

University of California, Irvine

Child Care Services



501 Adobe Circle Road
Irvine, CA 92617
(949) 824-2100

Parent Handbook

(01/02/2025 revise)

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Dear Families,

Welcome to UCI Child Care Services! We operate five child care centers serving children from infancy through 12 years of age, in addition to an administrative office.

The foundation of our work with children begins with developmentally appropriate practice, which is an approach to teaching grounded in the research on how young children develop and learn and in what is known about effective early education. All of our programs follow the guidelines of the California Department of Education, Early Education & Support Division and licensing requirements of the Department of Social Services. The indoor and outdoor environment, as well as the program curriculum, are planned and facilitated by teachers who maintain Child Development Permits, issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Our centers provide nurturing and engaging environments where children make connections, are supported in their desire to explore, and develop into healthy, compassionate and creative individuals.

We are happy that you have chosen one of our centers for your child, and look forward to working with you as a partner in your child's development. We welcome and encourage you to be involved in your child's program as your schedule allows, and are committed to keeping you well informed about your child's center and their growth and development. We look forward to getting to know your family!

Sincerely,

***Laura Sanbrano
Director
UCI Child Care Services***

Child Care Services Office

Effective administration creates an environment that facilitates the provision of quality care for children. The Child Care Services Office manages enrollment, fiscal matters, and all forms and records required by the State Department of Education, Community Care Licensing, the Health Department, the Federal Child Care Food Program, the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, and all other regulatory agencies. Waiting lists for the centers are maintained in this office.

Please notify the office whenever you change your address, telephone number, or place of employment. Tuition is paid in the office, and this is also where you would get waitlist or other enrollment questions answered.

HOURS: 7:30 am-5:30 pm
Monday-Friday

LOCATION: Early Childhood Education Center
501 Adobe Circle Road

MAILING ADDRESS: Child Care Services
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2250

TELEPHONE: (949) 824-2100

DIRECTOR OF CHILD CARE SERVICES: Laura Sanbrano

BUSINESS MANAGER: Lisa Martinez

Infant Toddler Center

The Infant Toddler Center offers a full day program for children age three months to 36 months. The center serves UCI students, staff and faculty. Subsidized tuition is available to eligible student families through a grant from the State Department of Education.

HOURS: 7:30 am-5:30 pm
Monday-Friday

TELEPHONE: (949) 824-4754

MAILING ADDRESS: Child Care Services
Attn.: Infant Toddler Center
533 California Avenue
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2250

DIRECTOR: Pearl Kurpjuweit
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Denise MacPartland
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION: QRIS 5-STAR RATED PROGRAM

Children's Center

Children's Center offers a full day preschool program for children two and a half to five years of age (or until eligible for kindergarten). The center serves UCI students, staff and faculty. Subsidized tuition is available to eligible student families through a grant from the State Department of Education.

HOURS: 7:30 am-5:30 pm
Monday-Friday

TELEPHONE: (949) 824-4752

MAILING ADDRESS: Child Care Services
Attn.: Children's Center
6533 Adobe Circle Road
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2250

DIRECTOR: Rakhee Parekh
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION: QRIS 5-Star rated program

Early Childhood Education Center

The Early Childhood Education Center offers a full day preschool program for children two years to five years of age (or until eligible for kindergarten). The center serves UCI student, staff, and faculty families, as well as families from the community.

ESTABLISHED: 1989

ENROLLMENT: 100

HOURS: 7:30 am-5:30 pm
Monday-Friday

TELEPHONE: (949) 824-2100

MAILING ADDRESS: Child Care Services
Attn.: Early Childhood Education Center
501 Adobe Circle Road
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2250

DIRECTOR: Wenli Lin
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION: NAEYC Accredited Program

Verano Preschool

Verano Preschool offers a half-day preschool program for children two and a half to five years of age (or until eligible for kindergarten). The center serves students, staff, faculty and community.

Hours: 9:00 am-1: 00 PM
Monday-Friday during the school year
Closed during UCI academic breaks and summer

TELEPHONE: (949) 824-4755

MAILING ADDRESS: Child Care Services
Attn.: Verano Preschool
3300 Verano Road
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2250

DIRECTOR: Leslie Josephson
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION: QRIS 4-Star rated program
NAEYC Accredited Program

Extended Day Center

The Extended Day Center offers an afterschool program for children in grades kindergarten through sixth grade. Subsidized tuition is available to eligible student families through a grant from the State Department of Education.

Hours: **During the school year**
11:30 am-5:30 pm
Monday-Friday

During the summer
7:30 am-5:30 pm
Monday-Friday

TELEPHONE: (949) 824-4753

MAILING ADDRESS: Child Care Services
Attn.: Extended Day Center
6537 Adobe Circle Road
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2250

DIRECTOR: Julie Bookwalter
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION: OCP OUTDOOR CLASSROOM DEMONSTRATION SITE

Mission

UCI Child Care Services seeks to provide excellent early care and education to children from infancy through elementary school age whose parents are staff, faculty or students at UCI, or who are members of the surrounding community. Children will be cared for in nurturing and engaging environments that promote healthy relationships, compassion, creativity, a lifelong love of learning, and a genuine appreciation for diversity. We are committed to keeping abreast of current research in early care and education and incorporating this into our practice, as well as providing a hands-on learning environment that allows undergraduate students to seek employment and internship experiences at our centers.

Guiding Values

We value early childhood as a unique time of learning and growth. We believe that children are competent and curious learners, full of their own knowledge and potential, and interested in connecting to the world around them. Through their deep connection with teachers and other children, we want children to feel safe, loved, respected and valued, and to develop into healthy, compassionate, community-minded, and creative individuals. We value children's play as a way for them to practice and reinforce their learning throughout the day and understand the importance of the scaffolding that happens with teachers and peers.

We embrace each family as a welcomed member of our child care community. We seek to appreciate and understand the diversity each family brings and recognize the critical role that parents play as their child's first teacher. We believe in open and respectful communication and interactions with families, and welcome, encourage, and support families to contribute to the life of their child's program.

We value an environment where children are supported in their desire to explore, and in their eagerness to take on new challenges. We believe children should have access to materials and experiences in both the indoor and outdoor classroom that promote a sense of joy and wonder, and that support their urges to feel empowered and competent. We value a constructivist approach to learning that takes a holistic view of the child and appreciates that each child has a unique learning style. We believe that an emergent and interest-driven curriculum will help children to be intellectually curious, skilled problem-solvers, collaborators, and critical thinkers.

We value the varied experiences and diverse backgrounds of our teaching staff and seek to support teachers and directors in their quest for current knowledge and in their growth as professionals. We value collaboration among teachers and understand that mentoring and sharing resources is how we learn most effectively. We seek to nurture and encourage our staff in their journey as individuals and early care and education professionals, and appreciate the passion, commitment and joy that they bring to their jobs.

Professional Recognition

Accreditation

Verano Preschool and the Early Childhood Education Center are accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (the Extended Day Center is not eligible for accreditation because they serve school-age children). The Academy administers a national, voluntary, professionally sponsored accreditation system for all types of child care centers serving children from birth through kindergarten age. The Academy is a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators.

