

**Frostburg State University
Children's Center Handbook**

PURPOSE: The University Children's Center is a self-supporting unit attached to the Department of Human Resources. The primary purpose of the program is to provide quality child care for children of University students, staff and faculty while the parents participate in the University. There are a limited number of openings for parents not affiliated with the University.

PHILOSOPHY: Children are provided care that will encourage the development of each child, based on individual physical, emotional, social and cognitive needs. Each child's needs are met in a group setting. This includes periods of quiet and active play, small and large group activities, lunch and snacks, as well as rest and sleep. The children are offered varied experiences planned on a weekly basis as well as the opportunity to participate in relaxed group experiences. Through a secure and warm environment that encourages the total development of the child, the program will help children know their individuality, understand their special worth, and develop self-discipline, tolerance, and understanding of individuals different from themselves. FSU is committed to making all of its programs, services and activities accessible to persons with disabilities. You may request accommodations through the Americans with Disabilities Compliance Office. (301) 687-4102, TDD (301) 687-7955.

PROGRAM: It is the philosophy of this program that early childhood be a time of fun, warmth, security, exploring and discovery. Children are creative and receptive; therefore, our program strives to nurture and encourage these qualities in its students. The curriculum includes sharing and conversation time, stories, songs, and finger plays, creative art activities and crafts, games, small and large muscle activities, exposure to shapes, colors, numbers and letters as well as the celebration of birthdays and holidays. Children are admitted regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion or disability.

AGES: Children must be at least 2 ½ years old and have independent toilet skills, except if a child has a medical condition or disability preventing independent toilet skills.

STAFF: Our Early Childhood Staff meet the State requirements and have degrees and/or certificates in Education and the child care provider course. Complete credentials are available upon request.

CAPACITY: The Center is licensed for 20 children at any one time.

STAFF/CHILD RATIO: We strive to provide a ratio of one staff for every eight children. However, the state licensing regulations allow a ratio of one staff for every ten children ages 2 ½ -5.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES: Your child will be considered for enrollment when the following forms/fees have been received and accepted by the Director: Pink Registration Form (2 sides) Agreement/Contract (signed) Registration Fee (\$75.00 per child, \$100.00 per family-\$50.00 for returning children & \$75.00 for returning families) made payable to Frostburg State University. The following forms MUST be received one week prior to your child's first day:

- **Emergency Card (2 sides)**
- **Health Inventory**
- **Immunization Form**
- **All About My Child Form**
- **Lead Addendum**
- **Signed card in back of Making the Difference For Your Child Booklet**

WITHDRAWAL NOTICES: A written notice must be received two weeks prior to your child's last day of attendance for any adjustments to be made to your tuition. If this notice is not received, tuition will not be refunded.

TUITION: There is a yearly registration fee of \$75.00 per child (\$100.00 per family). Tuition is due one month prior to your child's attendance. Tuition is to be paid in full by the due dates listed in this handbook. Checks should be made payable to Frostburg State University and mailed or taken to the F.S.U. Business Office (Pullen Hall) between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday. You will receive a statement indicating the amount due for 4 or 5 months. However, only 4 weeks of tuition is due at one time. You will receive a reminder from the F.S.U. Business Office approximately ten days before the due date. A tuition payment schedule can be found later in this handbook. There will be no charge for days the Center is closed for a holiday but you will not be refunded for sick, vacation or weather related closings.

Pre-School Program: 8:30- Noon \$12.00/day

Child Care is offered between 8 a.m. & 8:30 a.m. at \$2.00 and Noon- 4:30 p.m. at a rate of \$3.00 hr.

HOURS: The Center is open between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Children may arrive 5 minutes prior to their contracted time and be picked up 5 minutes

past their contracted time provided these times are not 8 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Late pick-up/early arrival fees (\$1.00 per minute) will apply to any child dropped off early or picked up later than their contracted times.

LATE FEES (TUITION): Since the Children's Center is a self-supporting unit, parents are encouraged to pay their tuition in full to the Frostburg State University Business Office by 4:00 p.m. on the due date. Failure to meet the due date will result in an automatic \$20.00 late fee. If your tuition and the \$20.00 late fee are not paid within 5 days of the due date, you will be denied use of the Center until all late fees, back tuition and the next month's tuition are paid in full. If tuition is paid late more than twice during any 6-month period, you will be denied use of the Center permanently.

