

Welcome to California Children's Academy!

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to California Children's Academy! CCA is an extraordinary organization made up of people who work together to serve the children of our communities. The family handbook serves as a guide for working together to support your children and family. The services offered by CCA are subsidized through grants from California Department of Education. CCA has over 35 years of experience working with children and their families. We are pleased to have you in our program and hope that your child will find this experience enjoyable and rewarding.

The Family Handbook is filled with information on the program and services; as well as the requirements of the parents who participate in CCA. We know you will find this information useful, and will want to keep it handy.

If you have any questions concerning CCA policies and procedures, or requirements specific to you as a parent, please refer to the sections outlined in this Handbook, or contact your Eligibility Specialist. We're glad you have chosen to take part in California Children's Academy and we look forward to continuing to serving your children and family. Welcome!

Warmly,

All of Us at California Children's Academy

Family Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

**Working with Parents and the Community to Provide High Quality Child Care
and Education to the Children of Los Angeles County**

Board of Director Approved, October 30, 2010

OUR VISION

We provide the very highest quality education and child care programs for children. We provide a place where children may develop a positive self esteem while learning about themselves, others and the world in which they live. Our teachers plan programs to meet the individual needs, abilities and interests of each child in our care. We treat each child and their family with respect and dignity. Children are nurtured, held and encouraged through positive support and guidance throughout the day. We treasure the uniqueness of each child in our care.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Office:

2701 N. Main St., Los Angeles CA 90031

Phone (323) 223-3313

L.A. Eligibility Office:

2701 N. Main St., Los Angeles CA 90031

Phone (323) 343 - 1681

Valley Eligibility Office:

12157 San Fernando Road, Sylmar CA 91342

Phone (818) 367 - 3353

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm

Your Child will initially attend:

Campus: _____

Address: _____

Campus Phone #: _____

Campus Supervisor: _____

Eligibility Specialist: _____

Ages served at campus: _____

Campus Hours of Operation: _____

Monday -Friday

Phone Number: _____

PHILOSOPHY

Our commitment is to help children acquire the skills necessary to learn and to support family's success.

We believe:

- Children always come first, before planned curriculum, before rules, and before adult convenience.
- The best learning happens in relationships that are characterized by personal respect and caring responsiveness.
- Children learn best in environments which motivates them to want to learn.
- Learning happens when children are allowed the freedom to choose their own activities.
- Curriculum is everything that happens to the child while he/she is at the center and is generated from the staff, parents and other children.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum used by California Children's Academy is based on the foundation that children learn by doing. Our developmentally appropriate emergent curriculum is organized around the strengths and interests of the children and is offered in a way that will appeal to children in their individual stage of development and reflect their cultural diversity. Every day there are opportunities for all children to explore materials and create meaningful experiences. We believe that children will discover and learn by making the decisions needed to work through an activity rather than being told exactly how to accomplish a task. Play with a purpose is the primary vehicle for our curriculum. It is the child's most valuable learning tool. The curriculum is individualized, and offers children first hand learning experiences. The California Children's Academy campuses teachers use the DRDP 2010 to assess each child's developmental level and design learning experiences that will encourage each child to develop his/her knowledge and skills.

Our emergent curriculum provides opportunities in several basic areas:

- **Language and Literacy** - Children are encouraged to build their verbal expression with many opportunities to engage in conversations with adults and peers. Literacy skills are promoted through the print rich environment and activities that promote an interest and awareness of letters and letter sounds as well as opportunities for writing.
- **Mathematical Thinking** - Children develop a sense of number by actively participating in real life mathematical experiences and with a variety of materials that build math skills, such as counting, sorting, matching, and shape recognition.

- **Scientific Thinking** – Children learn by exploring the world around them. We nurture children's natural curiosity and intrinsic need to discover by offering them opportunities to use their five senses through measuring, comparing, questioning, predicting and analyzing results.
- **Social Studies** – Children explore roles and relationships in the world around them through dramatic play, block building, recognizing similarities and differences in people, families, professions, and understanding the reasons for social expectations.
- **Emotional and Social Development** – Children are encouraged to develop a healthy self-concept and self-regulation through interacting with others, problem solving, and conflict resolution.
- **Physical Development** – Children are provided opportunities to engage in physical activities that will promote their large and small motor skills through the use of materials and equipment such as slides, balls, climbing structures, bicycles, scissors, playdough, paint, puzzles, and lacing cards.
- **Personal Health and Safety** – Children are given opportunities to make healthy food choices and develop safe practices.
- **The Arts** – Children are encouraged to express their creativity through art, self-expression, music, and dramatic play.

