve to his or her maximum ability. In order to achieve this mission, the Board of Education has adopted the following goals:

1. To improve teaching and learning to enhance the academic achievement of all students.

2. To improve staff, parent, and community participation in the educational process.

3. To maintain school environments that are safe, secure and attractive.

4. To build a school environment that is fully integrated in all its programs and activities and provides equal opportunity for all students.

5. To improve and expand the Early Childhood Education Program and integrate it into the K-12 Program.

6. To increase and expand inter-agency collaboration to better serve our students.

A MAN WHO HAS NO IMAGINATION HAS NO WINGS.
Mohammed Ali
Excellence For All: Goal 9

Enhance early childhood education so that all children entering kindergarten in SFUSD, regardless of race or ethnicity, or of English Language Learner or non-English Language Learner status will possess the tools and skills necessary to be successful in school.

Objectives:

9.1 (Success) The District will provide meaningful activities for preschool-age children in SFUSD’s Child Development Program so that these children, including those in the State and Title I Preschool and the District full-day preschool program, can be more successful.

9.2 (Literacy) Seventy-five percent of the four-year-old children in the District’s preschool programs will master the literacy objectives defined by the Child Development Preschool standards.

9.3 (Transition) The District will develop and implement measures to facilitate the transition to kindergarten of all children entering SFUSD schools.

9.4 (Program) The Early Childhood Education staff will identify appropriate program and materials that will enhance the instructional program.

Teaching Philosophy
The Child Development Program values teaching practices, which enhance the development of children’s learning. We join the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Child Development Division of the California Department of Education, and other state and nationally recognized education leaders in promoting and implementing this philosophy.

Our classroom environments provide the structure and space for children to acquire the thinking, social and emotional skills they need through meaningful interaction with other children and staff and independent learning experiences. Environments are designed to reflect children’s age, language, culture, physical and development needs.
Our intention is to develop children’s life skills, including their self-esteem, positive social and emotional health, and ability to interact constructively with peers and
adults. Our practices are designed to match our children’s culture, language and age.

Our curriculum emphasizes acquisition of knowledge in the areas of language literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, visual and performing arts, health and physical education.

Our programs provide a balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and individual, small and large group learning opportunities. Activities include reading, art, dramatic play, small and gross motor activities, indoor and outdoor play, construction, nature exploration and field trips.

Our staff’s relationships with children, families and each other promote healthy communication, ongoing involvement, and mutual caring and support.

Teaching Staff
Our Centers bring together an exceptional staff. Many become the “extended family” of our children, even after students have entered elementary, middle and high school. Our teaching team includes: site managers responsible for directing each Center’s programs, teachers certified in early childhood education, and paraprofessionals who assist in the classrooms. We offer a professional development program that teaches innovative instructional strategies and promotes excellence among our entire staff.

Other Professional Services
Other professional staff also support your child’s health and learning. Our nurse practitioner provides on-site observation concerning your child’s health. If your child should need to see a doctor, the nurse practitioner can refer you to a health care agency. CDP staff also includes a team of social workers. They help children and families develop skills to cope with social or emotional difficulties. They also assist by providing a link to the Community Resource and by observing children with special needs and coordinating meetings with parents/guardians. All staff receives ongoing asthmas and lead poisoning training.

Assessments & Portfolios
Monitoring your child’s progress in the classroom is important. Staff maintain ongoing assessments and portfolios for your child throughout the year. At least twice a year (more often if you wish), staff share this information with you through teacher conferences. At these conferences, the teacher will discuss your child’s progress in the Center and ways in which you can support your child’s growth at home.

THE ART OF TEACHING IS THE ART OF ASSISTING DISCOVERY.
Mark Van Doren
The Child Development Program operates:

- 36 full or part day centers that are open 12 months a year
- 17 part day programs funded by State PreSchool and Title 1, 10 month only
- Title 1 / Headstart combination full day programs, 10 month only
- Pre-school for All part-day preschool programs at several elementary school sites and at many SFUSD centers
- Tuition – based, i.e. non – subsidized, care is available at many centers.
- After School care is available at 29 centers, 12 months a year
- The Child Development Centers are located in every neighborhood in the city.
- Children range in age from birth to 10 years.

