

## Section 12 Family Life Program Parent Handbook

Welcome to the Family Life Program. It is a unique program designed to care about the whole family unit. The Program serves as an outreach mission program of the First Congregational, UCC, Downers Grove to parents and children of the Downers Grove area. The program provides full day kindergarten and childcare for toilet trained children ages 3 - 6 years old. The program provides part-day preschool for toilet trained children ages 3 to 5 years old. We hope that together our program will continue to nurture the development of children and strengthen the family unit.

### **The Mission of the Family Life Program**

To provide quality child care in a Christian setting in order to nurture in each child an attitude of love and respect for themselves as persons, to be concerned for others, to have a sense of wonder and curiosity about the world around them, and to experience the joy of learning for its own reward. Through communication and involvement of parents/guardians, the Program aims to strengthen the family unit.

As an outreach mission program of the First Congregational Church, the Family Life Program is managed by a Family Life Ministry Board. The Board is a policy-setting body for the Program. The Board recognizes the mission upon which the Program is founded and implements the philosophy through all areas of the Program's administration. The Board delegates to the Director the responsibility to administer the Program and staff.

The Family Life Program is licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). We adhere to the licensing standards of DCFS for toilet-trained children ages 3 to 6 years old. The Family Life Program is accredited by NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). This accreditation is not an end point but a continuing journey to optimize our nurturing and educating of young children in our community. To learn more about NAEYC access the website at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

### **The Christian Philosophy of the Family Life Program**

Christian faith is not only beliefs, but a way of living. It is crucial that Christians learn to live their faith day to day. The Church, like individual Christians, needs to show its faith during the week. One way in which our Church lives this philosophy is through the Family Life Program. The foundation of the program are the convictions that children are precious persons to God, that families are the Church because two or three can be gathered in His name, and that families need support from the larger Church.

We are intentionally a family life program -- not just a preschool facility. Within our programs we try to give children and parents' an opportunity to grow in a way that will benefit the whole family unit.

It has been said that "Children are not pieces of clay to be molded, but flowers to be unfolded."

We strive to provide an environment in which children can blossom at their own pace, urged forward by the knowledge that they are both protected and loved by those around them. We hope to help them develop an attitude of love and respect for themselves as persons and to be concerned for others. We seek to help them capture or retain a sense of wonder and curiosity about the world around them and to experience the joy of learning for its own reward.

We are a Christian organization. We relate the central events of the Christian story to the children as we prepare for the celebration of the Christmas and Easter festivals. We use a variety of media to teach the wonderful works that God has given us. We want them to experience both the church and the world as places where God's love and care are shown to them personally in their relationships with others.

The Family Life Program of the First Congregational Church admits students of any gender, race, color, creed, nationality or ethnic origin, in the administration of our hiring practices, admission policies, or any other Program activities.

## The Primary Goals of the Family Life Program

### A CONSISTENT ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

- Ample indoor and outdoor space, at least 35 square feet of free space per child indoors and out. The Program shares indoor space with the Church. The outdoor space is shared with the Downers Grove Park District. The Staff strives to work creatively with both areas, utilizing them for the benefit of the children.
- Safe, sanitary, and hygienic housing conditions. The Board welcomes inspections by state and local Fire Officials and county Health Inspectors on a routine basis.

### AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM DESIGN

- Compliant with DCFS rules and regulations. Appropriate teacher/student ratios meet or exceed DCFS standards.
  - Ratios for Preschool 1 Room 202 8:1 ages 3-4
  - Ratios for Childcare Room 205 9:1 ages 3-5
  - Ratios for Preschool 2 Room 203 10:1 ages 4-5
  - Ratios for Kindergarten Room 204 10:1 ages 5-6 (may be 12:1 for half hour prior to lunch)
  - Mixed age group ratios 9:1
- Teaching staff supervises children primarily by sight except during the use of the bathroom at which time the children are supervised by sound and checked on regularly by teaching staff. Our bathrooms are connected by two classrooms and the doors remain open at all times for safety purposes. The children are given privacy with walls around each stall. The second bathroom used by the part-day preschool groups is a single use bathroom and has doors which the children are allowed to close but there are no locks on the doors for easy access by the teaching staff when needed.
- Accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age 8. NAEYC is committed to becoming an increasingly high performing and inclusive organization. Founded in 1926, NAEYC is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children with nearly 100,000 members, a national network of over 300 local, state, and regional Affiliates, and a growing global alliance of like minded organizations.
- Appropriate and sufficient equipment and play materials. Equipment and play materials are readily available to the children. Both equipment and play materials are carefully selected to stimulate 3, 4, 5, and 6 year old play, including fine and gross motor development.
- Life-enriching activities. Gross and fine motor development activities are an integral part of our program.
- A balance is maintained between structured activities, free choice, and planned free choice. Each area is recognized as crucial in early child development.
- See attachment at the back of this handbook for more Curriculum information.
- Structured activities include:
  - storytelling
  - music and art
  - lunch
  - outdoor and indoor games
  - cooking and science exploration
  - field trips and other group activities
  - nap and/or quiet time provided for children who attend five hours or more per day
- Planned free choice is free play within a special planned environment. Teachers creatively add to or change the classroom environment to stimulate the development of the children.
- Free choice is child directed and may include:
  - blocks and construction
  - sensory table
  - dramatic play