PROGRAM EVALUATION SYSTEM

The California Children's Academy is funded by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division which requires an annual evaluation of child care and development services called Desired Results. The Desired Results system documents the progress made by children and families and serves to increase program quality standards. The Desired Results system uses the following three tools to evaluate the program annually:

1. The Desired Results Developmental Profile Revised (DRDP 2010) is completed twice a year and assesses the developmental level of each child.
2. The Desired Results Parent Survey is completed twice per year, giving the program access to information about parents and their level of satisfaction.
3. The Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition (ITERS-R or ECERS-R) measures the implementation of program quality standards once a year.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND RATIOS

All teachers are experienced early childhood educators who participate in a continuous program of educational development through in-services, college classes and professional organizations. All teachers must hold and maintain a current, valid

Associate Teacher Child Development Permit which authorizes them to teach young children. Teachers are encouraged to continue their education through various incentive programs the agency provides for them. CCA also provides training on a monthly basis to staff on various topics in child development and other classroom related topics, such as classroom management, lesson planning, curriculum ideas, first aid/CPR, etc.

We pride ourselves on maintaining low teacher/child ratios, which allow more opportunities to provide individual attention to each child.

The ratios for California Children's Academy are as follows:

- **1 Adult - 3 Infants (0-18 months of age)**
- **1 Adult - 4 Toddlers (18-35 months)**
- **1 Adult - 8 Preschool children (36 months+)**

Central Eligibility List (CEL)

California Children's Academy participates in an eligibility list, called the Los Angeles County Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL). This system assigns an eligibility rank number for the family; based on guidelines derived from the California Department of Education, Child Development Division. Eligibility ranking is based on income, and family size information. If funding is not available, qualifying families may remain on the eligibility list until funding becomes available or care is available with another provider. CCA currently does not maintain a waiting list.

ADMISSION PRIORITIES

First Priority: Families whose children are receiving child protective services or children, who are at risk of being neglected, abused or exploited. Within this priority, children receiving protective services through the local county welfare department shall be admitted first.

Second Priority: All children and families who are not within the first priority for admission shall be admitted in accordance with family income, with the lowest per capital income admitted first. For purposes of determining the order of admission, public assistance grants are counted as income. When two (2) or more families have the same income the family that has a child with exceptional needs shall be admitted first. If there is no family of the same priority with a child with special needs, the

same priority family that has been on the waiting list for the longest shall be admitted first. The program will not deny services to nor assign a lower priority if less than full-time services are needed. CCA serves children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.

Displaced Families

If CCA had the need to dis-enroll families due to insufficient funding or the inability to operate because of reasons beyond the control of the program, including earthquakes, floods or fire; the families shall be displaced in the reverse order of enrollment priority.

ADA STATEMENT

CCA is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities upon request of the individual. Individuals with disabilities requiring an accommodation to participate in CCA's programs should contact the Program Director/VP of Education, at (323) 223-3313.

ELIGIBILITY AND NEED

Families enrolled in the program must continually meet eligibility and need criteria in order for their services to continue. Parent/guardian will be required to sign a release of information allowing the designated Eligibility Specialist to verify employment/training/education/incapacity/and other information.

Eligibility is based on documentation and verification of:

- *Income
- * Current Aid Recipient
- *Homelessness
- *Child Protective Services
- *At risk of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation

The family monthly income must not exceed the income eligibility guidelines. Documentation of income for the 12 months immediately preceding the enrollment or recertification process is necessary in order to determine eligibility.

The documentation and verification for need is used to determine the number of childcare hours needed. Changes in certified hours of care must be approved in advance by the Eligibility Specialist; changes will be processed once new information is verified.

*Rotating work schedules may be required for parents/guardians who work on call, per diem or with a temporary agency. If the parent's hours increase or become set, the parent/guardian will be required to sign a release of information and the designated Eligibility Specialist will contact the employer to verify employment information.

*Families must have a "Need" for program services. Need for service is based on documentation and verification of the following:

- *Parents working/Employment
- *Vocational education or training
- *Parental Incapacity
- *Current Aid recipient
- *Actively seeking employment
- *Seeking permanent housing
- *Child Protective Services
- *At Risk for Abuse, Neglect and/or exploitation

RECERTIFICATION FOR ALL FAMILIES

Recertification must be completed for each family dependant on their need status, or whenever the need or eligibility changes.

Failure to report changes within five (5) days of any change may result in termination of child care services. Notice of change must be on the center form that is available at your child's campus. The form must be completed and returned in person.

NOTICE OF ACTION

Notice of Action (NOA) Application for services/Initial Certification:

This written notice is hand delivered or mailed to inform the family of the approval or denial of their application.

Notice of Action - Recipient of Services

This written notice is hand delivered or mailed to inform the family of a change in their service agreement. Examples: change in childcare schedule, family size, termination, family fee, etc...

