

Message from the President



Hello Children's Center Parents,

New Mexico Tech takes pride in supporting a safe and secure child care center that provides a high-quality service in a friendly and supportive environment. The Macey Family Children's Center was established in 2012, thanks to the support of Bill and Cheryl Macey and many donors on campus and in the Socorro community.

We have a great team of child care professionals who provide a positive and caring experience for pre-school children, as well as after-school programs for the children of the NMT community.

As a university with many young faculty and staff members, we consider it our responsibility to offer parents a convenient, healthy, and affordable atmosphere for their young children to grow and learn, helping them reach their potential.

We hope that you, as parents, acquaint yourselves with the aspects of the daily operations, the policies and the mission of the Macey Family Children's Center. We aim to make your children's experiences are always beneficial to their growth in accordance with your wishes and our mission.

This handbook will help you understand some of the procedures and policies, which we have adopted to provide the very best care and learning opportunities for your children. We hope you take the time to familiarize yourself with this handbook.

I also invite you to visit the Children's Center and personally meet the dedicated professionals who work there and are always committed to maintaining a mutually useful dialogue with parents on the care of your children.

With warm regards,

Dr. Stephen G. Wells
President, New Mexico Tech

Equal Opportunity Policy

The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology is committed to the policy that all persons shall have access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental handicap or disability, medical condition, or veteran status, as required by the New Mexico Human Rights Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Executive Order 11246, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or by other laws and regulations. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the Affirmative Action and Compliance Office, Brown Hall, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, 801 Leroy Place, Socorro, New Mexico 87801; telephone (575) 835-5206.

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Introduction

On behalf of the teachers and staff of New Mexico Tech Children's Center, I welcome you to our program. We are all eager to work with and learn more about your child and your family. We encourage you to read the Family Handbook to learn more about us.

The Children's Center Family Handbook contains valuable information that you should be aware of before enrolling your child. It provides an explanation of our policies that are consistent with the rules and regulations of the State of New Mexico, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

We will be better able to serve you and your child if you are familiar with the Children's Center rules and regulations. Please take time to read and understand our handbook and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us anytime. Before your child can be admitted to the program, you must sign the Procedure and Agreement form which is part of the application form you will fill out for your child. This will be our assurance that you understand and agree to follow the Children's Center policies.

I want to assure you that you are always welcome to come and visit your enrolled child at any time during our program hours. We have an open door policy for parents and other family members and encourage you to stop in when you want or have time to spend with your child.

Once again, welcome to the Children's Center. We look forward to a wonderful relationship with you and your family.

Sincerely,

Darlene Sanchez
Manager of the Children's Center

Contact and General Information

Organization

Darlene Sanchez.....	Manager/Teacher
Flor Gandara-Vega	Teacher/Roadrunners
Viviana Vasquez.....	Teacher/Jackrabbits
Lorie Tadano.....	Substitute Teacher
Casie Taylor	Teacher Aid (NMT Student)
Anita Montoya.....	Teacher Aid (NMT Student)
Ashley Garcia.....	Teacher Aid (NMT Student)
Alejandro Lopez.....	Teacher Aid (NMT Student)
Mitchell Tappen	Center Support/Assistant Director Auxiliary Services

Phone Number

Children's Center.....(575) 835-5240*

*Messages may be left on voice mail.

Mailing Address

New Mexico Tech Children's Center
801 Leroy Place
Socorro, NM 87801

Email Address

darlene.sanchez@nmt.edu

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday

- **Children's Center Office**
7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- **Early Childhood Program**
7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Holidays and other Children's Center Closings

In an effort to provide exceptional service to your family, it is our intent to be open every day except for weekends, holidays (observed by New Mexico Tech), and inclement weather. The Children's Center is closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)
- Winter Break (Christmas Eve through January 1)

A written reminder of the Children's Center closures will be posted at the Center prior to each closing.

In the event of **inclement weather**, please contact the New Mexico Tech campus police at 575-835-5434 to confirm whether the Institute is open or closed. If the Institute is closed, then the Children's Center will also be closed. If the Institute is delayed in opening, then the Children's Center will also be delayed in opening. The staff will be available to greet children fifteen minutes prior to the delayed time. (Ex. The Institute is delayed until 10:00am then staff will be available to greet children at 9:45am.)

Overview

The Children's Center offers quality and developmentally appropriate education and care for children of New Mexico Tech's students, staff, faculty, and Socorro community members. Our staff has an uncompromising commitment to excellence. The Children's Center also places a high priority on responsiveness and close working relationships with each child and family.

We offer a relaxed and casual setting for children ages 2 through 10. Our program offers optimum learning opportunities in a creative environment for your child/children.

Mission Statement

The Children's Center mission is to complement the service and education objectives of the university by:

- Providing education, care, and nurturing for the children of students, staff, faculty, and community members;
- Utilizing culturally and developmentally appropriate practices; and
- Serving as a role model of childcare excellence for the community at large.

Philosophy

At the Children's Center, our philosophy is to provide the best possible environment for the care, education, and development of your child/children. We believe that your child/children are entitled to the best that modern knowledge makes available about the education, care and guidance of children. Our philosophy is expressed in a curriculum that encourages:

- Programs that are designed to be different, flexible, and encourage active hands-on learning because all children are unique with individual skills and interests;
- Freedom and opportunity to develop physical, cognitive, and social skills at a child's own pace;
- Warm relationships with adults that give children a feeling of support while they develop a sense of self-worth and independence; and
- Consistent and understanding adult guidance, which supports needs, yet limits actions and promotes a child's gradual growth towards responsibility and self-control.

Program Goals

Our goal is to build and maintain a strong, diverse, and inclusive organization that allows us to achieve the following objectives:

- Supporting families in achieving their own goals.
- Providing opportunities and resources for children to develop cognitive, motor, communication, and social skills.

- Promoting developmental progress of a child’s self-care, self-esteem, and self-control.
- Promoting child engagement, mastery and independence.
- Providing children with, and preparing them for life experiences.