LATE FEES (EARLY DROP OFF OR LATE PICK-UP): Our Center is staffed only for the number of children enrolled. Therefore, we ask each parent to contract exact hours so the proper staff ratio is present for your child's safety. You are given a 5 minute grace period before and after your contracted hours (except for 8a.m. and 4:00 p.m.). A \$1.00 per minute fee will apply to any child dropped off earlier or picked up later than their contracted times without the proper authorization from the Director. If you must drop your child off earlier or pick him/her up later (only between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.), and the proper authorization from the Director has been received, a minimum fee of \$3.00 will apply for every half-hour. However, the Director must be contacted at least 24 hours in advance so arrangements can be made. No child will be admitted to the Center prior to 8 a.m. nor may any child be picked up past 4:30 p.m.

TREATS FROM HOME: You will be assigned a date once a month to bring in a snack. You will be required to bring in juice/milk, 5 oz. cups, napkins, and plates/bowls and/or forks/spoons (if needed) for the number of children found after your child's name. The snack CAN NOT be home made. It must be pre-packaged. Please check with the staff for ideas.

ABSENCES/LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY PICK-UPS: If you plan on bringing your child in late or picking your child up early, please call. Often we go for walks and may not be at the Center when you arrive to pick-up your child before his contracted time. If your child will be out for the day or late, please let us know as soon as possible. If you will be out of town or away from your normal work/school/home number, please let us know. We will need backup numbers and people to notify in case of an emergency. All children must be escorted to and from the Center by an adult and signed in and out daily. Please acknowledge the staff when dropping your child

off or picking them up so that we are aware of your child's presence or departure.

LICENSING INFORMATION: The Center is licensed by the Maryland State Dept. of Education and is equipped to accommodate twenty children at any one time. The Center is also in compliance with the State Fire Regulations and both agencies observe and evaluate the Center several times a year unexpectedly.

OPERATIONS: The Children's Center is open Monday through Friday (Sept.-mid-June), except when the University offices are closed (see holiday closings on contract). We are open between 8a.m. and 4:30 p.m. If Frostburg State University is closed or will open late/close early, the FSU Children's Center will be closed. Announcements will be made on the local radio station.

ADMINISTRATION: The Children's Center is administered by the Director, Denise Payne, and her assistant, Stacy Winters who reports directly to the Director of Human Resources, Mrs. Kathy Snyder.

STAFF: The Center employs one full-time Director and an Assistant. All staff report directly to the Director and may not make tuition adjustments or give authorization for children to spend extra time in the Center. Several paid Students assist throughout the day and Early Childhood Interns and Students from the Psychology Dept. are placed in the Center for their Internship experience.

DRESS: We encourage children to wear comfortable clothing. Please do not send your child to school in new or expensive clothing. We are on the floor quite a bit as well as outside. We use markers and paint a great deal and certain colors do not wash out. Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and tennis shoes. Children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothing. Your child's name should be placed in all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all the proper possessions and clothes. Please do not send your child in clothes that are too complicated and they cannot get them on or off themselves in the bathroom (overalls, snaps, buttons, etc.

OUTDOOR PLAY: Active outdoor play is an important part of a child's growth and development. A minimum of fifteen minutes per day has been scheduled for outdoor play time (weather permitting). Children should come to school dressed appropriately each day according to that day's weather and ground conditions. Children without appropriate

clothing and footwear will be asked to remain inside until their parents are contacted and the proper clothing is brought to the Center. All children will be required to go outside unless they have a written note from a doctor. Children will participate in outdoor activities at least three times per day (morning, after lunch and after nap). Children wearing loose clothing, necklaces, capes, open toe shoes or hard/slippery type shoes will not be permitted to use the equipment on the playground or the jungle gym. Comfortable sneakers and rubber-bottomed shoes are preferred. Please apply sunscreen every morning before sending your child to the Center. The staff will not be responsible or permitted to apply sunscreen to any child. DO NOT leave sun screen in your child's cubby.

CUBBIES: Each child is assigned a cubby. Their name will be placed on the top of it. Your child's extra clothing and shoes will be kept in the bottom of the cubbies inside the plastic box. Any letters from the staff will be placed in the folder and your child's artwork will be placed inside their cubby. Please take all papers home daily and read the material immediately since it may apply to the next day. Only your child's extra clothing shall remain in your child's cubby at the end of each day. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, please be sure to inform them about letters from the staff which will be in the folder. Please do not allow your child to go into anyone else's cubby. If something comes home that you have not seen before, please return it since it may have been placed in the wrong cubby. A box of tissues should also be in your child's cubby at all times. A light jacket, a hat and mittens should be kept in you child's cubby at all times. Please label EVERYTHING brought into the Center with your child's name.