Updating the Application:

The Program shall update the family's application to document when the family status changes from the prior eligible status, when there is a change in family size, or monthly gross income.

Recertification

After initial certification and enrollment, the Program shall verify need and eligibility and recertify each family/child at least once within a 10 month period.

Distribution of Notice of Action - NOA

The Program may hand deliver or mail the NOA to the family. If the Program hand delivers the NOA to the family, the action becomes effective 14 calendar days after receiving the NOA. If the Program mails the NOA the action may become effective 19 days after the mailing of the NOA, or as specified by the NOA; when the notification period exceeds the required 19 days.

REQUESTING A HEARING

If the parent disagrees with an action, the parent(s) may file a request for a hearing with the Appeal Officer (VP of Education), at (323) 223-3313, before the specific effective date on the Notice of Action. Upon the filing of a request for hearing, the intended action shall be suspended until the review process has been completed. The review process is complete when the appeal process has been exhausted or when the parent(s) abandons the appeal process. The Program shall notify the parent(s) of the time and place of the hearing within ten (10) calendar days following the receipt of the request for a hearing. The time and place of the hearing shall, to the extent possible, be convenient for the parent(s). If you disagree with the written decision of the agency, you have 19 days from the date of the written decision to file an appeal with the CA Department of Education. Complete instructions for this process are given on page two of the Notice of Action form.

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

If a parent has a concern or question regarding his or her child s/he must first direct the concern to the child's teacher. If the parent does not feel comfortable with the teacher's response then s/he can direct the concern to the Site Director/Supervisor. If the parent is still not comfortable with the response from the Site Director/Supervisor then the parent may contact the Education Coordinator who will then refer the concern to the appropriate component in the Administration Office.

If a parent has a concern or question regarding a teacher s/he must first direct the concern to the Site Director/Supervisor. If the parent is not comfortable with the response from the Site Director/Supervisor then the parent may contact the Education Coordinator who will then refer the concern to the appropriate component in the Administration Office.

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

California Children's Academy is available to all who qualify on a non-discriminatory basis and gives equal treatment in, and access to service to all families. CCA does not unlawfully discriminate regarding of actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation,

gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, age or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

California Children's Academy is operated on a non-discriminatory basis, affording equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, religion, ethnic or national origin, sex, or physical disability. Children with disabilities or other special needs, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are welcomed into the program and reasonable accommodations are made as necessary. **If you believe a California State or federal law, and/or statute, has been violated** please send your complaint, including the following information:

- Your Name, Address, and Telephone Number
- Agency Name, Address, and Telephone Number
- The cited law or statute that you believe has been violated

To the address provided below:

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Uniform Complaint Coordinator

Child Care Fees

Child care fees are determined by the California Department of Education. A sliding fee scale is used for families who qualify. This scale is based on the gross monthly income of all household members and on the number of people in the family. If a family is a TANF recipient, within the income guidelines, child care fees are waived.

- Fees are assessed based on contracted number of days per month, whether or not the child attends.
- Parents can call the Accounting department at (323) 223-3313 for information or questions regarding fees.
- Fees due two weeks in advance. Fees are due /payable on the first school day of week.
- Fees may be paid by check, money order or cashier check made payable to California Children's Academy.
- Payments can be made to the Campus Supervisor or Teachers. They will provide you with a written receipt.
- Subsidized fees may be adjusted based on submission of receipts from other childcare providers for eligible children. More information will be provided by center staff upon request. (Receipts in Lieu of Payment-Child Care Fee Contract)

- Fees shall be considered delinquent if not submitted on the first day of the school week. Delinquent fees may be grounds for termination.
- If an amount becomes delinquent, a Notice of Action will be issued, which includes the fees due, the period of delinquency, and notice that services will be terminated two weeks from the date of the notice.
- All delinquent fees will be aggressively pursued for collection.
- The Accounting Department will consider a reasonable plan from the parent(s) for payment of delinquent fees and continuation of services for the child, provided the parent pays current fees when due and complies with the provisions of the repayment plan.
- Families whose fee payments are delinquent or returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF) three times in a fiscal year will be terminated.
- All personal checks returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF) will be charged for applicable bank fees. Upon receipt of a third non-sufficient funds check within one fiscal year, all child care payments will be required to be made in the form of a money order or cashier's check.
- Upon termination of services for non-payment of delinquent fees, the family shall be ineligible for child care services until all delinquent fees are paid.
- There are no additional payments or costs (i.e. registration fees, etc.) associated with your child attending our campus. If a fee paying family leaves the program by their own choice, fees will be charges through the Friday of the week we are notified, unless prior notice is given. If on the child's last day, the account shows a credit, CCA will refund the parent for overpayment within 10 working days.