Program Standards

The Children’s Center maintains exceptional program standards. Our program standards provide opportunities and resources that allow for a healthy environment and constructive education for children through developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate practices.

Developmentally Appropriate Programming

Our programs incorporate developmentally appropriate practices into our curriculum. Our programs are designed to reduce gender, racial, and cultural stereotypes and to foster positive intercultural relationships through a conscious effort to integrate an anti-bias model within the curriculum. Our programs are developed to provide an environment that builds self-esteem, teaches personal life skills, enhances health, and promotes social responsibility. Additionally, our programs provide a group experience where children learn social-interaction skills and make individual and/or group decisions.

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Programming

Our programs are designed to support and encourage understanding and appreciation of various cultures, customs, and languages. We promote an understanding and appreciation of similarities and differences through culturally and linguistically appropriate methods.

Culturally Sensitive

- The program supports each child’s construction of a knowledgeable and confident self-identity including both personal and group identity emphasizing confidence, not superiority.
- The program supports each child’s critical thinking about intolerance by helping children develop the cognitive skills to identify stereotypes, comments, and behaviors directed at one’s own or another’s identity.
- The program supports each child’s ability to stand up for herself/himself and for others in the face of bias.

Linguistically Sensitive

- The program supports each child’s understanding, acquisition, and appreciation of her/his language(s) as a valid way of communicating with others.

Families and Children

We believe that families are the child’s first teacher and are to be valued as such. Our program provides a safe and supportive environment that extends and enhances the family’s role and supports families in their child rearing efforts. We are committed to respecting and responding to the diverse needs and interests of families and children from

many social and economic environments. Our program maintains a policy of openness without regard to ethnicity, religion, gender, handicapping conditions, economic status or national origin. Parents or other family members are welcome to come to the program at any time during our program hours to visit and spend time with an enrolled child.

Children with Diverse Abilities

Our program supports and encourages the inclusion of children of diverse ability. The staff has the education and experience to provide high quality, developmentally appropriate programming to children with diverse abilities. We strive to support the right of each child to play and learn in inclusive programs, to the fullest extent, consistent with the best interests of all involved.

Program Outreach to Families

We place immense value on open communication between your family and our organization. As a result, our program supports outreach to families through:

- Monthly newsletters
- Informal meetings between staff and families
- An open-door policy
- Child progress conferences
- Parenting groups and workshops when interest is demonstrated
- Phone calls and written communication with families
- Family involvement in their child's experience as time and energy permit.

Qualified Personnel

At the Children's Center, we are committed to providing your child/children with a safe, nurturing, and stimulating educational environment. Our staff is comprised of thoroughly screened Early Childhood professionals with the education and experience to promote the developmental progress of children. Our professional staff is required to complete a minimum of 12-24 hours of additional early educational training per year. Additionally, all staff members abide by the National Association for the Education of Young Children's *Code of Ethical Conduct*. (To obtain a copy of the *Code*, please make your request to the Children's Center manager.)

We maintain a low adult/child ratio in our program by utilizing college work-study students, field experience students, and community volunteers to assist our staff. We work together as a team, striving for communication between children, families, staff, and the community.

All professional staff members maintain current First Aid and CPR certifications. Furthermore, our professional staff has been trained to identify signs and symptoms of child abuse/neglect.

Children's Center Staff

Staff Biographies

Darlene Sanchez

I live in Magdalena with my husband, Jimmy. We have been blessed with four beautiful children: two boys and two girls. We are also blessed with three wonderful grandsons and a granddaughter. I have received my CDA and attended classes at the University of New Mexico - Valencia Campus. I am a member of the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children. My objective is to gain experience and develop a career in Child Development. I have been working with children for the past thirty years. For twelve years, I was a home care provider. I also worked for the Magdalena Schools as a preschool teacher and a substitute teacher for three years. I have been working for New Mexico Tech Children's Center for the over twenty years as an early childhood teacher.

I love working, educating and caring for children; whether it is playing, nurturing, strengthening, motivating, or developing their skills and building their self-confidence.

Jayleen Martinez

I was born in Socorro and raised in Lemitar, New Mexico. I have been employed at New Mexico Tech's Children's Center for two years, first as a substitute teacher and six months ago as a teacher for the Jackrabbits. During this time I worked on my Early Care, Education and Family Support 45-Hour Entry Level Course through University of New Mexico and received my certificate. My plan is to go back to school to further my education. I enjoy working with the children and teaching them new skills. In my spare time I enjoy exercising, playing sports, fishing and hunting. Something important in my life is spending time with my family.

Desiree Sedillo

As Socorro native, I graduated from Socorro High School in May 2016. My first job was working at McDonalds where I started in September of 2015 while I was a senior in high school. I was able to quickly move from crew to crew trainer and ultimately became a shift manager. I realized that didn't want to work in the fast food industry anymore and that I wanted something more. I applied here at the New Mexico Tech Children's Center and was hired as a substitute teacher in May of 2017. I developed a love for the children. In April of 2019, I attended UNM and received my 45-hour certificate and was hired as a full time teacher. I have a wonderful fiancé. His name is Felipe. That same year Felipe and I were blessed with our rainbow baby on October 31, 2019. Her name is Diane and she will be attending the Children Center.

Flor Gandara Vega

Hello my name is Flor, I was born in Mexico but raised here in Socorro. I am a proud mother of 2 teens and 1 adult daughter. My interest of working with children came when my oldest daughter started going to a head start program I liked the environment and how the children were happy. Years later, I volunteered at the church nursery for 13 years and

occasionally at the head start program where my younger children attended. I have worked for NMT children's center since 2015 as a sub and now as an Early childhood educator. My favorite part is getting to know the kids, parents, and learning about their different cultures. I am currently a CNM student working on getting my Child Development Certificate that I will receive in August, God willing. I am also working on a second certification on Program Management; I will like to be a good leader as well. I am planning on furthering my education one goal at a time and be a positive role model for the children I work with.

