

Daily Routine for Infants and Toddlers

6/2022

At UCI's Infant Toddler Center, we strive daily to provide high-quality, individualized, responsive and stimulating experiences that occur within the context of strong relationships and are imbedded into everyday routines.

Children under age 12 months are typically not all on the same schedule. Diapers are checked hourly and changed as needed. They play, eat, and sleep according to their own schedule. This is based on information parents share during drop off time. We provide responsive care according to each child's individual needs and routine.

By the time the children are about a year old, their routine is more predictable and similar to that of the toddlers. Typically, they will follow a similar daily schedule. Having a routine that is generally the same each day provides consistency and structure for the children, which helps them to feel safe because they know what to expect.

Early Morning:

Early morning is a series of reunions and departures as children and caregivers arrive and parents depart for school or work. Children who are eating toddler foods are offered morning snack between 8:15-8:45am. Very young infants may be ready for a bottle and/or early nap. After morning snack, children are free to play in the classroom. Diaper changes and going potty happen on an individual basis as children are finishing morning snack.

Mid Morning:

Children are doing a variety of activities such as small group and large group activities, going outdoors, going for walks around the neighborhood, and more free play.

Late Morning:

Children under 18 months get ready for lunch at around 11am. Toddlers, 18 months and older, have lunch at around 11:30am. The process for getting ready for lunch includes taking shoes off, washing hands, getting bibs on, and finding their place to sit. Meals are a social time and are done family style. After lunch, children get ready for nap by doing calming activities, getting diapers checked, and going potty. Children nap as long as they need to, typically between 12-3pm.

Mid Afternoon:

As children wake up from naps, they are helped with diapers and going potty, followed by washing hands. Snack is offered, followed by free play. The groups head out to explore the yard once again.

Late afternoon:

The children return inside for diapers, and they can choose free play activities in the classroom until their parents arrive to pick them up.