LICENSING

The CCA Child Development Campuses are licensed by the State Department of Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing. These regulations (Title 22) establish health and safety standards for child care centers. A licensing analyst has the authority to inspect the facility and interview children in care. The findings of each visit are posted on the parent bulletin board or a copy can be requested from the campus director.

For the safety of your child, CCA follows Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing regulations that require staff members to complete a rigorous background screening, which includes screening for criminal records. All staff members are required to obtain a health screening and T.B. test clearance.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

One of the expectations of your child's enrollment in the program is that you be an active participant in your child's education. We have found that family involvement adds tremendously to children's learning, and to the quality and scope of our program. Your partnership with the staff is vital to helping us reach the high standard we set for our campuses. There are many opportunities for family members and caretakers to participate at the campus. For more information, speak to the campus director or your child's teacher.

UNLIMITED ACCESS/OPEN DOOR POLICY

As a parent/guardian, you have unlimited access to your child(ren) while in care.

ATTENDANCE LOG

The Attendance Log is the "daily sign-in sign out log" and must be completed on a ***DAILY BASIS*** as the child arrives at, or leaves from, the childcare facility for the days and times of authorized care. Parent/Guardians and/or other adults are required to verify the child's attendance on a ***daily basis***, by signing in and out their child(ren) and accurately, indicating the times accordingly. Parents must fill out a confidential absence form providing the specific reason and date for not receiving childcare on that day.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Each child must be signed in and out of the center by a parent or designee. All sign in sheets are located in children's classroom. For your child's protection, he/she will be released only to designated persons on the emergency card. All persons picking up children must be over 18 years of age, have valid photo identification, and sign the child in/out with a full legal signature.

Notice of any permanent changes to the child's emergency card or status, must be communicated with the Eligibility department within 5 calendar days of any change. A Notice of Changes form must be completed. The form must be completed and returned in person to the campus director.

**Parents must be in an area that is accessible by telephone
or must have a person named on the emergency card who is available.**

Upon arrival to the center:

- Every child must be accompanied into the classroom by their parent or authorized designee.
- Child will be observed by the teacher for their daily health check.
- The parent or authorized designee must record the time of arrival and sign in with **full legal signature** (in ink).
- Every child must then proceed to wash their hands.
- The child will then be engaged in an activity.

Upon departure from the center:

- Every child must leave the center with only their parent or authorized designee.
- The parent or authorized designee must record the time of departure and sign out with full legal signature (in ink).
- Be sure that a teacher in your child's classroom knows that your child is leaving.

**Legal documents regarding a child's custody or release
must be on file at the center and updated as needed.**

LATE ARRIVAL OR LATE PICK UP

Being left at school beyond closing time can be a frightening experience for a child. Staff members are as supportive as possible, but it is a situation we all want to avoid. Children must attend according to their contract hours. The time on the clock in the office/classroom is the official time. If someone else is bringing your child, it is still your responsibility to have him/her arrive and/or pick up by the scheduled contract time. Parents who know that they will be late because of an emergency, need to call the campus. Notification does not excuse the late arrival/pick up and a Violation of Contracted Hours form will be filled out for you to sign.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

The following policy will be in effect when you are late to pick up your child at campus closing time:

- Any time a child is picked up at school more than fifteen (15) minutes after their contract time, a Violation of Contract Hours form is signed by the parent and the director/teacher.
- After failure two times to adhere to scheduled hours, a conference with the Eligibility Supervisor will be required to determine if an adjustment is necessary.

- The third Late Notice will result in termination of child care services and a Notice of Action will be issued. A parent has the right to appeal any adverse action taken by CCA. The appeal steps are outlined on the California Department of Education Notice of Action.

Late pick-ups (non-compliance to campus hours) are accumulated for twelve months from July 1st through June 30th.

CAMPUS WELLNESS

Children are expected to be in good health and able to participate in the planned daily activities. To reduce the spread of illness, please keep your child home if your child has had a non-clear nasal discharge, unexplained rash, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, stomachache, ear ache, swollen glands, fever over 100° without medication, or a strong cough during the previous 24-hour period. *CHILDREN MUST BE FREE OF ALL SYMPTOMS FOR 24-HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.* A daily health check will be performed prior to accepting your child. If it is noted that a child is unwell we will be unable to allow them to stay at school. If your child has been absent due to illness or a contagious disease i.e., chicken pox, lice, conjunctivitis (pink eye), he/she will need to meet with the campus director or lead teacher before entering the classroom and/or signing in. A doctor's note may be required in certain instances. If your child becomes ill at school he/she will be isolated from the other children and you will be contacted promptly and required to **pick-up your child immediately.**

Please keep emergency information (persons to contact with updated phone numbers) current on your child's emergency card. Leave a note of where you can be reached in the log located in the main office if you will not be in the usual place.