DONATIONS: Before discarding anything, please check with the staff to see if we may be able to use it. You would be surprised at some of the things we could make great use of. Things to keep in mind are toys, furniture, rugs, kitchen utensils and equipment, dress-up clothing (hats, shoes, dresses, etc.), riding toys, and clothes your child may have outgrow that we may keep on hand for extra clothing. Any item donated to the Center is tax-deductible.

REST TIME: Children attending the Center during the hours of 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. will be required to participate in our Quiet Time. Each child will have his/her own cot. No child will be forced to sleep but must remain quietly on their cot. Please do not pick your child up during our rest time unless it is an emergency or absolutely necessary so that we do not disturb our little nappers. Each child will need a small pillow, sheet, and blanket which will be kept at the Center. The bedding will be sent home every two weeks. Please return the clean bedding on your child's next

scheduled day. All bedding should have your child's name clearly marked on it.

SNACK: A small snack and drink will be served to the children present mid-morning and mid-afternoon (see daily schedules). Children will not be offered seconds nor will substitutions be given if your child dislikes the snack served. All children will be encouraged to taste all snacks and drinks. Please present the staff with a Doctor's written notice if your child is allergic to a specific food or has special dietary needs.

FIELD TRIPS: Participation in special trips off-campus will require a signed permission slip. These slips will be attached to the calendar. We welcome all parents to help with transportation and/or supervision of children on any trip. Permission slips should be completed and returned. It is a State Law that all children under 40 lbs. (no matter what age they are) OR under 4 years of age (no matter how much they weigh) be buckled in a child safety seat. We will not transport any child weighing less than 40 lbs. OR under the age of 4 unless they bring in the proper safety seat. Field trips are scheduled in the a.m. only.

DISCIPLINE: Encouragement and praise will be the basis of our discipline policy. Teachers will ignore inappropriate behavior that can be tolerated. When a child misbehaves, the child will be talked to quietly to explain why the behavior was wrong. An example of appropriate behavior will be given. Limits will be consistent and firm. The rules will not change from day to day. If a child continues to display the inappropriate behavior, "Time Out" will be used. Time Out is a chair which is any random chair and will be used for acts of physical aggression, destructiveness, tantrums that cannot be ignored, and actions that are not appropriate that have been discussed before with the child. The staff will always make clear to a child that it is the child's behavior that is wrong. No child will be called bad or made to feel bad about themselves. Corporal punishment or physical punishment which is the intentional infliction in any manner or any type of physical punishment which results in physical pain or distress will not be used. This will include, but not be limited to, tapping, slapping, hitting or shaking of the children. Emotionally or physically damaging acts including, but not limited to, ridiculing, shaming, belittling, deprivation of attention to the child's physical or emotional needs, verbal aggression, frightening threats or isolation out of sight or hearing of an adult will not be committed toward a child by any individual associated with this Center. No child in this center will be forced to eat nor will he be punished for not eating. Meals or snacks will not be withheld as a punishment. If necessary, parental consultation will be necessary for extreme disciplinary problems. The Center Director reserves the right to deny future use of the

Center to parents who bring children who are repeatedly disruptive or unmanageable.

WHAT TO BRING/NOT TO BRING: Each child should keep a complete set of clothing (including a sweater/jacket and shoes/slippers) in his cubby all times. Every article should have your child's name clearly marked on it. If these clothes are worn home, please return others the next day. In the event of an emergency or accident, any parent not having the proper change of attire available in their child's cubby will be contacted immediately to bring the proper attire to the Center for their child to change into. Please check your child's extra clothing occasionally for size as well as seasonal. We discourage children from bringing toys to the Center as this frequently leads to loss, breakage, and problems with sharing. Unless the item is necessary for the child's security or listed on the calendar, please try to limit the toys brought to the Center. We welcome books and records/cassettes as these are more easily and delightfully shared. Guns, harmful toys, and/or money should never be brought to the Center.