Program Quality
The San Francisco Unified School District’s Child Development Program has a contractual agreement with the California Department of Education, Child Development Division. We are required to complete an annual self-evaluation process. From this self-evaluation, program action plans for improvement are developed and implemented. State consultants review our program every 4 years. The Child Development Program provides top quality educational services, including:

- An environment which supports children’s opportunities for learning
- A curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, involve active learning and takes into account information gained from an assessment of each child
- Trained, knowledgeable, and caring site personnel who facilitate children’s learning
- A Parent/Site Personnel Partnership which acknowledges a joint responsibility for the education of the children
- Administrators who provide the leadership and support to ensure a high quality program for children and families that is developmentally and culturally appropriate

Opportunities for Family Involvement

Family involvement is crucial to your child’s development. From the time of our initial interview with you, we make every effort to get to know you and your child. We encourage you to communicate with you child’s CDP teachers, social workers, administrators or the CDP’s nurse. As a decision-maker in your child’s education, you’ll find we provide numerous opportunities for you to participate. Family members can:
Join site advisory councils. The advisory council for each site is called the Center Policy Advisory Council (CPAC). CPAC is composed of parents/guardians, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff and community members in the neighborhood of the Center. Together they form a group that helps maintain a quality program responsive to the needs of the community. You are welcome and encouraged to participate by attending the monthly meetings and getting involved.

Serve on District-wide committees. The District-wide committee is called the District Policy Advisory Council (DPAC). DPAC is composed of one parent/guardian from each of the SFUSD Child Development Centers and meets regularly to review policies and provide input for prospective changes. An Executive Board is selected from the DPAC to meet monthly with central office administration to monitor the program and to address any concerns brought before it by family members or guardians.

Volunteer in the Classroom. Your skills and expertise in Center activities are encouraged and appreciated. To volunteer you can help in the classroom, prepare materials for the school, serve as a chaperon on field trips, make presentations about your place of work or cultural/family traditions, share your expertise in special areas like cooking or crafts, help with school clean-up days, or lend a hand in painting, repairs or gardening.

Participate in CDP workshops. We offer parent workshops, on literacy assistance and other services to help you help your child develop and learn. Workshops, events and children’s programs are available throughout the year.

LEARNING STAMPS
YOU WITH ITS MOMENTS.
CHILDHOOD
LEARNING IS MADE UP OF MOMENTS. IT ISN’T STEADY. IT’S A PULSE.
Eudora Welty
How Children Learn from Our Activities

Infants and toddlers use all their senses to explore. They touch, smell, taste, look and listen to things around them. They develop their bodies by crawling and then walking. When you see toddlers playing with wooden puzzles, or stacking colorful plastic rings one atop the other, they are learning to identify colors, shapes and weights. They are also developing physical coordination and control.

In their pre-kindergarten years, children learn independence and explore their creativity through activities such as making representational drawing with paint, markers or crayons. During this period they learn that pictures are symbols of actual people, animals, things and places. These objects are symbols, similar in shape to the objects they represent. This is the beginning of symbolic thinking. Little by little they become more able to use abstract symbols to voice their thoughts and feelings. This prepares them for the concept that letters are symbols for sounds and numbers are symbols of quantity.

School-age children participate in enrichment activities and projects that complement their school curriculum. In keeping with our emphasis on literacy, we provide a “print-rich” environment to help children develop their reading, comprehension and communication skills. We also encourage their natural curiosity by helping them design individual projects focusing on particular topics.

How Children Learn from Our Environment

We take great care to create a place where your child feels comfortable. We encourage children to explore the toys, games and other materials independently and in-group activities.

We arrange the materials on shelves that are clearly labeled and encourage children to put things away when they are through playing. This teaches them to be courteous and to cooperate with others.

Our pre-kindergarten and school-age children enjoy exploring their neighborhood. The field trips we arrange are important part of our curriculum. The field trips give children the opportunity to see first-hand examples of topics and projects they study in their classrooms.
How Children Learn from Our Conversations

What we say to children and the way we say it is very important. We watch, listen and talk with the children to learn what they are thinking and understand what they are trying to do. If a child holds up a drawing, we invite the child to tell us about it. This encourages the child to use words to describe his/her feelings and observations.

KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER THAN RICHES.

African Proverb
CHAPTER 3  Preschool Readiness

Learning at Home

You are your child’s first and most important teacher. You are also most familiar with the world your child is striving to understand. If you let us know about events that may be affecting your child at home—the illness of a grandparent, a new baby, nightmares, separation or divorce—we can work more effectively with your child.

Listening: Be a good listener and talk with your child as you prepare dinner or work around the house.

Helping: Ask your child to help you do things.

Reading: Read to your child. After you’ve read a story, ask your child what happened in the story and who it was about. Children will learn to listen and interpret what they hear.

Homework: School-age children who learn good study habits early are more likely to succeed in school. Set aside a quiet place and time each day for your child to focus on his/her homework.

Play: Play with your child. Take a walk or play catch together. This is a great time to listen to and talk with your child. This is also a wonderful time to encourage your child’s curiosity.

Classroom Observation

In order to better understand our program we hope you will spend some time in the classroom observing what we do and/or volunteering. We encourage you to talk with your child’s teacher about scheduling a time to come in to observe and to explore our in-class volunteer activities.

Family/Teacher Conferences

Meeting with your child’s teacher will give you the opportunity to discover how your child is responding to our program. During the year we collect samples of your child’s work in a portfolio. You will have the opportunity to see this portfolio and talk with your child’s teacher at least twice a year. If at any other time during the year you would like to talk to your child’s teacher, we would be happy to arrange a family conference with you.
CHAPTER 4

Daily Procedures

CDP’s pre-kindergarten and school-age programs provide children with a warm and supportive environment that allows them to begin the social learning process. Emphasis is placed on children developing a positive attitude toward learning. By following the guidelines outlined below you can help ensure that this takes place for your child.

Arrival

We require that all children be brought to the Center and picked up at the end of the day by a responsible, authorized adult, at the time specified in your parent/guardian contract. Children are to be signed in and out daily with the correct time and your full signature.

It is important that you and Center staff cooperate in the arrival and departure of children. During the school year, your school-age children should be at the Center in time to take the school bus or report to elementary classes on site.

While getting to know you is important to us, arrival time is not the best time for conferences with the teacher. If you would like to talk with the teacher at length about your child or any aspect of the program, please call to arrange an appointment or write a note requesting a meeting. Our staff welcomes your insights and looks forward to giving you attention, but supervising the children is their first priority during service hours.

Departure

The Children’s Centers have specific closing times each day. An authorized adult must pick up children by the time specified in your Parent/Guardian Contract. Adults authorized in your Parent/Guardian Contract to pick up your child must be at least 18 years old. Under special circumstances, you may request that the age requirement be waived. This must be approved by the CDP Director. Ask your Site Manager for a form.

If you find yourself in a critical situation where you are unable to pick up your child by the contract hours, you must find someone else to pick up your child on time and then call your child’s teacher or the Site Manager to explain the details of the arrangement.

The name of the person picking up your child must appear on your child’s Emergency Card.

If your child is not picked up by the time specified in your Parent/Guardian Contract, teachers will begin calling the emergency contact persons listed on your child’s Emergency card. If no one can be reached to pick up your child, staff will notify the Police Department. If still no one is available to receive your child, your child will be
taken into protective custody. If this occurs, you must call 558-2650 or 1800-856-5553 (the Child Abuse Hotline of the Department of Human Services, Children’s Protective Services).

Three incidents of late pick-up within one school year (July 1-June 30) will be grounds for termination of our services. We will issue two warning letters before a Notice of Action. If you receive a Notice of Action, your child’s enrollment with CDP can be terminated.

Field Trips
Field trips provide unique opportunities for your child to enjoy educational experiences in a new setting. A Field Trip Authorization Form is needed for each trip requiring transportation. This will be sent home to you with your child before each outing. If your child has allergies, or health conditions requiring special procedures or precautions, please remind our staff prior to any field trips or special outings. Parents may be asked to contribute to the costs associated with field trips, but no child will be denied participation due to lack of funds.