Mitchell Tappen

Mitch Tappen was born and raised in Buhl Idaho, a town of roughly 3500 people. He received his bachelor's degree from Idaho State University in Elementary Education. After obtaining his degree, Mitch served as a Peace Corp volunteer in Thailand where he worked with elementary school teachers helping them with their teaching practices. Mitch went on to pursue a master's degree in Higher Education Administration at Clemson University. For the past 12 years Mitch worked at New Mexico Tech as the Director of Residential Life. At the beginning of 2021 he transferred over as the Assistant Director of Auxiliary Services.

Program and Supplementary Information

Early Childhood Program

Our Early Childhood Program provides early education and care for children ages two through ten years. We maintain a low adult/child ratio. Our program utilizes the Creative Curriculum and developmentally appropriate practices of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The Creative Curriculum

The most important goals of our curriculum are for children to get along well with others and become enthusiastic learners. We want children to become independent, self-confident, curious learners who can work well with others. We are teaching them how to learn, not just in early childhood but all through their lives. We do this by creating purposeful and productive play experiences that help children grow cognitively, physically, verbally, socially and emotionally.

Active Learning

Children are involved in direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas, and events. Through the activities that we plan and the way we organize our classroom, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule and talk with children, we seek to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give the children a successful start in school.

Adult-Child Interaction

Adults observe and interact with children at their level to discover how each child thinks and reasons. Adults interact with children in ways that empower children to take control of their own learning.

Learning Environment

Classroom furniture and equipment are arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use, and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about their world.

Daily Routine

Each day follows a similar schedule of events, providing consistency for both children and adults. Teachers plan activities that are based on the children's interests. Children are given the opportunity to do hands on activities that help them develop social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills. Daily class schedules for the Jackrabbits, Roadrunners and Reptiles are listed in the Appendix on page A-6.

Assessment

Teachers regularly record notes on children's behaviors, experiences, and interests. They use these notes to assess each child's development and to plan activities that will facilitate their growth and development. They also use these notes in parent meetings to help parents better understand their child's development.

Child Progress Conference

Child progress conferences are scheduled two per year. Our teaching staff uses a portfolio approach to gather information about your child's on-going development. From a compilation of observational anecdotal notes, work samples and action "photos", etc., an overview of each child's strengths and accomplishments is completed. The child's portfolio is shared during conferences.

Family Involvement Opportunities

During the year there will be a variety of opportunities for you to get to know the teachers here at the program and interact with other families.

Keeping the connection and support system for families while their children are at the Center is very important to us. There will be at least one family "meet and greet" available each semester for your family to participate in. These may be simple outings around the Center which may include games, singing or dancing. These also could be more complex where the families can take part in an activity outside of Socorro.

We have two celebrations – one at the end of Fall semester and one at the end of Spring semester – both here at the Center. We serve simple snacks and schedule these over the course of several hours to allow people to meet and talk with other family members and find out what has been going on at the Center.

Parents are also asked to come in and share information about their hobbies or jobs with the children. These events are arranged by the teachers as part of their curriculum activities.

When we go to Macey Center for student performances, parents are encouraged to come along for the walk and the show. This happens 2-4 times a year depending upon the performance schedule.

The manager writes a letter to families each month to share information about what has been happening in the Center and what might be coming up over that month. This is placed in the family folder at the start of the month, and notices about special events are posted throughout the building prior to those events.

Supplementary Information

Celebrations

Because of the diversity of the families we serve, we recognize all holidays that each family celebrates. We encourage each family to celebrate their holidays with us. If a child initiates a discussion or activity related to a holiday they observe, we will listen respectfully and provide time and space for the child's activity.

Birthdays are a special time in our programs. We are always happy to celebrate your child's birthday. If you have a birthday tradition that you would like to share with us, please make arrangements with your child's teacher. An idea we recommend for celebrating this special occasion is to have your child donate a book to the Children's

Center library. We will write your child's name and birth date on the inside cover. Each time the book is read your child's contribution to the program is remembered. Out of consideration for all of our children and families, we request that you do not pass out invitations at the Center for private parties unless all children are invited.

Food Service Nutrition Program

Our program serves a nourishing breakfast and afternoon snack. All children will be offered the same meals without physical segregation or other discriminatory action against any child because of race, color, age, national origin, sex, or handicap. A monthly menu is posted at the Children's Center. In the event that your child has a documented allergy, an alternative can be provided or other arrangements can be made with the family.

Lunch

Families are responsible for providing a lunch for their child. We have a refrigerator available in each classroom. We provide milk and water at lunch. If you choose to include juice in your child's lunch, it must be a 100% juice product. We will substitute milk or water for any beverage that is not a 100% juice product. Please read labels carefully! Included with this handbook you will find ideas and food guidelines for "brown-bagging" (see Appendix p. A-3).

Field Trip Policy

The Children's Center does not participate in any field trips off of the New Mexico Tech campus. All field trips in which children and staff do participate are "walking" field trips on campus. At no time will children be transported in any vehicle for a field trip.

Training Programs

To improve the quality of early childhood care and education, New Mexico Tech Children's Center cooperates with qualified child development training programs. We limit the number of non-obtrusive observers, field experience students, or other visitors to our programs. We strive to facilitate training in ways that are the least disruptive to children's experiences in our programs. We will not permit or participate in training programs that could in any way hinder the education, development, or well-being of children. Family's rights to confidentiality will be upheld at all times.

Rest Time

In our Early Childhood Program, we have a rest time from approximately 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Children's Center provides children with a cot for rest time. To make your child more comfortable, you are asked to bring a crib-size fitted sheet, small blanket, and pillow. All items should be marked with your child's name. The Children's Center will launder bedding weekly.

During this quiet time, children are read stories and listen to quiet music. Children who do not sleep will rest for 45 minutes and then be allowed to get up and do quiet activities, such as puzzles, books, etc., for the remainder of the rest time. We determine which children must nap according to the individual needs of the child and the guidelines set by New Mexico State Child Care licensing regulations.

Service Learning Projects

Our Children's Center's families and staff are encouraged to participate in a variety of service learning projects throughout the year. These projects vary in scope, including individual commitments of staff to serve on community agency advisory boards and clothing and food drives.