BIRTHDAYS: We will be happy to celebrate your child's birthday at the Center, if you wish to bring a simple treat. Please make arrangements for the specific day, in advance, with your child's Teacher. We encourage only nutritional birthday treats. Ask your child's Teacher for tasty and fun ideas. If you would like to have a pizza party to celebrate your child's birthday, please let us know before the first of the month so we may include it in our calendar. It will be the responsibility of the parents to order and pick up the pizza or have it delivered. Please order enough pizza so each child may have two pieces each. Ask the day before your scheduled pizza party for the number of children enrolled for that particular day. Parents must supply the plates for serving the pizza as well as the snacks (at least two, with one being a fruit).

MEDICINE/ILLNESS: Absolutely no medicine (prescription or over the counter) of any type will be administered to any child by the U.C.C. Staff nor can any medication be brought to the Center and kept in a child's cubby or the Center's refrigerator. If you need to bring in a medicine which you will administer to your child sometime during the day and it needs to be kept in the refrigerator, please find a refrigerator elsewhere. We are not permitted to store medicine in our refrigerator. If medication is needed due to a disability, arrangements will be made for someone to administer it. Children with infectious symptoms; e.g., conjunctivitis (pink eye), sore throat, vomiting, ringworm, diarrhea, fever, rash, etc., will not be permitted in the Center. Children must be free of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting for 24 hours and with symptoms abating before returning to the

Center. If a child is given an antibiotic for a respiratory infection or other contagious symptom, the child must be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to the Center. A staff member may refuse to accept a child if he/she feels the child is ill. In case of a contagious disease (measles, mumps, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, rash, ringworm, etc.) the parent of the sick child should notify the Center immediately so that proper precautions in relation to other children can be taken. Before your child is readmitted to the Center, it is necessary to bring a note from your doctor certifying that the child is no longer contagious. On occasion, the Center may have to contact you to pick up your child because of illness. We suggest you have a "backup" support system if you are unable to leave work or school abruptly. Sick children need to be isolated from the others. This is vital to maintain a healthy environment and is insisted upon by our health advisors. We ask that someone pick up your child immediately. If you will be away from your desk or office or off campus, please leave your whereabouts and number where you can be reached at all times in case of an emergency.

SPECIAL INFORMATION/CONFERENCES: The Center encourages the staff and parents to share in the experiences of the children at the Center as well as at home. However, for lengthy conversations about a child, an appointment for a conference between Parent and Teacher/Director must be scheduled. Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled as necessary during working hours to discuss the concerns, growth and expectations of your child if a problem occurs. In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing the Director or Teacher as soon as possible. All information will be regarded as confidential. We will accept your judgment as to the kinds of changes which may affect your child's behavior, security and general well-being. Common causes of distress include either or both time, new person living in the home, illness of parents, illness or absence of sibling, moving, or death and or illness of a family member or a friend or pet. The Teacher or Director will keep you informed of any significant changes in the Center's environment which may affect your child.

MESSAGES: We encourage Parents to write any information down that they feel the staff needs to know. Our days are usually quite hectic and it is hard to remember everything. Paper and pencils can be found near the sign in/out board for your messages to the staff pertaining to your child's well-being.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/PARTICIPATION: Our Center would like to continue its close relationship with our Parents and, therefore, we encourage parent participation in parties, special days, field trips, etc. Parents are

welcome to join us at any time and are encouraged to join us for lunch or any other activity without notice.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEAVING AN UNHAPPY CHILD: It is very normal for your child to be upset when leaving his Parents for the first time or two. The longer you hang around, the worse it will be. We suggest a short good-bye. Please feel free to call us after you arrive at your destination to check on your child. Children enrolled in the Center on a part-time basis have a harder time becoming adjusted.

CALENDAR/NEWSLETTER: A calendar with special events, activities and field trips will be sent home at the end of each month for daily reference. Please put this calendar somewhere so it can be referred to daily. Often the calendar will specify a certain object to be brought from home or will remind you of due dates. A newsletter will also accompany the calendars explaining the activities that we will participate in.

SKILLS: Throughout your child's attendance in the Children's Center, he/she will acquire skills in the areas of fine motor, gross motor, language, and self-help. Each child will develop these skills at his or her own pace. Some children develop skills more quickly in one area and more slowly in another. Your child will work on a set pattern of skills which eventually will be mastered by the developmentally appropriate experiences provided for him/her at the Center. Specific skills can be found on the monthly calendar.