Meals
Our meals are planned by the District’s Student Nutrition Services Department. Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack is served to all pre-kindergarten children. School-age children receive an afternoon snack. Those on full-day schedules also receive lunch.

Special dietary arrangements will be made within our capabilities for children with food allergies. If your child has food allergies, you should have filled out a Food Allergy Form at the time of enrollment. If you did not fill out a form, please request one from the staff. Inform staff of your family’s dietary restrictions.

Clothing
Your child will enjoy a wide variety of activities, including art, music, dramatic play, indoor/outdoor programs and field trips. It is best to dress your child in clothes that he/she can move in easily and which he/she can handle independently when using the restroom.

Treasures From Home to School
We encourage the sharing of special books, music tapes and cultural items from home. We ask, however, that your child not bring toys from home. Exceptions are made during the first few days of your child’s enrollment should he/she bring a favorite toy to help in the transition from home to school. We also request that children not bring snacks, such as gum, candy, soda, donuts, cookies or potato chips, to school.
CHAPTER 5
Child Development Program’s Policies

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

All completed applications, including birth certificate, health forms, and verification of income are received and processed at the administration office of the San Francisco Unified School District Child Development Office located at the following address:

20 Cook Street
San Francisco, CA  94118
Telephone:  750-8507

To meet the needs of applicants requesting child care service, the Child Development Program has established a procedure to make sure everyone is treated fairly and efficiently. Once a family is notified that they are eligible for service, they are placed on a centralized waiting list for the Center(s) that they have selected. When space is available, an enrollment interview is scheduled by the parents/guardians with the Site Manager at the Center the child will enter.

ENROLLING THE CHILD:

For the enrollment interview, parents are required to bring with them the following item:

- Official Identification
- Proof of Address
- The Child’s Birth Certificate
- Public School Health form with proof of Immunization and Physical Examination
- Personal Information form
- Income Verification (2 recent consecutive check stubs, AFDC grant award letter, Social Security Benefits, child support etc.)
- Training Verification form (if applicable).
- Parents are request to bring the child to the enrollment interview.
THE INTERVIEW:

The Site Manager will ask for the necessary enrollment information and will introduce the Child to the staff, the environment and to the classroom he / she will enter.

THE CONTRACT:

Failure to meet the terms of the contract may lead to termination of service. This can occur when:

- Fees are delinquent.
- Families no longer qualify under the regulations.
- There are habitual unexcused absences.
- There are late pick-ups.
- Children have exceptional needs that cannot be met at the Center.
- Failure to verify attendance at training facility.

TRANSFER PROCEDURE:

1. When a family wishes to transfer, they complete the Transfer Request Form, get a verification signature from the Site Manager at the Center where their child is enrolled, and submit the completed form to 20 Cook Street.

2. When space becomes available at the requested site, the family is referred by the Intake Office.

3. The waiting period for transferring from one Center to another shall remain at one year. The only two exceptions to this policy will be:

   Parents who can prove change of address.

   Parents who wish to reunite siblings enrolled at different Centers.

4. A family is eligible for transfer only if they remain enrolled in the program. Once a family withdraws, they will need to get back on the centralized waiting list for service.
FRAUD AND DECEIT:

If parents participate in fraud or deceit to gain enrollment into the program, reduce their fees, or to otherwise mislead the District, child care services will be terminated and the parent will be liable for costs incurred by the program.

Fraud is when a person willfully deceive another person (or organization) with the intend to alter that person’s position to his injury or risk. Deceit is the act of suggesting something is true when you know that it is untrue, or when you make a promise that you have no intention of fulfilling. When fraud and deceit has occurred, a Notice of Action must be issued.

EXAMPLES OF FRAUD:

1. Parent misrepresents family income at time of initial enrollment. An example is when a single parent receives child support and does not claim this support.

2. Parent changes eligibility status (change in jobs, classes taken in school) and does not immediately inform the Children’s Center office of the change.

3. Parent claims outside child care to offset Children’s Center fees when in fact care is performed by a relative or friend and no fee is in fact paid to the relative or friend.