Early childhood programs accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Academy's Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs, and been found to be in substantial compliance with the Criteria.

A high-quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children.

In accredited programs, you will see

- frequent, positive, warm interactions among adults and children
- planned learning activities appropriate to children's age and development, such as block building, painting, reading stories, dress-up, and active outdoor play
- specially trained teachers
- enough adults to respond to individual children
- many varied age-appropriate materials
- a healthy and safe environment for children
- nutritious meals and/or snacks
- regular communication with parents who are welcome visitors at all times
- effective administration
- ongoing, systematic evaluation

QRIS

Three of our centers (ITC, Verano Preschool, Children's Center) participated in Quality Stars, which is a part of QualityStart OC, a community partnership led by the Orange County Department of Education. Quality Stars helps to support early learning teachers and programs by giving them the tools and resources they need to create a safe, high quality learning environment for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Our participating centers receive teacher training and coaching, feedback on environment and teacher interactions, and a rating, based on a scale of 5 stars, so that parents know that our programs are committed to providing the best possible learning environment for children.

Outdoor Classroom Project

The Outdoor Classroom Project is an initiative of the Child Educational Center in La Canada. The Outdoor Classroom evolves from the real needs of children, offers activities that are personally meaningful to them, and fully embraces developmentally appropriate practices in early care and education. The premise of the Outdoor Classroom is that most activities that can be done indoors can also be done outdoors. In programs that employ an outdoor classroom philosophy, children spend substantial periods of time outside, and it is easy and safe for them to get there; they are free to move easily between the indoors and outdoors. While outside, children frequently have the opportunity to initiate their own learning experiences and activities, with teachers available to support them. The outdoor curriculum evolves from and changes with children's changing needs and interests, and children experience nature in as many ways as possible.

The Outdoor Classroom Project Demonstration Site Network is a group of programs of early care and education that voluntarily maintain a mutually agreed-upon set of standards developed by the Outdoor Classroom Project for the purpose of promoting and supporting the Outdoor Classroom philosophy and practices. By participating, programs agree to receive visitors to their programs to observe their unique implementation of the Outdoor Classroom in action. UCI Extended Day is an Outdoor Classroom Demonstration Site.

Staff Qualifications

UCI Child Care Services is committed to quality early childhood education. All professional staff are trained in Early Childhood Education and/or Child Development and hold a Child Development Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. In addition, they are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR and participate in ongoing professional development.

New employees are provided an orientation to guide them in understanding how agency policies relate to their respective job description. We support continuous staff growth by assessing the needs of staff and providing professional development activities to enhance their growth.

Teacher assistants are full-time students at UCI and represent diverse academic and cultural backgrounds. All of the centers also serve as field study sites for Social Ecology, fieldwork sites for Education Sciences, and may also host practicum students from local community colleges.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Child Care Services welcomes all families into our programs. The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or service in

the uniformed services. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. We welcome the enrollment of families and children with disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations in accordance to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

UCI Child Care Services refrains from all religious instruction and worship.

Getting Started

An intake interview will provide you with the opportunity to meet the site director and your child's teacher(s). At that time, you will share information about your child, ask questions, be shown around the center and learn about the center's program and policies. The purpose of the intake interview is for the director to learn more about the culture and values of the family and to talk about the goals that parents have for their children. This is also a chance for families to find out more about how the center will meet their child's individual needs within a group setting.

Helping Children Transition to The Center

Infants, toddlers and preschool children are assigned to a full-time teacher at the center. This primary teacher has the responsibility of helping new children become familiar with the routines of the center. The teacher will learn your child's unique ways of communicating, and will narrate the day for him or her until he or she is completely comfortable.

Children respond in a variety of ways to new settings. Some settle in quickly, as if they have always been at the center. Others may have a more difficult time adjusting. Children experience a variety of feelings (sadness, anger, and delight) as they learn to trust new teachers and know that parents do come back at the end of the day. Please be assured that your child will be supported during this transition time.

Parents can help their children by:

- Talking positively about the center, teachers and children.
- Acknowledging and validating all feelings (I know that you are angry, sad, excited, etc.)
- Communicating a matter-of-fact confidence in the center.
- Assuring your child that you love them, that you will miss them and that you will be back.
- Saying good-bye when you're ready to leave and then leaving. (It's confusing to children and teachers when parents say good-bye and then stay around for a while.)
- Letting your child know when you are leaving the center. It is critical to your relationship that your child trusts that you will not sneak out to avoid upsetting him or her. It is much better for a child to experience momentary sadness than to have to deal with the possibility that a parent may disappear at any moment.

Helping Parents Transition to The Center

This is usually the more difficult of the transitions! Parents may have mixed feelings about leaving their young children in group care. These are normal reactions to trusting your child with people who are initially strangers. You may experience new feelings as children form attachments with teachers. These attachments are essential for a child's emotional development and school success. In order to help yourself feel comfortable, you are welcome to spend time in the center or to call and check on your child during the day. Site directors or teachers can always make time to answer your questions or hear your concerns about your child.

What to Wear to School

Children are involved in sensory activities every day, often involving water, mud, cooking ingredients, paint and other art materials. Please send your child in comfortable, washable play clothes suitable for active and messy play. It is discouraging to children and staff when a parent arrives and is upset because their child's clothes are dirty. We will provide aprons, smocks or t-shirts for those children who wish to wear them.

Play clothes that are easy to manage encourage independence and self-help skills. Many toilet accidents are prevented if children can unbutton pants and unbuckle belts without a struggle.

When the weather is cool and unpredictable, be sure your child has a sweater or jacket kept at the center. In addition, each child must have at least one complete set of clothes (socks, underwear, pants, shirt or a dress) kept in his/her cubby.

We recommend that your child wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes to school. These types of shoes protect their feet during walks, bike riding and other outdoor activities. For safety purposes, if you send your young child to school with a hat, please be sure that it fastens under their chin with a snap or Velcro (not a string that ties). Please remove drawstrings from jackets and hoodies before sending them to school.

Please label all clothes with your child's name!

Multi-age Groupings

All of the centers have multi-age groups, which means that children of different ages may be in the same classroom or may spend time together during the day. A multi-age grouping provides a more family-like setting for children. It allows children to learn from each other, enables teachers to gear their expectations to a child's individual development rather than age, and increases the likelihood that a child will have someone to interact with at their developmental level.

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Attendance

Signing in and signing out your child is required by law for the safety and supervision of the children and for program fiscal accountability. Licensing requires that you or an adult (over the age of 18 years) authorized by you, sign your child in and out of the center each day using a full legal signature and the time of arrival or departure. If you forget to sign your child in or out, you will be called to come back and do so. **For your child's safety always let a teacher know when you and your child arrive and before taking your child from the center.**

Please call the center by 9:00 am if your child will be absent or late. When your child is absent, write a reason for the absence on your child's attendance sheet when you return and sign your full signature.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child from the center, you must list that adult on your child's Emergency and Identification Form. If the adult taking your child from the center is not on the form, we must have your written permission in advance. Adults listed on your child's Emergency and Identification Form must show a picture ID before they will be allowed to sign your child out of the center. Please speak to your child's teacher or the director if there is a change in your routine pick up plan, so that we can remind your child during the day.