All teachers are current in CPR and First Aid training. The staff will handle minor injuries sustained at school. Staff members are only allowed to use soap, water, a first aid cream, and Band-Aids. Parents will be notified of these incidences on an "Minor Incident" report. If there is a serious injury to a child, 911 will be called and the parent will be contacted immediately. If we cannot reach a parent, the child may be transported to the designated emergency center. Each child must have an Emergency Consent Form, signed by the parent, on file in the office.

Allergies

Please be sure to notify the staff of any food allergies or restrictions your child may have. When a medical statement is provided, food alternatives will be substituted. All food allergies that are documented by a physician are posted for our nutrition and classroom staff. Special procedures are applied when addressing the feeding patterns and needs of infants and toddlers.

Medication

Campus staff does not administer any type of medication.

HANDWASHING

Clean hands are the most effective way to keep illness out of our center and away from your child. Hand washing procedures are posted near all sinks. All adults and children need to wash hands with soap and water:

- *Upon entering the classroom, after messy play.
- *Before handling food, after toileting.
- *After assisting a child with toileting.
- *After using a tissue.
- *And remember to turn off the water using a paper towel, NOT YOUR CLEAN HANDS.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The campus staff, participating adults, and volunteers have the primary responsibility to provide a safe indoor and outdoor environment for children and adults. All campus certificated staff are current in CPR and first aid training. Everyone is required to follow all CCA safety procedures. All safety procedures are posted in each classroom, kitchen, and office. If, at any time, you are concerned about the safety of a particular situation, please speak with your child's teacher or the center director.

- Emergency Drills: Earthquake, evacuation and fire drills are conducted regularly. All individuals must evacuate the center and remain outside until the "all clear" signal is given by the campus director.
- Emergency Evacuation: In case of an ordered evacuation, parents will be notified about the evacuation as quickly as possible. Staff will remain with the children at all times and a notice will be posted at the center stating directions for the parents.
- Emergency Preparedness: The campus has a supply of drinking water and emergency supplies on the premises.

MANDATED CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING

All program employees are required under California Penal Code 11165.7 to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. The primary purpose of the reporting law is to protect the child.

CHILD ABSENCE POLICY

Parent/Guardian agrees their child will be in attendance on all days indicated on their Notice of Action. Parent/Guardian must call the campus by 8:30a.m., to report all absences or tardiness. If a parent does not inform the agency about their child's absence, after five consecutive days of absence, the child will be terminated from the program.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

An excused absence of more than 5 consecutive school days for any of the following excused absences requires written verification such as a doctor's note. On the Confidential Absence Report, the parent must specify the specific reason for the absence (not "illness", but "flu", "fever", "mother had flu", etc.) and sign/date the form.

- a) illness or quarantine of enrolled child
- b) illness or quarantine of parent
- c) Court Ordered Visitation

FAMILY EMERGENCY

In the event of a family emergency, children's absences are excused absences.

Family Emergencies shall include:

- *Death or severe illness of a family member
- *Incarceration of a Parent
- *Interruption in, or lack of transportation (Limited to 3 days)
- *Sudden, unexpected occurrence, crisis or tragedy affecting day-to-day living including natural and unnatural disasters
- *Special circumstances on a case-by-case basis with approval from the Executive Director/CEO.
- *Illness or quarantine of a sibling
- *Child removed from home by legal authorities
- *Civil Unrest

BEST INTEREST DAYS

In addition to the above excused absences children are allowed a maximum of 10 additional days of absence per fiscal year designated as "in the best interest of the child". (The fiscal year is July 1 - June30).

Best interest days to include vacation days.

More than five days of unexcused absences in a fiscal year will subject the family to termination of child care services.

LIMITED TERM SERVICE LEAVE

When a parent/guardian does not have need for child care services for a limited period of time, the Executive Director/CEO may grant a Limited Term Service Leave (LTSL). During such time your child shall remain enrolled and be allowed to return to the campus at the end of the LTSL. At least two weeks prior to the lack of need for services, the parent /guardian shall complete the "Child Leave Request Form" and give it to the applicable Campus Director.

CCA'S HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES

The campuses observe twelve (12) legal holidays. These holidays include: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and Christmas.

WITHDRAWING CHILDREN FROM THE PROGRAM

A thirty (30) day written or verbal notice is required when withdrawing your child from the center. Fees will continue until the last day of attendance. Refer to the Fee Policy for information regarding unpaid fees.

After three (3) days of non-attendance without contacting the center, the center will attempt to contact the parent. On the fifth (5) day of non-attendance without contact, a Notice of Action will be issued to the family giving a fourteen (14) day notice of termination of services at which the family has the right to appeal, before the termination date.