PARENT’S RIGHTS:

1. Parents / guardians, upon presentation of identification, have the right to enter and inspect the child day care facility in which their child(ren) is receiving care, without advance notice to the provider. Entry and inspection is limited to the normal operating hours when their child is receiving care.

2. The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parents / guardians for exercising their right to inspect.

3. The law requires that parents / guardians be notified of their rights to enter and inspect.

4. The law requires that this Notice of Parent’s Rights to enter and inspect be posted in the facility in a location accessible to parents / guardians.

5. The law authorizes the person in charge of the child day care facility to deny access to a parent / guardian under the following circumstances:

   a) The parent / guardian is behaving in a way which poses a risk to children in the facility; or
b) The adult is a non-custodial parent and the facility had a court order to deny access to the non-custodial parent.

CHILD’S PERSONAL RIGHTS:

Each person receiving services from a community care facility and / or a child day care facility shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. To be accorded dignity in his / her personal relationship with staff and other person.

2. To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his / her needs.

3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of punitive nature, including but not limited to: interference with daily living functions including, eating, sleeping, toileting, shelter, clothing, or medication and other aids to physical functioning.

4. To be informed, and to have the authorized representative informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints, including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the licensing agency’s complaint receiving unit, and of information regarding confidentiality.

5. To be free to attend religious services or activities of his / her choice and to have visits from the spiritual adviser of his / her choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside the facility, shall be on a completely voluntary basis. In the child day care facilities, decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual advisors shall be made by the parent / guardian of the child.

6. Not to be locked in any room, building or facility premises by day or night.

7. Not to be in restraining devices without approval by the licensing agency

Behavior Policy

In order to ensure a safe learning environment at our centers, we have established the following behavioral expectations. Staff will be going over these expectations with the children. We require your cooperation in helping children to understand and adhere to acceptable behavior guideline. We all want our students to learn how to be responsible, cooperative and respectful members of our school community. We want them to learn how to handle conflict appropriately.
Standards of behavior used by staff are designed to be fair, consistent, and effective. Our goal is to assist children in the development of self-discipline, self-control, and understanding of appropriate behavior.

**Children’s Commitment:**

*Children are expected to:*

- Act in a safe and responsible manner around others.
- Use positive ways to problem solve
- Give help to others when needed
- Properly use and maintain center equipment, materials and property
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves
- Show kindness, courtesy, and respect for others
- Follow staff directions promptly
- Use appropriate language
- Stay with assigned class and classroom staff

**Parent’s / Guardian’s Commitment**

*Parents/Guardians are expected to:*

- Discuss behavioral expectations on a regular basis with their child(ren)
- Work with teachers to reinforce standards of behavior
- Participate in all requested parent/guardian conferences

**FREQUENCY OF RECERTIFICATION:**

The frequency of renewing the eligibility for service is as follows:

*Employment:*
Once each year as long as job remains the same.
In Training:
At the beginning of each semester, parents / guardians must bring verification of enrollment with the listing of class times, a statement of vocational goal, and anticipated completion date of studies. At the end of each semester parents / guardians must bring proof of completion of classes.

Seeking Employment:
Parents / guardians are allowed 60 days seeking employment in any one fiscal year.

Incapacitation of Caretaker:
At the duration of the time interval indicated by the legally qualified professional, but in no case to exceed 12 months. After 12 months, there needs to be a re-evaluation.

At Risk of Abuse / Protective Services:
Families receiving services because the child is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation shall be recertified at least once every six (6) months. At the time of recertification, the Contractor shall document that the family is participating in a protective service plan in accordance with the requirements of their local county welfare department, Child Protective Services unit, to alleviate the circumstances causing the abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Calendar/Hours
The program is open Monday through Friday throughout the year except for staff development days and holidays. These dates will be given to you at the beginning of the school year.

Most Centers are open from 7:30a.m. to 6:00p.m. Individual site schedules may vary.

Daily Attendance/Hours of Service
Your child’s daily attendance at CDP is based upon the hours of service determined in your Parent/Guardian Contract. You are expected to honor the hours specified in your Contract. Should you fail to adhere to contract hours, your child’s enrollment in CDP can be terminated.