WEATHER RELATED DELAYED OPENINGS, EARLY CLOSINGS AND CLOSING POLICY

- o The Children's Center will be CLOSED when the University is closed.
- o The Children's Center will OPEN late when the University opens late. (i.e., if the University opens at 9 a.m., the Children's Center will open at 8:55 a.m. If the University opens at 9:30 a.m., the Children's Center will open at 9:25 a.m. If the University opens at 10 a.m., the Children's Center will open at 9:55 a.m. In other words, the Children's Center will open five (5) minutes prior to the official opening of the University).
- o The Children's Center will CLOSE early when the University closes early. ALL PARENTS will be notified (by phone) to pick up their child BEFORE the University is to close. Therefore, it is important that parents have back-ups and leave numbers of others to pick up their child if they cannot leave their place of employment. If the University closes at 1 p.m., ALL children MUST be picked up by 1:05 p.m.

- o FSU closings, delayed openings and early closings can be heard on your local radio station. Closings and delayed openings are usually announced by 6:15 a.m.

LUNCH: According to the State Regulations, each child must be provided a balanced and nutritious lunch with milk daily. The State requires that milk be served from its original container. Therefore, each child will be served a cup of milk with lunch. You will be asked occasionally to bring in cups and one gallon of milk if your child stays for lunch. Since the Center is not equipped with to prepare lunch, parents are required to provide a well-balanced and nutritious lunch daily for their child. When you do not send appropriate quantities of the required food, we must have things on hand to supplement the lunch you send. If you do not send a lunch with your child, you will be billed the following: complete lunch \$4.50, one snack \$1.00. If your child receives any of the above to supplement his lunch, a bill listing the food provided by the Center will be placed in your child's cubbies and will be payable the next day to the Business Office. Your child's lunch must contain a few napkins and any other paper products and utensils needed to eat his/her lunch. If the lunch needs to be warmed, please be sure to mark the wrapping or container with your child's name so it is given back to your child after it is warmed. We will not cook food for your child's lunch. Therefore, we suggest you cook your child's food at home and we will warm it only. We will not warm anything longer than 40 seconds. Your child's lunch box should have your child's name clearly marked with large letters on the inside and outside with a permanent marker so your child may recognize it. All thermoses, lids, containers, plates and bowls should be clearly marked with names. If your child will be present during lunch, he must bring a complete lunch with nutritious snacks. Lunch boxes that need to be refrigerated should be placed in the refrigerator. Otherwise, the lunch should be placed in your child's cubby. Please try to limit the number of warm-ups since we can warm up only one at a time. This is very time consuming and someone usually ends up with cold food, especially if his was heated first. Therefore, we ask that you pre-heat the food at home and send it in a thermos to contain the heat. If you must send in a warm-up, please do so in a microwavable container only. When sending pizza or a sandwich, we suggest you send in a paper plate for heating. Please put your child's name on the plate or bowl if sending soup. The pre-packaged puddings, yogurts, applesauce and fruits are usually wasted since once they are opened, they cannot be resealed. Once these items are opened, we do not put them back in lunch boxes since they usually spill and leak out. We encourage the children to eat all of their sandwich or main entree before starting on their snacks. The children are asked to eat the healthier snacks first and if time allows, they can eat the non-nutritious snacks (candy, gummies, chips, etc). Most of the times the children will cooperate but tantrums do occur when they do not have time to eat the chocolate pudding, cake or candy/cookies that often accompanies their lunch. It is very difficult for the child who brings a well-balanced and nutritious lunch to understand why "little Johnny" gets candies and cakes in his lunch. Please be considerate of the other children and only pack healthy snacks. We try to check your child's lunch box

before it is put away to make sure the lids are on tight. However, an occasional lunch box slips by and is put away before we check it.

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

CHILDREN'S CENTER PRE-SCHOOL SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m. Art, Individual Skill Development & Self-Directed Play

10 a.m. Snack

10:15 Story

10:30 a.m. Opening (pledge, calendar, weather, feelings, etc.)

10:45 a.m. Circle Time

11:15 a.m. Music

11:30 a.m. Movement/Outdoor play & Self-Directed Play

Noon Lunch

CHILDREN'S CENTER CHILD CARE SCHEDULE

8 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Self-Directed Play,

12 p.m.-12:30 p.m. Lunch

12:30 p.m.-12:40 p.m. Independent Reading

12:40 p.m.-1 p.m. Playground/Story time

1 p.m.-3 p.m. Nap Time

3:10 p.m.-3:20 p.m. Snack

3:20 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Independent Reading

3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Playground/Self-Directed Play