We must be able to reach you or someone on your authorized pick up list at all times. Please make sure that all people on your emergency list are aware that they are listed, and are willing to pick your child up in case of illness or emergency. Failure to comply with this may jeopardize your child's enrollment at the center.

Please carefully supervise your child **and their siblings** when entering or leaving the center. When you sign your child out, you are responsible for their safety and supervision.

We ask that the entrance gates and/or front doors be kept closed and that only adults open or close them. Please make sure that you are not letting anyone into the center behind you who does not have a key fob. Even if it feels rude, it is much better to close the door behind you and let someone ring the bell rather than to let someone in who doesn't have a reason to be at the center. It is the job of the center to check the monitor and determine whether someone without a key fob should be granted access, so please don't feel like you need to make that determination.

Emergency Pick Up

If you or someone on your emergency sheet is unable to pick up your child, protocol is for you to call the center and speak to the site director or Director of Child Care Services, who may authorize an alternative person to pick up. **Teachers may not make this authorization.** You will need to provide a description of the person and the person must bring photo identification.

Key Fobs

Families are issued a key fob for each parent upon enrollment. Key fobs should be used to access the center at drop off and pick up, and ensure the safety and security of everyone in the center. While we understand that a key fob may be forgotten occasionally, please make every effort to bring it each day so that the doorbell does not disrupt the program and interrupt the work of teachers and directors.

If key fobs are lost or are not returned on the last day of enrollment, families will be assessed a \$50 fee. If a key fob is found after a new one is issued, there will be no refund of the \$50 fee.

Cell Phone and Photography Policy

All five child care centers have a “no cell phone” policy inside the centers. If you must take or make a phone call, please step outside to do so. Transitions are made easier when your child has your full attention at drop off and pick up, and your full attention allows for clearer communication between teachers and parents. Photography of children with a cell phone or other electronic device (iPad, camera, etc.) is not allowed in our centers at any time. However, photos and/or videos may be taken at family events at your child’s center, such as potlucks, ice cream socials, pancake breakfasts, or performances. In these instances, we ask that parents refrain from posting pictures or videos of other people’s children on social media without parent permission.

Late Pick Up Policy

It is very difficult for children to be left at school after their normal pick up time. We ask that parents make every effort to observe their contract hours and the center's closing time, and are respectful of the staff's needs to get home to their own families and other obligations. If you are late, staff will attempt to reach parents and emergency contacts by phone. Please be assured that your child is always our concern and will be well cared for until your arrival. We understand that unavoidable situations arise, however, we have found it necessary to implement the following policies:

- **For subsidized families**, any arrival before or after your **contract hours** will result in an Early Arrival or Late Pick-up Notice. A verbal warning will be given on the first non-compliance of contract hours. After 2 more non-compliance notices in writing, you will be required to meet with the program director to discuss changes to your contracted hours. If continued non-compliance is noted, then your family may be terminated due to violation of your contracted hours.
- **For all families (subsidized and full cost)** arriving at the center after 5:30 pm (or after 1:00 pm at Verano Preschool), a late fee of \$20.00 will be charged for the first fifteen minutes and \$1.00 for **every minute** thereafter. Thirty minutes past closing is considered excessively late and will require payment of the late fee and a meeting with the site director before a child may return to the center. **Repeated lateness is a significant problem for the center and services will be terminated upon the third late notice.**

- If it is past closing time and neither parents nor other authorized adults on the emergency sheet can be contacted, campus police will be called.

If you have a question or concern to discuss with your child's teacher or director, please arrive early enough so that there is enough time to talk before the center closes. We are always happy to conference with you, but may ask that you make an appointment for another time if it is close to 5:30.

Parent Involvement

Parent Participation

Your child and the center benefit when you are an active participant, and we welcome your participation at whatever level you are comfortable giving. We have an open-door policy, which means that you are always welcome to visit, observe or be involved in any of the day-to-day activities at the center. If you have an interest in music, art, cooking, woodworking or have another hobby or talent that you would like to share with us, or would simply enjoy helping teachers with activities or projects, please let your child's teacher know. Parents are required to show proof of a negative TB test, as well as MMR, Tdap and influenza immunizations (or a waiver declining the flu shot) before being involved in activities that include close physical contact with children other than their own.

Center Involvement

There are many different ways of becoming involved in your child's center. These include parent education meetings; social gatherings or events for the children, participation on a parent committee, center work days, or fundraising. Notices of upcoming events will be in center newsletters and emails and will be posted on parent boards. Support of your child's center is vital to providing an outstanding program for children and families.

UCI Child Care Advisory Committee

The mission of the UCI Child Care Advisory Committee is to ensure high quality and affordable child care for students, staff, faculty, and community members. To this end, the principal activities of the committee include monitoring the utilization and financial health of all campus funded child care facilities, consulting on and soliciting feedback on family-friendly accommodation policies and resources, and advocating on behalf of and fundraising for affordable child care. The UCI Child Care Advisory Committee is a place where campus families can voice a request, concern or consideration related to child care. These dedicated activities advance the campus commitment to healthy child development and work-life integration for UCI students and university employees. The committee is comprised of both current and former parents in the programs, as well as faculty and staff who have a committed interest to ensuring that the University continues to provide high quality early care and education for the youngest members of the campus community.

Program Evaluations

Twice each year, we ask families to evaluate how well the program has met their needs through a parent survey given at the center. We are interested in hearing parent's perspective on the effectiveness of the program for your child and for you. We welcome your input, ideas, questions or concerns at **all** times, not just when we do a survey. The results of the parent survey are also used to set center goals for the school year.

In addition, the center teachers and director complete an Environmental Rating Scale (for Infant-Toddler, Early Childhood or School-age children) each spring to assess how well all of the areas of the center are working for children and families. The results of this assessment are also used to set center goals for the coming year.

Celebrations/Holidays/Birthdays

UCI is a multicultural community of people from diverse backgrounds. Our activities, programs and everyday interactions are enriched by our acceptance of one another, and we strive to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Sharing family traditions and holidays is an important part of our curriculum. Celebrations and holidays are shared with the children as special events and as part of our on-going program. Families are encouraged to share their traditions with their child's center.

Birthdays are an important day for many children and their families. Each center may choose to recognize a child's birthday in a different way, for example by singing a birthday song or reading a special book. Due to USDA Federal Food Program and NAEYC Accreditation guidelines, as well as the prevalence of food allergies, parents are asked not to bring food into the center to share for birthdays.

Parent-Center Communication

Director

The site director is available to assist you with confidential issues concerning your child, your family, or issues that may arise in the classroom or the center. Making an appointment to talk about confidential issues ensures that you have enough time to talk.

Informal Daily Communication

Check in with your child's teacher every morning at drop off time. It is important for us to be aware of any information that may affect your child's day at school. You may occasionally receive a call from the teacher to advise you about an incident during the day or to ask for your input on an issue that has come up during the day. Always feel comfortable to call us any time to check on your child. Please take a moment at pick-up time to find out how your child's day has been.