The hours of service are based on your family’s work hours or hours of school/training. Parents/guardians seeking employment are eligible for less than 6 - hours per day. School-age children have two sets of contract hours, one for the school term and one when the elementary school is not in session and the Center is open. Please make an appointment with your Site Manager if your work or school hours change.
Absences

If your child is going to be absent, notify the Center office prior to your child’s scheduled arrival time. Failure to do so may result in loss of service. Children’s absences are designated as excused or unexcused.

Excused Absences

The following are excused absences:

- Illness or quarantine of the child (name of the illness is necessary)
- Illness or quarantine of the parent/guardian
- Family emergency (personal or family emergency requiring the student’s absence when approved at the discretion of the site administrator - eg. death or illness of immediate family member, victim of a criminal incident or natural disaster, eviction or loss of housing, court appearance)
- Child’s doctor, dental or therapy appointment
- Documented court-ordered visitations - a copy of the order is required. Court-ordered time spent away from home with a parent or relative may exceed 10 days if the time is specified in court-order.
- Time spent with a parent or relative “in the best interest of the child” (defined in Education code § 8208(e)). Examples include a close relative visiting, religious or cultural day, family vacations, or special functions (eg. birthdays). These “Best Interest of Child Days” will be limited to 10 days within a fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). The 10 day limit does not apply to children who are recipients of protective services or are considered at risk of abuse or neglect.

If your child is frequently absent for illness or absent 5 days or longer, you will be required to provide documented proof of the reason for his/her absence.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are any absences that are not identified as “excused absences.” For example:

Your car will not start and you must keep your child at home or bad weather makes it inconvenient for your child to attend.

Excessive unexcused absence can lead to termination of child care. SFUSD defines “excessive unexcused absences” as 15 consecutive days of unexcused absences.
Fees, Payments & Credits

Your Parent/Guardian Contract determines whether or not you will be charged a fee and specifies the amount. The fees are based on a sliding scale for families. Daily fees are determined by income level and family size. If your child attends for 6.5 hours or more per day, it is considered a full-day fee. Part-time fees are assessed for children who attend less than 6.5 hours per day. If you have more than one child enrolled, fees are based on the child enrolled for the greatest number of hours.

If your Contract indicates that you will pay a fee, a monthly statement will be sent to you in advance. Full payment for the month must be paid by the tenth of each month. No adjustment in daily fees will be made for absences or vacation.

Please pay your fees by check or money order and make them payable to “San Francisco Unified School District Child Development Center.” Fees are considered delinquent if they are not paid by the due date. Delinquency notices are issued after the tenth day of each month. A Notice of Action stating the date of termination of child care service will be sent to families who are delinquent.

Some parents/guardians may qualify for a credit toward their fee. Expenses incurred in an outside child care program for another child may be deducted from the Child Development Centers fee. In this case it is important that you get required documentation completed by child care provider and make payment using a money order.

Transfers From One Center to Another
Your child must be enrolled in one Center for one year before you may request a transfer to another Center. The only two exceptions to this policy are:

If you can prove change of address
If you wish to unite siblings enrolled at different Centers

To request a transfer, complete the Transfer Request Form and give it to your Site Manager to sign and sent to the requested center. Your Site Manager will notify you when space becomes available at the requested site.

You are eligible for transfer only if your family remains enrolled in the program. Once your family withdraws, you will need to get back on the centralized waiting list for service.

Termination of Services
There are two conditions under which your child’s participation in CDP may end: involuntary termination or voluntary withdrawal.
**Involuntary Termination**

If you ignore or fail to adhere to Center policies, you will be sent a warning letter regarding the concern. Following that you will be given a Notice of Action. A Notice of Action must be given to you before termination of child care services. You will be given 10 working days notice and be provided with the Appeal Procedures.