Recreational Swimming

The Children's Center is fortunate to have access to New Mexico Tech Swim Center facilities. We routinely schedule recreational *Swim Days* for the summer Roadrunners and Reptile children. Parents/guardians will be notified of *Swim Days*. We ask that you provide advance notice if you do not want your child to participate. Please be sure that your child keeps a swimsuit, towel, and sunscreen at the Children's Center for our *Swim Days*.

Water safety is a top priority and concern. Therefore, children enrolled in our program, who participate in *Swim Days*, are required to attend a Water Safety Awareness class taught by the Swim Center lifeguards.

Each June the Swim Center runs a two week session of swim lessons exclusively for the Roadrunners and Reptiles. Parents who wish to have their child participate must pay the fee at the Swim Center for the swim lessons.

Use of the New Mexico Tech Swim Center is a privilege. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the children to follow Swim Center rules and be respectful to employees.

If a child does not abide by Swim Center rules and/or is disrespectful to Swim Center staff the following will take place:

- The child will be given one warning by the Swim Center staff
- If the child still refuses to modify his/her behavior the following will occur:
 1. He/she will be removed from the pool and the Children's Center manager will be notified of the child's removal
 2. The Children's Center manager will escort the child back to the main Center
 3. The manager will call his/her parent/guardian and notify them of the incident
 4. The child will lose swimming privileges for an amount of time to be determined by the Swim Center manager and Children's Center manager.

Our younger preschool class enjoys water play in a wading pool on hot summer days. Please provide a swimsuit, towel, and sunscreen for these splash-splishy days.

Admission Policy

Children of New Mexico Tech students and employees as well as children of community members are eligible to enroll in our programs. As an opening becomes available, priority will first be given to New Mexico Tech students, then to employees of New Mexico Tech, and finally to community members. Attendance begins and/or continues as long as you and/or your child meet the following requirements:

- You have submitted a completed application packet and paid the non-refundable registration fee.
- You have been interviewed and understand the program goals.
- Your child meets the age requirements.
- Your child's immunizations are current and records have been submitted or you have a Certificate of Exemption on file.
- She/he can age-appropriately control her/his actions and does not exhibit behavior that could be dangerous to herself/himself, other children, or Children's Center personnel.
- You have read the Family Handbook and agree in writing to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein.

Immunization Requirements

All children must have a current immunization record on file with the Children's Center before they can attend. Vision and hearing screenings must be obtained before enrollment. An **annual** well child check and dental screening is required. If you request to be exempt for religious or conscientious reasons, the Children's Center must have a certificate verifying that fact. This certificate must be renewed every nine months. Exemption forms are available from the Children's Center manager. A ***Recommendation for Immunizations Schedule*** is available from the manager or your health care provider.

Family/Child Orientation

All families are required to visit the Children's Center at least once with their child before enrolling. It is recommended that a minimum of one hour be spent in the Early Childhood Program before attending.

Family Handbook

You are strongly encouraged to carefully read through the handbook. You will be required to sign a Policy and Procedure Agreement Form (see A-1) before your child/children will be admitted into the program. As you read through this handbook, you may have questions. Please feel free to contact us and we will address any questions or concerns.

Tuition and Fees

Description of Fees

Tuition and Modification Conditions

- Rates are subject to change, as conditions require. Families will receive as much advance notice as possible.
- No allowances are made for absences, vacations, New Mexico Tech holidays, and Winter Break. Families are responsible for full tuition payments even when their child/children do not attend.

Registration and Re-enrollment Fees

- A one-time nonrefundable Registration Fee of \$35.00 per child is required to enroll your child.

Charges for Late Pick-up

The Children's Center closes at 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. If your child remains past the scheduled closing time, you will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute.

Parent/Guardian Financial Responsibility

Payment of Tuition

- Tuition is due in advance. Tuition is due the fifth day of the month and payments can be made through the NMT cashier located in Fidel Center. Invoices will be issued on the fifteenth of each month for the following month. Schedules are set for the entire semester.
- A processing fee of \$25.00 will be added to an account for any returned check. If more than two checks are returned within a year for insufficient funds, you will be required to pay in cash at the cashier's window in Fidel Center or by money order at the Children's Center.

Current Rates

(July 2021-June 2022)

Community	\$858.00 per month
NMT Faculty or Staff	\$797.00 per month
NMT Full Time Student	\$499.00 per month
After School Program	\$199.00 per month

Discounts

Discounts apply to the lowest rate.

One child: Full-rate charge.

Each additional full time child: 10% discount of full-rate Student Discount

To qualify for a student discount, one parent/guardian must currently be enrolled as a full-time student at New Mexico Tech. The parent/guardian is required to submit a copy of their current class registration.

Financial Aid/ECECD

We accept children of participants in the New Mexico State Children, Youth, and Families Department child care assistance program. Ask the Children's Center manager for the appropriate forms. Childcare services are not provided until the Center obtains a completed ECECD contract. Registration fees will be due at that time.

Full time NMT students may pay the registration fee to hold a space for their child while completing the ECECD process. The space will be held for a maximum of 45 days. If after 45 days, ECECD funding has not been secured, the space will be released.

If a ECECD contract expires and a new one is not in place, child care will not be provided until a new contract is given to Children's Center manager.

Link to ECECD eligibility information and application form.

<https://eligibility.ececd.state.nm.us/eligibility/public/application/applicationInfo.page?dswid=-4253>

Attendance

We require that parents/guardians call the Early Childhood Program (575-835-5240) when your child/children will not be attending due to illness, change in schedule, or other reasons. No allowances are made for absences. Refunds, credit, or make-up days cannot be granted.

Signing In/Out of Children

Please bring your child to her/his classroom where you will find an attendance sheet for signing in and out. For safety reasons we must know when your child arrives and departs. We ask you or any other person, who brings or picks up your child, to verbally check in with the teacher and enter the time of arrival/departure on the attendance sheet. An adult must accompany your child from the parking area to the classroom and from the classroom to the parking area.