Child Assessment and Parent Conferences

The goal of all of our centers is to ensure that children are making progress in all areas of development. We use the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), a tool developed by the California Department of Education, Early Education & Support Division, to assess the development of children. All children are assessed within 60 days of enrollment and then twice yearly thereafter. Parent input is a necessary component of this assessment, and you will be invited to an initial goal-setting conference, and bi-yearly conferences after that to discuss your child's strengths, areas they are working on, and concerns that teachers or parents may have. Conferences are typically scheduled twice each year, but can be arranged any time at the request of parents or teachers. The results of assessments are also used to inform curriculum planning in the classroom, and curriculum goals are set each year based on the aggregate results of the center's DRDPs.

Bulletin Boards

There are parent bulletin boards or parent windows in all centers with information concerning center activities, meetings, announcements, health notices and menus. Each classroom also has a bulletin board with curriculum plans and other announcements.

Email Communication and Newsletters

Centers will send newsletters and reminders home either by email or by putting them on sign-in sheets to keep families informed about the program, parent events, classroom activities and general information and reminders of interest to all families.

Boundaries

We strive to have close yet professional relationships with the families that we serve. Please respect the personal boundaries of site directors and teachers by not asking to "friend" or follow them on social media sites, or asking for their cell phone or home phone numbers as well as attend birthday parties or social events, or provide services such as tutoring or private lessons of any kind.

UCI Child Care Services prohibits all Center employees, including student employees (collectively, "Employees") from signing enrolled children in or out of a Center (Infant Toddler Center, Children's Center, Early Childhood Education Center, Extended Day Care Center and Verano Preschool), as well as transporting enrolled children in their cars. Additionally, Employees are prohibited from "babysitting" children enrolled in any Centers. We understand that you may be more comfortable having someone you know babysit your children, but experience has shown it can be confusing for children, can blur the boundaries between home and school, can give rise to conflicts of interest, and poses a liability for the Center and its Employees. We ask for your cooperation and support of this by refraining from asking any of our Employees (including student employees) to provide care for your children any time other than when they are in the Centers.

Translation

When necessary, we will provide a translator for communication with parents and in interpreting center materials.

Guidance

We strive to create an environment where children are safe and where they know they will be cared for and listened to, not just by their teachers, but by one another as well.

In order to minimize conflict, much effort is taken to provide appropriate activities, create an inviting environment, and meet the individual needs of children. Still, conflicts are a natural occurrence as children try to relate to one another in a group setting.

Many techniques are used for assisting children through conflict resolution. Although our interactions vary depending on the age of the children and the severity of the situation, all means seek to guide children as problem solvers.

The following techniques are used regularly at the centers:

- **Limit Setting-** In order for children to build trusting relationships and feel confident to explore, they must clearly know what is expected of them. Rules are kept few, basic, clear and concise. Boundaries and expectations expand in keeping with the abilities of the children.
- **Consistency-** So that children know what to expect (and from that can anticipate, predict and change their own behavior accordingly), limits and expectations are consistent throughout the classrooms. All adults respond in a consistent manner to conflict situations.
- **Tone-** The message a child receives from an adult intervening is: you are safe, the situation is under control, and we can work it out. A firm, kind, serious tone with a relaxed demeanor reinforces this message.
- **Modeling-** The adults in the center set an example of compassionate, caring individuals who are able to express their own feelings and needs clearly and calmly.
- **Passive Intervention-** Children are given time to work through their own problems. If a situation does not escalate to destructive or aggressive behavior, a teacher may choose to simply observe as the children seek a solution, or their presence can serve as a gentle reminder to use words instead of action. Teachers trust children to 'figure it out' but are there to help if they should need it. When additional intervention is necessary to facilitate the resolution process, it is as non-intrusive as possible.
- **Physical Intervention-** Children will be physically stopped when hurting each other. The focus will then turn to resolving the conflict at hand.

- **Identifying/Interpreting-** "You both want the truck." Such a simple statement can clarify the problem, diffuse tension and help the problem solving begin. Children also need help to consider other's emotions or needs especially when they are upset themselves. For example, "Look, he is crying. It really hurt when you kicked him."
- **Validating Feelings-** Constructive thinking is virtually impossible when a child is overcome by an emotion such as anger, sadness, fear or frustration. Acknowledging the emotion is imperative before any other learning can occur. "I will not let you hit her. Tell me why you are so angry." It is important that all children in a conflict be honestly listened to. Children are not told to say "I'm sorry," but rather, to actively comfort or offer help to the child they hurt/upset. Adults may say, "I'm sorry you got hurt" and at some point, children will spontaneously do the same.
- **Giving Choices/Offering solutions-** Adults offer choices and possible solutions to children who are having a difficult time finding them on their own. Some options given are negotiating and collaboration.
- **Redirection-** A request to stop a negative behavior is accompanied by a suggestion for an appropriate behavior with which to replace it..."You may not climb on the fence; if you would like to climb you can use the climber."
- **Natural Consequences-** Consequences for behavior are those that are logical to children. "If you are not able to stop throwing the sand, then you will need to come out of the sandbox." When children are able to understand the results of their own behavior they are better able to modify it.

About "Time Out"

Although it is a popular discipline method, "time out" is not considered a viable option at the centers. While it may interrupt a negative behavior, it does not help children acquire the skills to deal with the situation should it arise again. Young children are generally not yet capable of the reflective thought necessary to make "time out" a learning situation. If a child needs time to calm down, teachers facilitate this in a non-punitive manner by helping children find a way to calm themselves.

When More is Needed

Occasionally a child's behavior is excessively disruptive or harmful to individual children or the class. UCI Child Care Services is committed to seeking solutions for difficult situations with children. If the teacher and director concur that they need additional support and expertise to best meet a child's needs, some or all of the following steps will be required of the family:

- **Additional parent/teacher conferences** will be held. The purpose of the conference is to clearly define the problem, re-examine possible causes, brainstorm

any changes the staff and/or family can make and reinforce consistency between home and school.

- **Community Resources-** Professional support (for example a Resource Specialist from the Irvine Unified School District) may be sought. The site director facilitates the referral process, working with parents, staff, and specialists.
- **Schedule Adjustment-** the site director and teachers may determine that an adjusted schedule (for example, shortened hours or different arrival time) is in the best interest of the child. Families may be requested to come to the center to speak directly to their child about expectations for behavior at school, or may be asked to take their child home for the remainder of the day. Typically, these are interim measures until there is a resolution of the issues.

Excluding or expelling a child from our programs is not considered until all steps above and/or all possible interventions have been exhausted and there is an agreement between the center and the family that excluding the child from the program is in the best interest of the child. All decisions will be in compliance with federal and state civil rights laws. In the event that a child must be excluded from the program, the program will assist the family in accessing services and finding an alternative placement.

Individualized Education Plans

We are committed to working in partnership with families whose children have Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plans (IEP). We will attend IFSP or IEP meetings when requested by parents. A copy of your child's IFSP or IEP is kept on file at the center. Teachers refer to the child's plan to support the goals and objectives within the classroom. Additionally, we will collaborate with all professionals providing services for children with IFSP's or IEP's. We will support parents in the services they request for their child and will make reasonable accommodations to support their services within the center. All fees charged by any consultants or professionals are the responsibility of the family.