Your child care services can be terminated for the following reasons:

- Submitting fraudulent information or withholding information regarding family eligibility
- Failure to re-certify with all required documentation
- Failure to verify training enrollment and/or attendance
- Expiration of the number of days (60 per year) for seeking employment
- Income exceeds amount on salary schedule to be subsidized
- Excessive absenteeism - 15 consecutive days of unexcused absences
- Delinquent fee balance - fees that are unpaid 7 calendar days after the due date
- Inappropriate parent/guardian conduct
- Late pick-up - three times after closing time within a fiscal year
- Late pick-up exceeding contract hours and exceeding three tardies within a fiscal year

**Voluntary Withdrawal**

If you find you will no longer need child development services, fill out a Withdrawal Form (available from the Site Manager). You must give at least 14 days prior notice.

**Confidentiality**

Family eligibility and service records are confidential information. Access to this information, including health records, will be provided only to appropriate staff, auditors, and personnel from the California Department of Education and Community Care Licensing. Otherwise, information requested from family files will not be released without your prior notification.

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**CURIOSITY IS A WILLING, A PROUD, AN EAGER CONFESSION OF IGNORANCE.**  
Leonard Rubinstein
CHAPTER 6

Safety

Safety as Priority
We are committed to your child’s safety. We have in place a number of safety measures to protect your child. These include:

- All children must be signed in and out of our Centers by and authorized adult.
- Teachers are trained in first-aid and CPR.
- Safety conditions at sites are closely monitored.
- We adhere to Department of Education Title V, adult to child ratio: The pre-kindergarten program has one adult for every eight children and the school-age program has one adult for every 14 children.

Emergency Information/Change of Address & Phone
The Center keeps an Emergency Card on file for every child. This card lists the current addresses and phone numbers of family members and at least two other authorized persons who may be called in an emergency if you cannot be reached. Persons expressly denied authorization to pick up the child are also listed. Please call us immediately if the phone numbers or persons listed on your child’s Emergency Card change so that we can maintain the most up-to-date information on your child.

Persons Authorized to Pick Up Your Child
Children will not be dismissed to anyone other than you or an authorized representative on the Emergency Card without your prior parent/guardian consent. Authorized representatives must be at least 18 years old and listed on your child’s Emergency Card. He/she must show identification when picking up your child. If someone not listed on the Emergency Card is picking up your child, you must provide written permission that morning.

Medications
If your child needs to take any medication (over-the-counter or prescribed) while at CDP, please read the following carefully.

To authorize your child to take medication while attending CDP, you must have your child’s doctor fill out the Medication Form (available from the Site Manager). The doctor must complete and sign the section of the form which describes the amount, method, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken. You must then complete and sign the section of the form indicating.

Your wish for District personnel to give your child medications as directed by your child’s doctor.
If prescription medication is to be given to your child, you must provide the medication in the original pharmacy container labeled with your child’s name and doctor’s instructions. All authorized medication forms must be current and for a specific time period, a specific seasonal period (e.g. hay fever medication), or a specific daily dose.

Most important, talk to the staff about any medications you wish them to give your child. This way you can make certain that communication is clear.

**Health Care**
To make sure that children are protected from contagious diseases, we request that you examine your child for signs of illness before bringing him/her to the Center. Please keep sick children at home and notify the Center of their absence.

If your child develops a communicable disease, inform the Center immediately. Children are given health checks every morning at the Center. If any symptoms are apparent, you will be required to take your child home. All children are to have regular and up-to-date immunizations and physical examinations.

**Emergency Procedures**
All San Francisco Unified School District Schools and Child Development Center have procedures to prepare them for fire, earthquake or other emergency conditions. Staff and children participate regularly in earthquake and fire drills. The Fire Marshall inspects the Centers regularly for safety, and state consultants review the premises for compliance to state standards. First-aid material is always available in every classroom and our staff is instructed in its use.

In case of any emergency, our teaching staff is required by law to remain with the children until parents/guardians can come to the Center and take their children home. In the event of a major disaster, all public employees connected with the Center serve as civil defense aides. In case of a serious accident or illness to a child, you or someone listed on your child’s Emergency Card will be called immediately. The Center will also call (911) emergency assistance in caring for your child.