Releasing Child/Children to Authorized Persons

If anyone other than the parent/guardian is to pick up your child, even if his or her name appears on the emergency pick-up list, a *Pick-Up Pass* must be completed by a parent/guardian and given to your child's teacher prior to release of the child. In case of an emergency, a phone call will be accepted before the adult arrives. If we do not recognize your voice, you must identify yourself with your "Code Word" before we will confirm anyone else picking up your child. All visitors are required to see the Children's Center manager at the Early Childhood Program before signing a child out. The adult must present picture identification. We *will not* release a child to anyone who has not been authorized to pick him or her up. We cannot legally refuse a biological parent access to his/her child unless there is a court order. Please provide the Center with a copy of the court order for the child's file.

Releasing Child/Children into Potentially Dangerous Situations

In accordance with the Public Health Licensing Authority and the Children's Code of the State of New Mexico, all staff at the New Mexico Tech Children's Center are required to report any incidents that may fall within the definition of child abuse and neglect. We are therefore mandated to use discretion and precaution in releasing a child into the custody of an adult who exhibits physical impairment due to the influence of alcohol or other substance. Our first obligation is to the safety of all children in our care. Releasing a child into a potentially hazardous situation would constitute child endangerment. Therefore, it is our policy that we will not release any child to a person whom we deem too impaired to safely transport and/or care for that child. We will make every effort to locate an alternate person to pick up the child from the emergency numbers provided by the parents/guardians. If an angry or hostile situation occurs we reserve the right to contact the New Mexico Tech Campus Police to ensure the well being of our staff and children.

Parking

For the safety of the children arriving and departing, please use the designated parking areas. There are a number of slots directly in front of the building designated for dropping off and picking up children. If you intend to park your car for the day, please move it to one of the other parking spaces in the lot.

Children are not allowed in the parking lot or in cars unattended. Do not leave your keys in the ignition. It is important that your child be secured in a child safety seat or seat belt when being transported to and from our programs. Failure to provide for your child's safe arrival and departure may cause us to deny you the opportunity to continue in our program.

Clothing and Personal Items

Clothing

All clothing should be labeled with your child's first name or initials, including hats, mittens, and boots. Always dress your child/children for the weather, as the children participate in outdoor activities daily. Clothing should fit properly. Clothes that are too tight or too long many inhibit or obstruct play. Shoes should fit well. We recommend comfortable close-toed shoes. Sunscreen, when provided, will be use to protect children when they are outdoors.

Personal Items

New Mexico Tech Children's Center is not responsible for personal items brought to our programs. Personal items such as coats and backpacks should be labeled with the child's name. Toys from home are unwelcome at our program. We have an ample supply of play equipment and materials that belong to all of us. Toy weapons (guns, knives, swords, etc.) are **NOT** allowed in our program. Any such toys brought to the Children's Center will be placed in the office and can be claimed by parents/guardian at the end of the day.

Key Cards

The New Mexico Tech Children's Center uses a key card system on the main door to the Center. This is to have greater control over persons gaining admission to the building.

Each parent/caregiver is assigned a key card. The key cards will allow you access from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. If an individual on your authorized list is to pick up your child (i.e. a grandparent), it is your responsibility to see they have the loan of your key card to access the Centers front door.

To open the door, simply dip your card in the slot and remove it. The door will then unlock. For those individuals who have business at the Center but do not have children in attendance, there is a doorbell for them to gain entrance. **The only circumstances in which a parent or child should use the doorbell would be if the door was not**

operating properly. Remember that if you or your child to use the doorbell it removes a teacher from their classroom to answer the door.

If a key card is lost, the Center manager must be notified immediately so that card may be disabled. Lost key cards may be replaced by visiting the Auxiliary Services Office located in the Fidel Center on the second floor. You must present a photo identification to obtain a replacement card. The first replacement card will be free however there will be a \$5 charge for second replacement, a \$10 charge for third replacement and \$25 for any additional cards.

When your child leaves our program, you must return both key cards to the Center manager.

Standards of Conduct

Child Guidance

Our staff views child guidance as a means of teaching children what is acceptable behavior and helping the child to develop the self-control needed to function as positive productive individuals. We also emphasize that the behavior, not the child, is unacceptable or inappropriate.

Rules and limits are established for the safety and well-being of the children. The rules are few and simple and are followed by both children and adults.

Enforcement of rules and limits is done in a positive manner. Child guidance is always used with the goal of self-discipline in mind. An effective technique of positive guidance is telling children what to do instead of what not to do. Saying “no” constantly loses its effectiveness. We believe in being gentle, yet clear and firm.

Consistency is a must and allows children to know what is appropriate and expected. Redirection, logical consequences, and problem solving are techniques we use to guide children. Acknowledging children’s feelings and giving them acceptable ways of expressing negative emotion helps children learn appropriate social skills.

A supervised separation apart from the group is used as a last resort when a child is out of control or hurting people or equipment. We try to allow children to regulate themselves whenever possible by letting them decide when to rejoin the other children. We will help the child regroup positively and make sure he/she knows what is expected of him/her. Each separation will be documented in the child’s record. If there is a situation where several separations apart have had no effect on changing or modifying the undesirable behavior, we will call the parent/guardian for a conference to develop a plan to help the child.

Management of Disruptive and Aggressive Behavior

When disruptive or aggressive behavior persists and we can find no effective way to modify the behavior, we will take one or more of the following steps:

- Require a parent/teacher/manager conference.
- Invoke a one-week suspension from our program.
- Invoke involuntary withdrawal from our program.

Children may be suspended or withdrawn from the program immediately for major infractions where the safety of the aggressor, the staff, or other children is compromised.

A major infraction is recognized as the following:

- Intentionally harming, physically or verbally, another individual.
- Intentionally damaging program and/or individual property.
- Unauthorized departure from program and/or facility without parental and/or staff consent.

Health and Well-being

Injury

Our staff makes every effort through the physical arrangement of our indoor and outdoor learning environments and through the supervision of children to prevent accidents and injuries. In the event that your child has a minor injury, the adult in charge will take one or more of the following actions:

- Wash area with soap and water.
- Apply a bandage.
- Apply a cold pack.
- Monitor the injured child.
- Comfort the injured child.