Biting Policy

One of the most upsetting yet normal behaviors of early childhood is biting. Infants may bite because their gums hurt, and to bite down hard on something gives relief. With toddlers and young preschoolers, social skills are still limited. It is difficult for young children to distinguish between what is loving and what hurts. When an older child bites, it is usually a means of expressing emotions. Young children do not have a social conscience as we know it. They may fully understand that when they bite, someone cries; but they have not yet connected all of the social consequences.

Parents will be notified if their child has been bitten, and of the procedure's teachers have taken. The name of the child who did the biting will not be included when informing the parent of the incident. If the bite has broken the skin, it will be washed with soap and

water. Both parents will be notified immediately and requested to call their child's physician for further instructions.

If biting becomes an ongoing behavior, the site director and the child's teachers will talk with parents and together they will carefully analyze the circumstances. Anecdotal information noting when the incident happened, where it happened, what precipitated the bite, who was involved, and the times of day the biting occurs will be recorded. A teacher will be assigned to stay in close proximity to the child to interrupt the biting behavior before it happens and to provide needed support. Reasonable action will be taken to modify the environment, routines or interactions within the group, to help diminish the biting. If further action is needed, please consult the "When More is Needed" section of the guidance policy.

Health, Safety and Nutrition

The centers maintain clean, safe, and healthful environments. Our goal is to protect and enhance the health and safety of all children and staff. Adults model good health and safety behaviors and promote good daily health routines. Teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid.

Health Requirements for Admission

Health regulations are determined by the California Department of Social Services and the State Department of Health. For the protection of all children enrolled in the program, the following requirements are necessary:

- Verification of your child's current immunizations must be on file before your child may attend school.
- Your child must have documentation showing that they are free from active tuberculosis or a waiver from their physician stating that they are not in a high-risk category.
- A physical exam by a licensed physician is required prior to enrollment. At the Infant Toddler Center, children are required to submit verification of an annual health screening.
- An additional health history completed by parents is requested to help teachers become better acquainted with your child.
- Immunization records must be kept current while your child is enrolled in the program.

Daily Health Evaluation

State regulations require that a teacher evaluate each child's health when the child arrives at school. Teachers do not allow sick or possibly ill children in the classroom. Teachers use their discretion and best judgment when sending a child home.

Should your child become ill at school, we will call you immediately and your child will need to be taken home by you or someone on your authorized pick up list within 30 minutes of the call. If your child attends Extended Day and they stay home from school in the morning because of illness or tiredness, they may not come to Extended Day in the afternoon.

If there is a disagreement with the center's decision to send the child home, the parents will need verification from a physician stating that the child is not contagious and is well enough to take part in the program.

Teachers appreciate knowing if your child is undergoing any unusual or traumatic experiences that might affect their behavior at school. This information allows teachers to better meet the needs of your child during school hours

Developmental and Health Screenings

Several of the centers utilize the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ3 and ASQ SE), which is a developmental screening and monitoring tool. Upon entry, parents are given the opportunity to fill this out, which provides a look at how their child is doing in important developmental areas. Parents can choose to participate, can opt out, or can choose to participate at a later time. If a parent chooses to participate, they will take the ASQ questionnaire home, complete it, and return it to the center. The director or the child's primary teacher will score the questionnaire and will share the results with the family as soon as possible, either verbally or in writing. Completed questionnaires and score sheets will be placed in the child's assessment file and will be kept confidential.

After the questionnaire is scored, parents will receive a recommendation which may range from no further action necessary (because the child's development is on schedule), a parent-teacher conference to discuss next steps, a list of activities that parents can do with their child at home, or referrals for additional screenings. If referrals for vision/hearing, health care, behavior screening or early intervention are recommended, the director and child's primary teacher will help connect families to these resources.

UCI Child Care Centers provide health screenings for **preschool children** (ages 3-5 years old) with The Irvine Unified School District (IUSD) School Readiness Nurses. The School Readiness Nurses, funded by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, work collaboratively with both parents and professionals to provide an array of services. They provide health screenings for preschool children at no cost, which consist of hearing, vision, dental, and development as well as measuring height and weight.

Parents must give consent for their child to have the above-mentioned health screening by completing a consent form with a parent signature and a development response form. Parents may choose whether to have the results of the screenings shared with their child's teacher and/or preschool director. Parents receive a screening results form or a direct call from the School Readiness Nurse to discuss any concerns or questions and to review the developmental screening. All information is kept confidential.

School Readiness Nurses share overall health screening results from the City of Irvine and any recommended follow-ups or referrals needed with the center director. The results of

health screenings are used to provide appropriate community resources and medical information for children and families in our programs.

Health Policy for Children

In order to protect the health of children, families and staff, UCI Child Care Services adheres to the following policies:

Children will be sent home from the center if:

- they have a temperature of 100.4 or above.
- they have three loose stools or more during the day OR the stool cannot be contained in the diaper OR underwear for toilet-trained children.
- they vomit once (and it was not caused by coughing, choking on food, crying, or motion).
- they are suspected to have a contagious illness due to symptoms such as rash, (which may include blisters, raised bumps or lesions), sore throat, or red/discharging eyes).
- any illness or symptom that prevents the child from participating meaningfully in school activities or if the illness or symptom results in a need for care that is greater than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, we will call you immediately. Your child will need to be picked by you or someone on your child’s authorized pick up list within 30 minutes. Your child will be isolated to minimize exposure to other children and will stay with a familiar teacher until they are picked up.

Children Must Be Excluded From The Center With These Symptoms:

Symptoms	Child May Not Return to School Until:
Fever of 100.4 or above	The temperature has returned to normal for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication)
Diarrhea	Loose stools have subsided for at least 24 hours and your child has returned to normal eating with no stomach upset.
Vomiting	Vomiting has subsided for at least 24 hours and your child has returned to normal eating with no stomach upset.
Strep Throat	A medical professional has written a release for your child to return to school.
Red/ Discharging Eyes	A medical professional has written a release for your child to return to school.
Rash (e.g.: blisters, raised bumps, lesions)	A medical professional has written a release for your child to return to school.

Head Lice

The child has been treated with a pediculicide and *all nits have been removed from hair. Hair will be re-checked at school after 7 days.*

If your child is sent home because a teacher or director suspects that they have a contagious illness, you will be required to bring a note from a medical professional in order for your child to return to school. Please notify the center immediately if your child has a contagious illness such as strep throat, pinworms, impetigo, conjunctivitis, measles, mumps, whooping cough, staph infection, chicken pox, hand, foot and mouth disease, Covid-19, RSV, Norovirus or head lice. We will notify all parents if children have been exposed to a contagious illness while at the center (keeping the name of the ill child confidential). This policy has been revised effective 02/15/2024.