**Behavior Guidance**
Our staff is led by the philosophy that behavior guidance is the process of helping children to understand social limitations and to develop self-control and positive social behavior. Guidance is both verbal and non-verbal. Isolation, ridicule, harsh voices, or any other “punishment” is unacceptable. The CDP staff must never resort to physical punishment in any form.

> A CHILD’S LIFE IS LIKE A PIECE OF PAPER ON WHICH EVERY PASSERBY LEAVES A MARK.
> Proverb
Child Abuse Prevention
Our staff is required by law (California Penal Code, Section 11161.3) to report all suspected cases of child abuse. Should child abuse be suspected, the Site Manager would report the matter to the appropriate authority or agencies.

LET NO CHILDREN DOUBT THEMSELVES OR THEIR MINDS—EVER. LET NO CHILDREN BE DEMEANED, NOR HAVE THEIR WONDER DIMINISHED.

Proverb
CHAPTER 7

Any Concerns?

Communicating with Staff
We encourage cooperation and communication between the families we serve and our staff. We strive to provide you with a variety of opportunities to ask questions, share your insights and participate in overseeing the program. If you have questions about any aspect of the program, we hope you will approach your child’s teacher, the Site Manager or the CDP Director to let them know your concerns.

Appeal Procedure
If upon enrollment, at recertification, or upon other forms of notification, a parent/guardian disagrees with any action or decision as written in the Application for Child Development Services or in the Notice of Action, the parent/guardian may file a written request for a hearing with the Director of the Child Development Program within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date on which the application was signed or the notice was dated.

Once a request for a hearing is made, all actions are suspended until the review process has been completed. The review process is complete when the appeal process has been exhausted or when the parent/guardian abandons the appeal process. The Director or a designee will notify the parent/guardian of the time and place of the hearing within 10 calendar days following receipt of the written request for hearing. To the extent possible, the hearing will be scheduled for the convenience of the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian or his/her authorized representative is required to attend the hearing. If neither appears at the hearing, the parent/guardian will be considered to have abandoned the appeal.

At the hearing, the Director will explain to the parent/guardian the legal, regulatory, or policy basis for the contested action or decision. During the hearing, the parent/guardian will have the opportunity to explain the reason(s) for believing the action or decision was incorrect. Center staff may present any material facts at this hearing.

The parent/guardian or authorized representative may ask the Director to arrange for an interpreter to be present at the hearing within ten (10) days after the hearing, the Director shall mail or deliver a written decision to the parent/guardian.

Appeal Request
Upon receipt of the written decision from the Director, if the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision, an appeal to the State Department of Education, Child Development Division (CDD), may be made. The parent/guardian has fourteen (14) calendar days in which to appeal to the CDD. The parent/guardian must specify in the appeal request the reason(s) why the intended action or decision is incorrect. A copy of the original Center notice to the parent/guardian and a copy of the Director’s written decision must also be submitted with the appeal request.
If an appeal is not made within the fourteen (14) calendar days, the parent/guardian’s appeal process will be considered abandoned and the original action or decision will be implemented.

Upon receipt of the parent/guardian’s appeal request, the CDD will request the necessary written materials and the basic date file from the Director. The CDD may also conduct any investigations, interviews or mediation necessary to resolve the appeal.

The decision of the CDD will be mailed to the parent/guardian and to the Director within thirty (30) days after receipt of the parent/guardian’s appeal request. The local program shall implement the decision of the CDD immediately upon delivery.

SOMETIMES THE HEART
SEES WHAT IS
INVISIBLE TO THE EYE.
H. Jackson Brown Jr.

NOT TO KNOW IS BAD;
NOT TO WISH TO
KNOW IS WORSE.
West African Proverb

TOO OFTEN WE GIVE
CHILDREN ANSWERS
TO REMEMBER
RATHER THAN
PROBLEMS TO SOLVE.
Roger Lewin
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This will acknowledge that I/we, the parent(s) guardian(s) of ________________________________________________________, have been personally advised of our rights and have received from a representative of the above agency, a copy of the Family Handbook, which includes the Notification of Parent’s Rights and Personal Rights – community Care Facilities and Child day Care Facilities.

_________________________________________________________   __________________________
Signature                                                     Date