The adult in charge will notify parents of the injury and complete an Injury Report. One copy will be placed in your child's daily file for your retrieval and one will be kept on file in the office. If your child arrives at his/her program with an injury that happened at home or away from the Children's Center, please inform us or we will be contacting you to inquire.

If your child has a serious injury, requiring immediate medical care, we will first call 911 and then contact the parent/guardian.

Incidents

Your child may experience or witness an event that leaves no physical signs but may have a psychological impact (e.g. witnessing a traffic accident). If this occurs while your child is at the Children's Center, you will be notified in writing of the incident. If this occurs when your child is not in attendance at the Children's Center, please notify us of the incident.

Allergy and Sensitivity

Please let us know if your child has an allergy or sensitivity to food or other substances. Furthermore, we must be informed if your child has a history of allergic reactions. We should be aware of the situation so we may take appropriate precautions to protect your child's/children's health.

Child Abuse/Neglect

It is our legal obligation to report unusual physical marks or inexplicable behavior to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. Staff members are familiar with the signs of abuse/neglect as given in the description provided by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. As required by the New Mexico Children's Code, staff members will report any known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

When reporting suspected abuse or neglect any of the following information may be requested:

1. Child's name, address, and age.
2. Location
3. Nature and extent of injuries and previous injuries
4. The name and address of the parent or caretaker of the child
5. The name of the person we suspect is abusing or neglecting
6. Why we suspect the child is being abused or neglected.

The above report may be made by telephone, in person, or in writing to the local Social Services Division office.

Other state agencies to which reports may be made to are:

- Juvenile Probation Office.
- Local District Attorney's Office.

Failure of educators to report is a misdemeanor

New Mexico law requires that our staff report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Failure to do so is a misdemeanor. Additionally, New Mexico law establishes immunity for any person reporting in good faith. State law assures confidentiality of reports and reporting persons. The law provides that an anonymous report may be made and the case will still be investigated.

Illness

Our goal is to ensure that every child and staff member has a safe and healthy environment. Because of this, we have developed the following policies:

- In the event that a child becomes ill at the Children's Center, his/her parents will be notified and asked to pick their child up. If the child has a 100+ degree temperature, she/he has to be **FEVER FREE FOR 24 hours** without fever reducing medication such as Tylenol before being accepted back to our program.
- A child will not be allowed to attend the program when she/he has a sign or symptom of an illness that requires exclusion from our programs (see Exclusion from Care List p. A-5) and may not return without a signed statement from a physician indicating the child is no longer contagious.
- If your child is not well enough to be outdoors, she/he is not well enough to be at the Children's Center.

Medication

The New Mexico Tech Children's Center will not dispense or store any prescription or non-prescription medication, including over-the-counter, naturopathic, homeopathic, or herbal supplement for any child enrolled in our programs.

If a child requires any of the above medication during the day, the parent/guardian must come to the Children's Center and administer the medication to the child.

Emergency Situations

In conjunction with Campus Police, the Children's Center practice fire drills on a monthly basis. The children and staff leave the building and proceed to the playground south of the building.

In case of fire or other event that require the evacuation of the building, the group will proceed to the closest safe space as designated by Campus Police/Emergency Response Team. Parents will be notified and will be asked to pick up their child as soon as possible.

The Emergency Evacuation Plan is located in the Appendix on page A-7.

Missing Child

In the event that a child should become missing, while in our care, the following policy has been developed:

- Our staff will conduct a thorough search of our facilities, within the first five (5) minutes after your child has been reported missing
- If your child cannot be located after the five (5) minute search by the staff, the Children's Center manager or the staff member in charge will notify both you and the New Mexico Tech Campus Police.

Important

This procedure does not apply to children who fail to show up or whose parent/guardian fails to notify us that their child will be absent from the program that day.

COVID-19 Mask Mandate

In compliance with the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department *masks are required for children age 3 years and older when indoors* (unless drinking, eating or napping). Masks are no longer required outdoors for staff, children, parents and essential visitors. *Indoor mask requirements remain in effect.*

Privacy of Information

Information pertaining to your child/children and/or your family will not be released without your written permission except to authorized personnel. Authorized personnel are identified as the Children's Center manager, staff, the New Mexico Department of Children, Youth, and Families agency, and other officials or agencies who are considered to have a legitimate interest. Legitimate interest is defined as a need to inspect a child's record in order to ensure the child's safety and well-being. A record of all disclosures to any individual or agency will be kept with the record in question.

Inspection of Records and Facilities

The Child Care Services Bureau, Licensing Section of the Prevention and Intervention Division of the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families department has been granted the responsibility for the administration and enforcement of Child Care Licensing Regulations [8.16.2 NMAC]. As the licensing agency, it has the authority to interview children and/or staff; to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent; and to observe the physical conditions of children, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.

Grievance Procedure and Withdrawal Policy

Grievance Procedure

Families who have concerns about any aspect of our programs and/or staff are asked to take the following steps:

1. Speak directly with your child's teacher and arrange a time to address your concern.
2. If your concern was not addressed or resolved in Step 1, arrange to meet with the teacher and the manager.
3. If after Steps 1 and 2 you still do not have resolution to your concern, arrange to meet with the Children's Center manager and the Assistant Director of Auxiliary Services.
4. If after Step 3 you still do not have resolution to your concern, arrange to meet the Director of Auxiliary Services.
5. If you still have concerns contact the Vice President of Student Life.

Withdrawal Policy

Voluntary Withdrawal

One week's written notice of withdrawal from the program is required. If written notification is not provided, you are still responsible for all fees for the program in which your child was scheduled to attend. Your child will be readmitted only if space becomes available and an additional Registration Fee is paid.

Involuntary Withdrawal/Expulsion

In striving to meet children's needs, we expect to find a similar level of commitment from families. We will consider involuntary withdrawal of a child if the child:

- Intentionally harms, physically or verbally, another individual.
- Intentionally damages program and/or individual property.
- Departs from program and/or facility without parental and/or staff consent.