Strategies for Keeping Your Child Healthy

- Pay close attention to your child's health. Take the initiative in getting your child to the doctor as soon as you suspect that your child may have an infection. You can avoid losing time at work or school by identifying illness early.
- Let your child's doctor know that your child is in group care. Communicating this information to your doctor will enable him/her to work with you to help keep your child as well as possible.
- Pay attention to your child's sleep and diet. Fatigue increases susceptibility to illness. It is very important to your child's health as well as cognitive and physical development that your child be eating a balanced, nutritious diet.
- Dress your child appropriately for the weather. Over-dressing and under-dressing contribute to poor temperature regulation, which may lead to illness. Please keep a sweater in your child's cubby. We can always undress a child if the weather turns warm. We cannot always find an extra sweater if the weather turns cool.
- Be prepared for your child's illnesses. Develop a back-up network of people who can care for your child in an emergency. Children, whether they are in or out of group care have an average of six colds per year, usually occurring during the fall, winter, and spring months. You may lose work/school time during your child's first year of group care.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics states that young children should not be put to bed with a bottle. This can cause ear infections and tooth decay. Young children's Eustachian tubes can become congested and infected from drinking bottles while lying on a flat surface. Milk or juice in bottles can also cause a condition called bottle mouth in which children damage or lose their baby teeth. This can seriously affect their permanent teeth, and it is painful and expensive to correct.

- For the health and safety of children, personal pets and animals are not allowed in the center without prior authorization from the center director.

Medication

A center director or teacher shall administer medications for children only when prescribed by a physician. Each container must be child proof, carry the name of the medication, the date prescribed, the name of the child for whom it was prescribed, the name of the prescribing physician, and the physician's instructions.

When sample medication is given by the physician or when the physician requests that you give your child an over-the-counter medication or dietary supplement, the medication must be accompanied by the same information as a prescription, written on the doctor's prescription stationery with a current date.

Parents must completely fill out and sign a **UCI Child Care Services Parent Consent for Administration of Medications and Medication Log** each week. If your child continues to need medication the following week, a new form must be filled out on Monday or medication will not be given.

In addition to the Administration of Medications Log, if a child uses an inhaler or nebulizer parents must also fill out the **Nebulizer Care Consent/Verification Form** and provide an **Asthma Action Plan** ((completed and signed by physician or health care provider working under the supervision of the child's physician), which must include the following information:

- Name of child and name of medication.
- Specific indications (such as symptoms) for administering the inhaled medication in accordance with the physician's prescription.
- Potential side effects and expected response.
- Dose form and amount to be administered in accordance with the physician's prescription.
- Actions to be taken in the event of side effects or incomplete treatment response in accordance with the physician's prescription. This includes actions to be taken in an emergency.
- Instructions for proper storage of the medication.
- The telephone number and address of the child's physician.

If your child needs medication on a continual basis because of a chronic condition, please speak to your director.

Sunscreen

Children spend a great deal of time outdoors during most days. If you would like your child to use sunscreen, please apply it in the morning before coming to school. Parents who want children to have a second application in the afternoon will need to fill out a Sunscreen Authorization Form. If you are providing your own sunscreen, you must write your child's full name on the bottle and it must have an expiration date on it.

Field Trips and Walks

To enrich curriculum experiences and teach children about their community, we take walks throughout Verano and to places surrounding the UCI campus. Parents will be informed in advance of any trips off campus and are always welcome to participate. We will follow state ratios for field trips, carry first aid equipment and emergency forms, and a cell phone. If your child attends the Extended Day Care Center, please see the center director for information about summer field trips.

Injuries

Minor injuries are treated with soap and water, bandages and ice. The teacher observing the injury will write an accident report and place the original on your child's attendance sheet for signature. Parents will be called immediately if we observe a head injury or in the event of any serious or questionable injury. In an emergency, the staff will contact 911.

Emergency Procedures

Child Care Services has an emergency plan in the event of earthquake, fire, and/or natural disaster. If there is a major disaster, children will be cared for on-site if it is safe, or moved to another location. Parents are asked to pick up their children as soon as possible, and to please limit phone calls. Although we know you will be concerned about your child, we need to be free to care for all children and the phone lines will need to be kept free for emergency use. All centers have first aid supplies, food, water, and blankets on hand if children need to remain in the centers for an extended period of time. Sign out procedures will be followed. If you send another adult to pick up your child, they must be on your child's emergency list.

Each month the centers have drills to keep staff and children prepared for an emergency. Children participate in fire and earthquake drills, as well as lock down drills. Teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid, and all centers are equipped with smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event that a center must evacuate, we will work with campus police and the UCI Emergency Operation Center to determine a safe evacuation site. Our designated evacuation site is the Anteater Recreation Center (ARC) located at 680 California St. Any change of location will be posted at the entrance to each site.

UCI Child Care Services Notification System

UCI Child Care Services has a notification system similar to the Zot Alert system that the campus uses. It is a way to notify all parents via email and/or text in case of emergency, evacuation or center closure.

Please sign up for the notification system by going to: notifications.childcare.uci.edu (Do not use www. prior to typing in the address).

1. Once in, use your UCI email address to log in using your UCI NetID and password. After log in, go to "edit my account." Parents can also create an account if they don't have a UCI email address.
2. Classify yourself as "parent," and then check the center or centers where your child(ren) is/are enrolled.
3. The "Device" portion of the account information is where you can choose how you would like to be notified, either by text or email or both. Notifications are for parents or guardians only.

Building Access and Security

All visitors and guests must check in with the center office or director before entering the classroom. They will be asked to sign in and to wear a visitor badge while in the classroom.

Insurance

Child Care Services carries a secondary medical insurance policy for minor accidents occurring at the center. This policy is meant to cover some out-of-pocket expenses.

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff are **mandated** by Community Care Licensing to report **suspected** child abuse or neglect to the Orange County Child Abuse Registry. Reports are made confidentially and site directors and teachers are unable to discuss or confirm whether a report has been made or not.

Nutrition

Family style eating is an integral part of our programs. Staff sit with children during mealtimes to serve as role models and to encourage healthy eating habits. Meals and snacks are planned according to the recommendation of the USDA Federal Child Care Food Program. Monthly menus are posted in each center, and are given to parents each month.

Centers receiving funding from the State Department of Education (Infant Toddler Center, Children's Center and Extended Day) provide breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Upon enrollment, and in October each year, families are required to fill out a food program application to verify their eligibility, even if they know that they are not income-eligible.

At the subsidized centers (Infant-Toddler, Children's Center and Extended Day), a doctor's note is required if your child requires food substitutions or is unable to participate in

center meals. Parents of any child with severe food allergies or special nutritional needs should see the site director of your center.

Lunch boxes that are brought to school (Verano Preschool) must be labeled with your child's name.

Please note that all centers are NUT FREE, which means that no peanuts, peanut butter, or tree nuts (such as almonds and walnuts) may be brought into or served at the center.

Sleeping Arrangements

Your center director will discuss napping and sleeping arrangements with you during your intake appointment. The Infant-Toddler Center and all of our preschool programs are required to provide a napping/resting period for all children. Our licensing requirements prevent us from disrupting a child's sleep by waking them up, or forcing them to sleep if they are not tired. At the Infant-Toddler center, infants are always put down to sleep on their backs. When infants can easily turn over from a back position to a belly position, infants will still be put down to sleep on their backs but then allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer to sleep.

Administrative Policies- Non-subsidized families

Calendar

The centers follow the administrative calendar of the University and are closed for all University holidays, as well as for one week of staff development. A calendar noting your center's operating days will be given to you upon enrollment.

Registration Fee

All families will be charged a one-time non-refundable registration fee to reserve a space. If a child leaves the center for any reason, a re-registration fee is charged upon return.