A thirty (30) day notice is required when childcare services are no longer required.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

CHANGES AFFECTING SERVICE

Program Participants are responsible to report any change in family status that may affect the service within five (5) days. Including, but not limited to these examples:

Family Changes

Family size change
Marriage, divorce, or separation

Changes in Service

More or less childcare hours needed
Absences that exceed more than five
(5) consecutive days
Income (pay raise, pay cut)

Changes in Need

No longer working
New employment
No longer seeking employment
Incapacitation
Request for LOA
No longer training

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAM

Our centers participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All snacks, meals, and beverages are provided free of cost to families. All meals are planned to meet the nutritional needs of the children served and CACFP guidelines. Meals are served family style, are culturally sensitive, well balanced and flavorful. Additional information about the food program is listed below:

- Families are not charged for these meals.
- Menus are posted on the main bulletin board as well as in every classroom.
 - Menu changes for the day will be posted on the main bulletin board.
- A medical statement is required for any food allergies or restrictions your child may have.
 - Food alternatives will be substituted.
 - Medical statement forms may be obtained from office staff.
- Infants' and toddlers' feeding patterns and needs are addressed individually.
 - The teacher will provide parents with information and procedures.
- Outside food or drinks are not permitted in the classroom or play yard areas.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The children who attend the child development centers at California Children's Academy receive their meals and snacks at no charge because the program receives funding from the federal child and adult food program. Meals and snacks are available to enrolled children who meet the approved eligibility criteria without discrimination against any child because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap.

SEXUAL HARRASMENT

It is the policy of the CCA to provide an educational, employment and business environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment, as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and Federal law. California Children's Academy forbids any form of harassment. Prompt disciplinary action will be taken against any person engaging in harassment. If you feel that you have been the victim of harassment please contact the Human Resources Department at (323) 223-3313.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As per CCA agency policy, student records are confidential. The use or disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and his/her family shall be restricted to the purposes directly connected with the administration of the program. CCA shall permit the review of the basic data file by the child's enrolling parent(s) or parent's authorized representative, upon written request and at reasonable times and places. All records are subject to on-site review by officials representing Community Care Licensing, the California State Department of Education, the Health Department, U.S.D.A., or local police authorities in the event of suspected of child abuse or neglect.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

California Children's Academy refrains from any religious instruction.

PHOTO RELEASE

With each family's permission, the agency will use photographs or other images of children or adult students for documentation, art projects, displays and school promotional materials. If you are opposed to having your child's image used in any way, please notify your eligibility specialist.

DISCIPLINE

The goal of CCA's discipline policy is to assist children in developing emotional regulation and self-discipline through respectful interactions that support children's emotional growth. Our staff views discipline in a very positive way. We provide a warm, caring environment in which children are allowed to experience all feelings and at the same time begin to learn to deal with these feelings in appropriate ways that lead to the development of self-control. Teachers maintain clear, consistent, fair limits, which are age appropriate. Children are encouraged to "use their words" to express their feelings. Staff members are gentle but firm and do not administer corporal punishment.

Additionally, California Children's Academy reserves the right to discontinue services under any of the following conditions:

- ***When it has been recommended that the parents and family participate in therapeutic intervention and such recommendation has not been followed and the child's dangerous or abusive behavior persists.***
- ***If after appropriate therapeutic intervention, the child's dangerous or abusive behavior persists.***
- ***When it has been determined through that the child needs an environment that we are unable to provide.***

NOTIFICATION OF PARENT AND PERSONAL RIGHTS

A parent has the right to review their eligibility file. Requests for copies of records must be made in writing by the enrolling parent. A parent has the right to enter and inspect the child care campus without advance notice whenever children are present. A parent has all of the rights as outlined in the Notification of Parent's Rights. Every child has all of the rights as outlined in the Notification of Personal Rights. These rights are declared by the State of California - Department of Social Services - Community Care Licensing Division.

YOUR CHILD AT OUR CAMPUS

ITEMS FROM HOME

We request that all toys, playthings, money, gum, candy, and food from home remain at home. However, if your child needs a special item to help with separation or nap times, he/she may bring that from home to use as needed. The item may be kept in your child's cubby.

CLOTHING FROM SCHOOL

Please send your child to school in comfortable play clothes that can get dirty. Our children play in sand, water, paint, and other fun, messy materials as part of their daily learning experiences.

- Long skirts and dresses, scarves, jacket hood strings, jewelry, or other items that can be caught on equipment are dangerous when a child plays or uses school equipment.