Suspension of services may also occur if a parent/guardian:

- Fails to pay or make a reasonable plan to pay his/her bill.
- Does not comply with the Children's Center policies.
- Knowingly makes false statements:
 1. Written or verbal at the time of admission to our program.
 2. Written or verbal, that could affect the health/safety of their child/children, our staff, or participants in our programs.
- Seriously endangers staff, children, or others.
- Endangers the integrity of the program or university.

The New Mexico Tech Children's Center is dedicated to providing the best care for your child/children. We are committed to working with your family to resolve any issues that may arise. Our grievance and withdrawal policies have been developed to ensure a consistent and fair process for everyone.

Policy and Procedure Agreement Form

Please read the statements below. As part of the application form you will sign each statement and those forms will be part of the completed application.

Statement of Agreement

I have read the material covered in the New Mexico Tech Children’s Center Family Handbook. I have been given the opportunity to discuss any questions and/or concerns regarding the policies and procedures in this handbook with the Children’s Center manager. I understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the Children’s Center.

Name

Date

Privacy of Information

Information pertaining to your child/children and/or your family will not be released without your written permission except to authorized personnel. Authorized personnel are identified as the Children’s Center manager, staff, the New Mexico Department of Children, Youth, and Families agency, and other officials or agencies who are considered to have a legitimate interest. Legitimate interest is defined as a need to inspect a child’s record in order to ensure the child’s safety and well-being. A record of all disclosures to any individual or agency will be kept with the record in question.

Name

Date

Inspection of Records and Facilities

The Child Care Services Bureau, Licensing Section of the Prevention and Intervention Division of the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families department has been granted the responsibility for the administration and enforcement of Child Care Licensing Regulations [8.16.2NMAC]. As the licensing agency, it has the authority to interview children and/or staff; to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent; and to observe the physical conditions of children, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.

Name

Date

Appendix

Guidance Policy

Our staff views child guidance as a means of teaching children what is acceptable behavior and helping the child to develop the self-control needed to function as positive productive individuals. We also emphasize that the behavior, not the child, is unacceptable or inappropriate.

Rules and limits are established for the safety and well-being of the children. The rules are few and simple and are followed by both children and adults.

Enforcement of rules and limits is done in a positive manner. Child guidance is always used with the goal of self-discipline in mind. An effective technique of positive guidance is telling children what to do instead of what not to do. Saying “no” constantly loses its effectiveness. We believe in being gentle, yet clear and firm.

Consistency is a must and allows children to know what is appropriate and expected. Redirection, logical consequences, and problem solving are techniques we use to guide children. Acknowledging children’s feelings and giving them acceptable ways of expressing negative emotion helps children learn appropriate social skills.

A supervised separation apart from the group is used as a last resort when a child is out of control or hurting people or equipment. We try to allow children to regulate themselves whenever possible by letting them decide when to rejoin the other children. We will help the child regroup positively and make sure he/she knows what is expected of him/her. We expect that most children will have difficulty at some points in time, in getting along with others. We will talk with parents regularly to keep them informed of their children’s developing skills in this area, and if necessary, will coordinate strategies with the families to assist children in learning needed skills.

Adults working with the children are expected to use developmentally appropriate techniques and strategies in dealing with behavior. Corporal punishment of any kind is strictly forbidden. Yelling, shaming or blaming, sarcasm and other power strategies from adult to children are also not acceptable. Adults are expected to realize that they are always models for the children in how to act, and should modify their responses to frustration, anger or other situations with an awareness that the children are watching and learning from them.

Food Guidelines for Lunch

Guidelines are provided by the New Mexico Child and Adult Care Food Program

Meal Pattern Requirements for Children

Suggested Servings for Lunch		
Food Product	Servings for ages 3 through 5 years	Servings for Ages 6 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread or Biscuit, Muffin, or Cooked Pasta, Noodle products, or Rice, Cooked Cereal or Grains or Tortillas (corn 6") or taco shells or Tortillas (flour 8-9") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ slice ½ whole ¼ cup ¼ cup 1 whole ½ whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 slice 1 whole ½ cup ½ cup 2 whole 1 whole
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruits and/or Vegetables (2 or more) and/or 100% juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ cup total 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ cup total
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat (lean), Fish Poultry, Cheese or Eggs or Cooked/Dry Beans, Peas, Lentils or Nuts and Seeds or Peanut Butter or Other Nut Butters or Cottage Cheese or Yogurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ½ ounce 1 egg 3/8 cup ¾ ounce 3 Tbsp. 3/8 cup ¾ cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 ounce 1 egg ½ cup 1 ounce 4 Tbsp. ½ cup 1 cup
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milk, fluid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup

Lunch Maker – Suggested Foods for Lunch

For a well-balanced meal you need to select a bread, 2 fruits/vegetables, meat and/or meat alternate, and a beverage using the suggested portions from the *Meal Pattern Requirements for Children* located in the table above.

Breads

- Bagel
- Croissant
- Garlic Bread
- Pita Pockets
- Tortilla
- Corn Bread
- Dinner Roll
- Hamburger Bun
- Rice Cakes
- Whole Wheat
- Crackers
- Fry Bread
- Hoagie
- Rye

Bread Alternates

- Macaroni
- Rice
- Spaghetti

Fruits and Vegetables

- Apple
- Banana
- Celery Sticks
- Kiwi Fruit
- Nectarines
- Pears
- Tomatoes
- Applesauce
- Bell Pepper
- Cherries
- Lettuce
- Orange
- Plums
- Avocado
- Carrot Curls
- Green Chile
- Melons
- Peaches
- Strawberries

Salads

- Carrot Raisin Salad
- Garden Salad
- Cole Slaw
- Potato Salad
- Green Bean Salad

Meat and Meat Alternatives

- Canadian Bacon
- Chicken Roll
- Hamburger
- Tuna Salad
- Plant-based protein
- Cheese Pizza
- Chicken Salad
- Pork Roast
- Turkey Ham
- Chicken Patty
- Ham
- Roast Beef
- Turkey Roll

Cheese and Meat Alternatives

- American
- Colby
- Mozzarella
- Swiss
- Cheddar
- Cottage Cheese
- Muenster
- Co-Jack
- Monterey Jack
- Provolone

Beverages

- 1% Milk
- Whole Milk (for children under age 2)
- Non-dairy alternatives
- Low fat Chocolate Milk

Food Allergies

Staff

- Onions
- Avocado
- Onions
- Strawberries
- Pineapple
- Shellfish
- Oregano

Recommendations on Exclusion from Care

Recommendations are provided by the New Mexico Health Department.