- For Verano Preschool families, an annual deposit is required to hold a space for your child. This is applied to tuition unless you do not return in the fall. If you do not return in the fall, **the deposit will not be refunded**. Tuition is charged by the month throughout the year.

Billing Procedures and Payment of Fees

Tuition is due in advance on a monthly basis.

- Tuition bills are placed on sign-in sheets at the end of each month (for the following month).

- A monthly fee is charged for tuition. Should a child start the program during the middle of the month, the daily fee will be charged for the number of days in attendance. Daily tuition is prorated based on your contracted rate.
- No tuition credit is given for any days the center is closed due to university holidays and staff training days or any days a child is absent due to vacation or illness.
- If your child is absent from school for any reason, other than extended hospitalization, full tuition will be charged for the entire month.
- After the fifth working day of the month if tuition is not paid, a \$3.00 late fee will be assessed for each day tuition is unpaid. If payment is not received as of the tenth working day, child care will not be provided.
- Due to University policy, cash cannot be accepted for tuition payment. **There is a \$25.00 returned check service charge** (fees subject to change depending on University Cashier policy). If a check is returned, your personal check will no longer be accepted. After that you will need to bring a cashier's check or money order for payment.
- Tuition is due at the Child Care Services Office. There is a tuition drop-off box located in the lobby, or tuition can be mailed to our administrative office.
- **There is a one-month tuition charge if a one-month written notice of termination is not given to the office.**
- There is a 10% tuition discount given for siblings.
- Full-cost families will receive \$50.00 off their next month's tuition for referring a new family to any one of the child care centers.

Grievance Procedure

If an issue cannot be resolved within the classroom, parents should contact the site Director at their center. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at that level. However, if the issue remains, parents would then be directed to speak to the Director of Child Care Services. If more assistance is needed, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Wellness, Health and Counseling Services can be contacted.

Termination of Services

The Center may terminate your child's enrollment under the following circumstances:

- Non-payment for your child care services and/ or lack of adherence to tuition payment policies.
- Parents falsify information on enrollment forms or otherwise knowingly falsify information.
- Parents do not agree or do not follow and comply with the policies set forth in this Handbook.

- Lack of parental cooperation with the Center’s efforts to resolve difference and/or to meet the child’s needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
- Inappropriate or abusive behavior and/ or verbal abuse or threats by parents, relatives, guardians or other parties toward the Center staff, other parents or children.
- Inability of parents to deal in a professional manner with Center personnel or other parents and children at the center.
- The continued enrollment of the child poses a risk to the health and/ or safety of other children, parents or center staff members or continued enrollment of the child constitutes an undue burden on the Center’s resources.

Sabbatical Policy

Parents may request a sabbatical leave of absence when they are going to be gone from UCI for between three months minimum to one year maximum. A request must be given to the Child Care Services office forty-five (45) days before the start date of the leave, and this temporary leave is in effect only as long as a parent maintains their UCI affiliation. Your child’s space in the program will be filled with another child as of the beginning of the approved leave, and there is no guarantee that an appropriate opening will be available for your child immediately upon return from leave or that the same tuition rate will be available. It is the parent’s responsibility to confirm the return date (or any changes) in writing (via letter or email) with the Child Care Services Office no less than 45 days in advance of your return. Failure to return from your sabbatical will result in the loss of your initial enrollment date at Child Care Services, which may impact your priority on future wait lists. You are responsible for your child’s tuition through the final day of attendance, even if the leave begins earlier than the requested date. Parents are responsible for paying an administrative fee of \$100 at the time of re-enrollment following the leave of absence.

Administrative Policies: Subsidized Families

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility is based on documentation and verification of at least **one** of the following:

1. Income

Total countable income means all income of the individuals counted in the family size, for example:

- Gross wages or salaries
- Overtime
- Tips
- Cash aid
- Child support payment received
- Portion of student grant or scholarships not identified for educational purposes as tuition, books, or supplies.

Income documentation is required for the month preceding certification or recertification. Current and ongoing income documentation may be requested. If you are **employed**, UCI Child Care Services needs a release authorization and a payroll check stub(s) equivalent to one month's pay, a letter from your employer, or another record of wages issued by your employer. If you are **self-employed**, UCI Child Care Services needs as many of the following types of documentation as necessary to determine your income: a letter from your source of income, a copy of your most recently signed and completed tax return, or other business records as requested.

We reserve the right to ask for additional documentation to verify income.

2. Current Aid Recipient

3. Homelessness

If a parent is homeless, UCI Child Care Services needs a written referral from an emergency shelter or other legal, medical or social service agency OR a written declaration that the parent is homeless and a statement describing your living situation.

4. Child Protective Services

If the child is under protective services, UCI Child Care Services needs a written referral dated within six months of your application for services that includes:

- A statement from the local county welfare department, child welfare services worker, certifying that the child is receiving Child Protective Services (CPS) and that child care and development services are a necessary component of the CPS service plan.
- Probable duration of the CPS service plan
- Name, address, phone number and signature of county child welfare staff.

5. At Risk of Abuse, Neglect, and/or Exploitation

If a child is *at risk*, UCI Child Care Services needs a written referral dated within six months of the application for services, including:

- A statement by a legally qualified professional (someone licensed in the state to perform legal, medical, health or social services for the general public) that the child is at risk of abuse and neglect and that child care and development services are needed to reduce or eliminate that risk.
- Probable duration of the at-risk situation.
- Name, address, phone number and signature of the legally qualified professional.

Family Selection Process

UCI Child Care Services accepts walk-ins and maintains a Wait List when our centers are full. All families are ranked. Ranking is based on your gross family income and your family size.

Priority for selection are:

- CPS or At Risk
- Lowest rank

Documentation and Determination of Family Size

The information provided on the application for services shall be used to determine family size. A parent shall provide the names of the parents and the names, gender and birthdates of the children identified in the family. This information shall be documented on a confidential application for child care and development services and used to determine family size. The parent shall provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family.

The number of children shall be documented by providing one of the following documents, as applicable:

- Birth certificates
- Court orders regarding child custody
- Adoption documents
- Records of Foster Care placements;
- School or medical records;
- County welfare department records; or
- Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent.

If only one parent has signed an application and the information provided above indicates there is a second parent who has not signed the application, the parent who has signed the application shall self –certify the presence or absence of the second parent under penalty of perjury. The parent who has signed the application shall not be required to submit additional information documenting the presence or absence of the second parent (*EC 8263[a][1][B]*).

If the information provided by the parent is insufficient, the contractor shall request any additional documentation necessary from above to verify the family composition and family size.

For income eligibility and family fee purposes, when a child and his or her siblings are living in a family that does not include their biological or adoptive parent, only the child and related siblings shall be counted to determine family size. In these cases, the adult(s) must meet a need criterion as specified in *EC 8263(a)(1)(B)*, to receive services.

Calendar

Student families follow the quarterly academic calendar of the University, and therefore receive child care only when classes are in session. You will be given a calendar upon enrollment. Medical and Law students will follow the academic calendar for the UCI Medical School or the UCI Law School but must contract for the number of days permitted by the grant to subsidized families.