- Closed toed shoes that fasten or tie provide more security when children use large motor equipment and are required at all times while your child is at school to prevent injuries. Tennis shoes are highly recommended to enable safe running, climbing, and balancing activities.
- Dressing your child in layers will ensure their comfort as the temperature changes throughout the day.

Don't forget to label ALL garments with your child's name.

Parents must provide an extra set of seasonal clothing, including underwear and socks, in case of accidents or spills. Please promptly return all borrowed clothing to the center.

FIELD TRIPS

The CCA does not take field trips outside of the local community. If age appropriate, the classroom may choose to take a walk in the surrounding neighborhood. Parents will be notified in advance to the date, time and route. CCA does not transport children in vehicles.

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday is a special day for him or her. Your child's class will celebrate his or her birthday by making a special crown and singing the "Happy Birthday" song. The center will celebrate all birthday's for the month on the third Wednesday, by providing a healthy snack. If families would like to contribute to their child's classroom celebration, please ask your child's teacher what cooking materials are needed this month. If you do not wish to have your child's birthday recognized, please tell your child's teacher.

HOLIDAYS

Our purpose is to help the children become more aware of the many cultures and traditions in our community. Commercial holidays and other celebrations are **NOT** celebrated in our campuses. The children, families, and staff involve themselves in helping to plan for the cultural celebrations in order to incorporate these special days into their educational experiences. We encourage all families to share their culture and family traditions with us. If you would rather your child not participate in any of these celebrations, please let your child's teacher know.

NAPS

Children who attend our program for more than five hours are required to rest on a nap mat during the classroom scheduled naptime. Infants and toddlers take naps according to their individual needs.

TOILET INDEPENDANCE

Toilet independence is the process in which your child learns to recognize and act independently upon the urge to use the bathroom. Preschoolers are accepted into the program even if they are not fully toilet independent. The staff will work with the child and the parents with appropriate toileting techniques when your child is ready.

- Teachers and parents will regularly confer and determine if the child is truly ready for this process.
- Gentle reminders and encouragement will be offered on a regular basis.
- If children are in diapers, the family is expected to provide disposable diapers (not pull-ups) and wipes.
- Please be sure to send your child in clothing he or she can get in and out of easily and provide lots of extra changes! Soiled clothing will be put in plastic bags and sent home at the end of the day.

PRIMARY CAREGIVING/CONTINUITY OF CARE

The CCA utilizes a primary caregiving system which infants and toddlers are assigned to one of the teachers/caregivers. Each child is temporarily assigned to a primary caregiver when he/she enters the classroom. All caregivers will interact and provide learning experiences for the new children. Within a few weeks as the children become more comfortable and connect with a primary caregiver, a primary caregiver will be assigned. When possible we will match children and caregivers with similar schedules and home languages.

This primary caregiving relationship is not an exclusive one, but one in which all caregivers work as a team to support each other. While each primary caregiver is responsible for the children in his/her care, the other members of the team become secondary caregivers by supporting whenever such assistance is needed.

We believe that by creating significant relationships with a few caring adults, children can establish a sense of trust for themselves and the world around them.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We believe our centers can be more helpful to you and your child when good communication is maintained. Each May and November you will be invited to attend a parent conference with your child's teacher. This is an excellent time for parent and teacher to talk about your child both at home and school. If you have questions and/or concerns, additional conferences may be requested.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Conferences are scheduled twice a year upon completion of the DRDP 2010 assessment. During this conference, goals are set by both teacher and parent based on the strengths and areas of concern found in the results of the assessment. This is an excellent opportunity to talk about your child's progress and how our program is meeting your child's needs and development. Parents are given a copy of the summary of their child's developmental progress. If needed, you may schedule additional meetings with your child's teacher.

Daily Parent Communication: For information that needs immediate attention, a note may be found in the following areas:

- * Child sign-in sheet
- *Parent mailboxes
- *Message board in classroom
- *Front door of the center and/or classroom

Parent Newsletter: Parent newsletters are distributed to families monthly. The newsletter includes parent education articles, upcoming events, parent participation programs, information on family resources, and announcements of community events.

Agency Website: Please visit your CCA site <http://www.californiachildrensacademy.org> for more information regarding the center program and staff.

Parent Bulletin Board: Parent information is located on the main bulletin board at the entrance of each center. This bulletin board contains information of interest to families. On this bulletin board you will find:

- Licensing information
- Food menu and menu changes
- School calendar
- Center's hours of operation
- Family resource information-Every classroom also has a parent board that contains information about what is happening in your child's classroom and other parent information.