Exclusion from Care List

Childhood Illness	Exclusion Recommendations
Chicken Pox	Excluded until 6 days after onset of rash or until all sores have dried and crusted
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Excluded until 24 hours after start of treatment
Diarrhea	Excluded until diarrhea ceases for 24 hours
Giardia	Excluded until diarrhea ceases for 24 hours
Head Lice	Excluded until 24 hours after start of treatment
Hepatitis A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excluded 1 week after jaundice appears • If no jaundice appears, excluded 2 weeks from onset of symptoms
Hepatitis B	No exclusion unless: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child shows aggressive behavior like biting or scratching or 2. Has open wounds or drawing skin lesions
Hepatitis C	Same as the recommendation for Hepatitis B
Herpes (Primary herpes with sores inside of mouth)	Child should be excluded until fever is gone and the child is not drooling with sores present
Impetigo	Excluded until 24 hours after start of treatment
Mumps	Excluded until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
Oral Temperature (100.4° F or above)	Excluded until fever-free for 24 hours
Pertussis	Excluded until child undergoes 5 days of antibiotic treatment
Rash	Excluded until health care provider determines it is not contagious
Ringworm	Excluded until treated and sores are covered
Rubella	Excluded until 7 days from appearance of rash
Rubeola	Excluded until 5 days from appearance of rash
Salmonella	Excluded until diarrhea ceases for 24 hours
Scabies	Excluded until 24 hours after start of treatment
Shigella	Excluded until child has 1 negative stool
Shingles	Excluded until sores have crusted
Strep	Excluded until 24 hours after start of treatment
Tuberculosis (Active)	Excluded until TB control officer determines otherwise
Vomiting	Excluded until vomiting ceases for 24 hours

Daily Class Schedule (This is an approximation of the typical schedules for each group. The exact schedules are posted in each classroom.)

Jackrabbits:

7:30-8:30	Free Choice Play
8:30-8:45	Circle Time
8:45-9:20	Breakfast
9:20-10:15	Small group activity
10:15-10:30	Clean up and get ready to go outside
10:30-11:45	Outside time
11:45-12:00	Clean up and get ready for lunch
12:00-12:30	Lunch, Brushing teeth / potty time
12:30-2:45	Nap time
2:45-3:00	Circle time/ get ready for snack
3:00-3:20	Snack
3:20-3:45	Activity time
3:45-4:00	Clean up time
4:00-5:15	Outside time
5:15-5:30	Clean up and get ready for home/ Goodbye!

Roadrunners:

7:30-8:30	Free Choice Play
8:30-8:45	Circle time
8:45-9:20	Breakfast
9:20-10-10:15	Small group activity
10:15-10:30	Clean up and get ready to go outside
10:30-11:15	Outside
11:15-11:30	Clean up and get ready for lunch
11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-12:15	Brushing teeth/ Potty time
12:15-12:30	Get ready for nap
12:30-2:45	Nap time
2:45-3:00	Circle time/ get ready for snack
3:00-3:20	Snack
3:20-3:45	Activity time
3:45-4:00	Clean up time
4:00-5:15	Outside time
5:15-5:30	Clean up and get ready for home/ Goodbye!?"

Reptiles:

3:00 –3:15	Free Play
3:15 – 3:30	Snack
3:30 – 4:00	Homework/Reading
4:00 – 4:30	Activity/Free Play
4:30 – 5:30	Outside Play

Emergency Evacuation Plan

If a determination is made that it is necessary to evacuate the Children's Center, the following guidelines are recommended:

1. All children and the staff should leave together in an orderly manner. The group will proceed to the closest safe space as designated by Campus Police/Emergency Response Team. These spaces might include – Macey Center, The Skeen Library or Kelly Building (PRRC). A sign will be left on the front door of the Children's Center indicating where the group has gone.
2. The emergency backpack should be collected from each classroom. The sign-in/out sheets for each classroom and the emergency contact numbers for the families posted by the multipurpose room should also be taken. The senior staff in charge should collect all these items.
3. At least one student or staff member's cell phone should be turned on to allow for text or phone communication to and from Campus Police.
4. Once the group has arrived at the safe space, the person in charge should call Campus Police/Emergency Response Team to advise that the Children's Center children and staff are at the safe location. The group will stay in this place until directed to return by Campus Police/Emergency Response Team. Children will be released to their parents from the safe place.
5. These plans will be adjusted as needed to meet the specific needs of Children with special needs and conditions.

Emergency Backpack contents – box of tissues, toilet paper, plastic gloves, wipes, pampers, band aids, gauze, adhesive tape, small scissors, cold pack, bottles of water, sunscreen, crackers, blanket, cups, glucose, epi-pen, and hand sanitizer.

Shelter in Place

If a situation arises where it's determined the children need to remain in the Center, all exterior doors are to be locked. The classroom doors leading to the hallway are to be locked. All shades are to be drawn on the windows. The children will remain in the classrooms. Campus Police will notify the staff when it is safe to release the children to their parents.

Lock-Down

If a situation calls for a lock down, all exterior doors are to be locked. The classroom doors leading to the hallway are to be locked. The children are to be taken into the bathroom and the bathroom doors are to be locked. Campus Police will notify the staff when it is safe to release the children to their parents.

Continuity of Operations

If a situation arises where the Children's Center building becomes unusable the program would be relocated to the Student Activities Center auditorium.