Certification

To qualify for a subsidy, one parent must verify that he or she is a matriculated UCI student paying fees through the Registrar's Office. **Failure to make reasonable academic progress may result in termination of services. Academic progress is defined as: a grade of C or better in all attempted classes**

The other parent must verify need based on documentation of one of the following:

- **Child Protective Services** (see Eligibility above)
- **At-Risk** (see Eligibility above)
- **Parental Incapacity:** If you are incapacitated, UCI Child Care Services needs
 - A signed release statement authorizing a legally qualified health professional to disclose information necessary to establish that you meet the definition of incapacity and
 - A statement (form CD 3906) from a legally qualified health professional that includes the following:
 - That the parent is incapacitated, that the parent is incapable of providing care and supervision for the child for part of the day, and the extent to which the parent is incapable of providing care and supervision, the days and hours per week that services are recommended, probable duration of incapacitation, name, business address, telephone number, professional license number, and signature of the health professional.
- **Employment**
- **Training Toward Vocational Goal** (see requirements under "Certification")
- **Actively Seeking Employment**
- **Seeking Permanent Housing**
- **Or a combination of the items listed above.**

Gross family income must not exceed 70% of the state median income at time of the initial certification in order for the family to qualify for a state subsidy.

Recertification of Eligibility and Need

To continue to receive services, the family must be re-certified every year and must provide documentation to support continued eligibility and need for services. The enrolled student must submit new training verification and employment verification around the anniversary of your last certification date. A report of sufficient progress will be required at time of re-certification (a copy of grades/transcripts). They must also provide income verification indicating that the family income does not exceed 85% of the state median income in order to be eligible for recertification.

Fraudulent information or failure to report changes to the Child Care Services Office will result in immediate termination of services. The parent(s) will be obligated to re-pay the State and UCI Child Care Services for services rendered.

Contract Hours

Your contract hours for the year will be based on the training and or employment verifications of both parents. Contract hours will be assigned based on the need of both parents. While seeking employment, your hours will be limited to not more than 30 hours per week. If you need to modify your contract hours, please provide new documentation indicating reason for change, this may include a new training verification for the quarter, new employment verification or internship assignments. **We request a one-week advance notice on any changes to your contract hours. If back up documentation is not provided, we may not be able to accommodate your change. Drop-in care is not available at any of the centers.**

Attendance

Unexcused absences by student families jeopardize the grant for all families. An unexcused absence would include things like the child not feeling like coming to school, or the parent or child waking up late. It is understood that special circumstances arise, but after three unexcused absences you will be required to meet with the director to discuss your child care. Unexcused absences will result in termination of services. **Unexcused absences are anything not listed below:**

Excused absences include:

- Child or parent illness or quarantine
- Court ordered visitation with absent parent (maximum of four consecutive weeks- court order must be on file)
- Dental, doctor or therapy appointment (for child or parent)
- Family emergency (illness of sibling, death of immediate family members, funeral, car accident, weather conditions, court appearance, car trouble, etc.)
- Best Interest Days

Best Interest Days are limited to ten days per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). **After you have exhausted your ten best interest days for the fiscal year, any additional absences in the best interest of the child are considered unexcused absences. If your family accrues more than five unexcused absences for the fiscal year (July 1- June 30), your family will be terminated due to excess absences.**

Failure to list a reason for your child's absence will result in an unexcused absence.

Best interest include:

- Vacation (specific, with parent/relative)
- Day with family
- Religious holiday
- Occasional special event (school play, recital, etc.)
- School program/ field trip

- Child's birthday
- Other reasons which are clearly in the best interest of the child.

An absence is applied only if your child is out for the entire day.

Limited Term Service Leave is not allowed. If your child leaves the program, it is your responsibility to fill out a new subsidized application to put your name back on the wait list. Priority will not be given for your anticipation return date.

Billing Procedure and Payment of Fees

A family fee assessment is based on your income and family size.

- A family fee is charged based on the number of contracted hours for the month. Full time monthly fees are assessed when a child is scheduled to attend 130 hours or more per month. Any months when the contracted hours are less than 130 hours, the part time monthly fee will be assessed. There is no adjustment for excused or unexcused absences. There is an exception to the family fee if the family income is below 40% of State Median Income, or if the family is receiving CalWORKs cash aid.
- Your monthly family fee is based on current income verification and family size. If you pay for child care for another child not in one of our programs, your monthly family fee will be adjusted upon verification of other child care fees paid to a different provider for your family. If you pay fees to other service providers because we are not able to meet all of your child care needs, you will be given credit for this when you submit a receipt or cancelled check.
- State regulations require that a family fee be charged even when your child is absent due to vacation or illness.
- Your family fee is due in full on the first of each month and is delinquent if not paid by the fifth working day of the month. It is to be paid at the Child Care Services Office. If payment is not received by the 5th working day, a notice of action will be issued to terminate services two weeks from the date of the notice. A reasonable repayment plan may be accepted, and you must comply with the repayment plan for continued services.
- **There is a \$ 25.00 returned check service charge** (fees subject to change depending on the University Cashier policy). If a check is returned we can no longer accept your personal check, only **MONEY ORDERS OR CASHIER'S CHECKS.**
- Due to University policy we cannot accept cash for tuition payment.
- **A one-month notice in writing is required when terminating from the program.**

Transferring from One Center to Another

Transferring to the next center is not automatic. It is only possible if your child is next on the waiting list and there is an opening at the appropriate center. Children enrolled in a subsidized program are automatically placed on a waiting list for the next subsidized center. Names are put on the list according to the date your child was initially enrolled in his/her current center.

Termination of Services

A family will be terminated from the program if they fail to meet subsidy requirements or knowingly use incorrect or inaccurate information to obtain a benefit that they would otherwise not be entitled to receive. **The Center may also terminate your child's enrollment under the following circumstances:**

- Non-payment for your child care services and/ or lack of adherence to family fee payment policies.
- Parents falsify information on enrollment forms or otherwise knowingly falsify information.
- Parents do not agree or do not follow and comply with the policies set forth in this Handbook.
- Lack of parental cooperation with the Center's efforts to resolve difference and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
- Inappropriate or abusive behavior and/ or verbal abuse or threats by parents, relatives, guardians or other parties toward the Center staff, other parents or children.
- Inability of parents to deal in a professional manner with Center personnel or other parents and children at the center.
- The continued enrollment of the child poses a risk to the health and/ or safety of other children, parents or center staff members or continued enrollment of the child constitutes an undue burden on the Center's resources.

If services are terminated for any reason, your family will not be eligible to re-apply for services for a minimum of six months. Re-application for services will be subject to review by the Child Care Services Committee.

Uniform Complaint Procedures Notice

University of California Irvine, Child Care Services

It is the intent of the University of California Irvine, Child Care Services to fully comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Anyone has the right to file a complaint regarding the University of California Irvine, Child Care Services alleged violation of a statute or regulation that the California Department of Education is authorized to enforce. This includes allegation of unlawful discrimination.

Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with:

**California Department of Education
Early Learning and Care Division
Attn: Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814**

**California Department of Social Services
Child Care and Development Division
Complaint Coordinator
744 P Street, MS 9-8-351
Sacramento, CA 95814**

If the complaint is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education or California Department of Social Services, remedies may be available in federal or state court.

A person filing a written complaint alleging unlawful discrimination may also pursue civil remedies.