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

The PAC provides an important link between center operations and families. Members of the PAC support the overall program and their children's individual classrooms by sharing input, reviewing policy changes, participating in special events, establishing goals and managing fundraising activities to support the agency as a whole. Each center's PAC meets at least twice per year. Each center will have one parent representative who will serve on a agency level PAC, which will meet twice a year. The purpose of the PAC is to involve parents in the awareness and support of children's services. Many of the leadership skills acquired while participating on PAC are:

- Team building
- Advocacy
- Organizing and meeting management
- Fundraising and money management

Parent Education

Parent education is an important component of the philosophy of our campuses. Parent attendance at these opportunities is expected each year. Parent education opportunities offered are based on the parents "Needs Assessment" and Parent Survey.

ADULT STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Adults will be responsible for the safety and conduct of the children while conducting business with the Agency. The following adult behaviors are in conflict with the agency philosophies, which respect every individual, adult and child. Any family, parent, or parent representative who displays any one of the following behaviors may result in their child being terminated from the program:

1. Harassment, threats, endangerment, verbal or physical abuse of any child or adult at CCA Offices/Campuses or during telephone communication or program sponsored activity.
2. Possession or consumption of, or under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs, at CCA Offices/Campuses or at any program sponsored activity
3. Smoking in CCA Offices/Campuses or at any indoor program sponsored activity.

The well being and safety of the children, families and staff in our program is of utmost importance. It is expected that all children, families and staff be treated with respect. Harassment, threats or endangerment of the children, staff or other parents will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to; rudeness, yelling, profanity or their children to address an

incident that happened at the campus. Parents must deal with this through the Campus Director/Supervisor. Parents must be good role models to the children at all times. If any of the above incidents occur, the following process shall be followed:

- A. Parent asked to leave premises or police will be called.
- B. The parent is required to have a face to face meeting with the designated administrative staff person. The child may continue attending the center unless the appointment is not kept, in which case the child will not be accepted at the campus and a NOA for termination of service will be issued.
- C. Continuation in the program will be determined on a case by case basis, after the meeting with the parent and based on severity and circumstances of the incident.
- D. If the child is allowed to remain in the program, additional instances of a similar nature will result in termination from the program.

Each parent is obligated to inform the Eligibility Office of any change in status including but not limited to; income, marital status or family size. Per California Department of Education requirements, your services may be terminated at any time for knowingly providing false information for determination of initial or ongoing eligibility or fees. In addition, you will be billed for all past child care services provided. If you do not reimburse the agency for money owed, you may be taken to Small Claims Court and/or referred to the District Attorney.

FRAUD

Fraud is defined as knowingly or intentionally withholding pertinent materials or information, making any false statements or presenting any false materials or information, as a means of obtaining state-funded child care services. Fraudulent, false, incomplete, deceitful, or misleading information provided to CCA campuses regarding income, family size, employment, seeking employment, school/training program enrollment and for medical incapacitation that is used to determine initial or on-going eligibility for subsidized child care services or parent fees may be grounds for termination of child care services.

**All suspected cases of fraud will be forwarded to
the local District Attorney's office.**

California Children's Academy Participation Agreement

I, _____ have received, read, and have been instructed on the contents of the Family Handbook provided by the California Children's Academy. I fully understand my responsibilities as a participant in the CCA and agree to comply with the rules and regulations of the program.

With your initials below you are indicating you understand and are in agreement with the following specific policies of CCA:

_____ I understand and hereby agree to comply with the Adult Standard of Conduct

_____ I understand and hereby agree to comply with the requirement of, and how to, correctly fill in a sign in & out sheet attesting to fill out truthfully and accurately.

_____ I understand it is in the best interest of my child, to attend parent meetings and parent conferences.

_____ I understand and hereby agree to comply with the 5 day "reporting of changes" notice requirement

_____ I understand and hereby agree to comply with the Non Discrimination Policy

_____ I understand and hereby agree to comply with the Childcare Absence Policy

_____ I understand and hereby agree to comply with the Fraud Prevention Policy

_____ I understand and hereby agree to fill out/submit all paperwork truthfully and accurately under the penalty of perjury.

Yes No _____ I give permission to CCA to take and use the name, history, and photographs of my child(ren), and/or myself for publications, including but not limited to videos, brochures and photographs.

I have read and understand the Program requirements and hereby agree to comply with all the program requirements, procedures, and reporting responsibilities. I understand that all of the information requested of me is used for determining my eligibility and/or participation in the program, so that I may receive childcare services paid for by the State of California. I understand that my failure to provide truthful and correct information may result in prosecution for fraud, and that if after investigation, I am found guilty of fraud, I may be required to pay back any monies used for care on my behalf, and be subject to other civil penalties, including but not limited to fines and imprisonment. I therefore affirm under penalty of perjury, that all of the information I have provided and given, in seeking to participate in California Children's Academy, is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant Signature

Date

Eligibility Specialist Signature

Date