- art and writing
- computer
- snack
- quiet areas
- manipulatives

#### **SUMMER CAMP**

- Our Program is open year round and provides flexible scheduling during the summer months.
- Parents register for Summer Camp in April and May and are responsible for paying for the days the child is scheduled when registered. Which means, if you take a vacation you are not charged tuition for time off. You can sign up for as little as two weeks or all 10 weeks of summer camp. The days you attend can vary from week to week as long as you have prescheduled it in the spring.
- Only the childcare rates apply during the summer months. All rates are weekly.

#### **A LEARNED AND LOVING STAFF**

- Staff meets or exceeds DCFS AND NAEYC qualifications. Staff members understand children and how they learn. The staff understands early childhood development and applies their knowledge to the practical environment of the classroom by arranging materials and equipment to best meet the needs of the children. Staff members apply developmentally appropriate strategies to develop and enhance interests and capabilities of the individual child according to his or her age group.
- Staff members value the natural training opportunities available through play. Staff members create an environment which reduces the natural complications of young children working and playing together.
- Disciplinary procedures are consistent with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services: Part 407: Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers. Subchapter C: Requirements for Licensure. More information can be found under **Discipline of a Child** in this handbook.
- Staff members are alert to observing and recording. Each child's progress and development is celebrated and confidentially recorded to help parents and the staff better understand the child and his/her needs.

#### **HAPPY, COMFORTABLE AND STIMULATED CHILDREN**

- Children's health needs are considered. State health requirements are followed. Nutritious snacks are served daily. Well-balanced, varied noon meals are served daily in the full-day childcare and kindergarten. A balance is maintained between quiet and vigorous activities.
- Children are motivated to increase their use of language and to expand concepts. Children are encouraged to talk with each other and adults. Children are taught to problem solve and develop independent thinking skills.
- Children are encouraged to develop socially and emotionally. Children are inspired to consider other's rights and feelings, to take turns, to share, and to stand up for them when necessary. Children are urged to develop wholesome attitudes about themselves.
- Children are motivated to increase their skills for constructive and creative processes. Children are inspired to design and make their own projects with paints, clay, blocks, and other manipulative materials to express their own creativity.
- Children are motivated to increase their literacy, and writing skills through the use of journal writing, computer, show and tell and inventive spelling.

#### **TEAMWORK**

- *Between the Family Life Program and the Church.* The Board maintains good communication with the Church as the Chairperson(s) attend monthly Church Cabinet meetings.
- *Between Family Life Program and Parents.* The Program welcomes parents to observe, to discuss policies, to make suggestions, and to volunteer in the classroom. All parents are invited to expand their parenting skills through Family Life programs.
- *Between the Board and the Staff.* The Director represents the total staff at monthly Board meetings. Staff is always welcome to attend and speak at monthly Board meetings.

- Meetings are held at least twice yearly between the staff and the board to discuss Program achievements and improvements.
- Additional meetings may be held if needed to discuss emergency situations.
- The Board assists staff during Family Supper Nights and at the annual Heritage Festival that is sponsored by the Village of Downers Grove.
- *Between staff members.* The entire staff has a direct or indirect influence on each child, therefore all members work with one another. Communication is facilitated through several meetings:
  - Staff meetings at least once a month
  - Staff members touch base every day to discuss immediate concerns involving individual children and program needs
  - Other meetings may be scheduled at the Director's discretion.
  - A Daily Communication book is used to enhance the communication between staff, parent and director.
- *Between the Family Life Program and the Community.* The Program recognizes the great resources in the community. The Program continually seeks new ideas and resources within the community and offers its own resources to others as well.

#### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

If a parent has a concern or believes a change should be made the following steps are recommended:

- Discuss the issue with the child's teacher or other appropriate staff member to reach a satisfactory resolution.
- Discuss the issue with the Program Director to reach a satisfactory resolution.
- Discuss the issue with the Minister Liaison to reach a satisfactory resolution.
- If an issue is not resolved, direct it in writing to the Family Life Board. It will be placed on the next monthly meeting agenda, and the parent may attend the meeting to discuss the issue.
- After deliberation by the Board, a written resolution will be given or sent to the parent and to the Program Director to file.
- Note that all issues can be addressed either verbally or in writing. When addressing the board it is preferred in writing with a copy sent to the Program Director.

#### **CLASSROOM PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES**

##### **CLASSROOM VISITATIONS**

- The Director shall be contacted to inquire about classroom visitation.
- Parents and others are encouraged to visit the classroom, to observe and participate with their children, provided their presence is not disruptive to classroom routine.
- When possible, the Director will clear visitation time with the teachers.
- Parents will be encouraged to ask questions following the school session unless the Director is available, as teachers need to spend their time with the children.
- The Director may also substitute for a teacher to enable communication between parent and teacher.

##### **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

- Newsletters shall be sent home on a regular basis. Content to be decided by the Director. Staff is encouraged to share articles and activities.
- Monthly Classroom Activity Calendars, Snack Schedules and Lunch menus are sent home for full-day programs. These calendars are also posted in each classroom on the Parent communication board.
- Monthly Classroom Activity Calendars and Snack Schedules are sent home for part-day programs. These calendars are also posted in each classroom on the Parent Communication board.
- Weekly lesson plans must be posted for both full-day and half-day programs.
- Student evaluations are prepared twice yearly. Parents or teachers may request a conference at any time throughout the year. A concerned parent should arrange for the appointment. Assessment Procedures are available at the end of this handbook.
- Parent contact with the teacher shall be limited to the start and end of each school day.

## SNOW DAYS

We will do our best to get to the school so we can open but some of us do have a way to travel. If in doubt please call first to make sure someone is here and that we will be opening. We want everyone to be safe.

- The Family Life Program will follow the District #58 snow days.
- You can go to the public website [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com) and search by typing in Downers Grove or the phone number 630-968-0527.
- Call 847-238-1234 from a touch tone phone and enter 630-968-0527.
- Listen to WGN Radio 720-AM, WBBM Radio 780-AM, or watch CBS-2, NBC-5, ABC-7, FOX-32 WGN-TV or CLTV cable for closing information.
- The Director will inform the teachers of "no school." The list of parents to be called shall be divided among the teachers. Those families who normally arrive early will be called first.
- Parents are encouraged to call after 7:00AM to confirm program opening.

## CLASSROOM TRIPS

- *Local Trips* (walking): Teachers need to inform the Director, Administrative Assistant, or the Church Office when they leave and return from a field trip. A note posted on the classroom door is also necessary stating where the class has gone and the expected time of return.
- *Field Trips*, other than local ones, will be planned with the Director. Permission slips will be sent home in advance for parental (or guardian) signature.
- Teachers will take a cellular phone, first aid kit, ice pack and emergency cards on all trips. These items are located in the Fanny Pack of each classroom
- Drinking water should be provided to all children when outside during summer weather.

## FUNDRAISING/DONATIONS

- **Scholastic™ Book** orders are distributed monthly. When placing an order please complete the form in its entirety and make checks or money orders payable to Firefly Book Club or Seesaw Book Club. A parent volunteer is responsible for handling all areas of the process. Ordering books from the book club allows the Program to increase its library by receiving free books and other resource materials for the classroom.
- **Ronald McDonald™ House** New to us this year, this program helps families in need of a place to stay when loved ones have a medical procedure. The simple collection of pop tabs from any aluminum cans can pay for a Ronald McDonald House's utility bill for the year, amongst other costly bills that the houses have to keep them in operation. To assist us in this collection each family will receive a blue house in which to collect your pop tabs at home. When the house gets full transfer them to a Ziploc™ bag and return them to the Family Life Program Campbell's™ Soup collection Bins located at the East entrance and in the office.
- **Labels for Education** The Family Life Program continues to collect Campbell's™ product labels that can be redeemed for free educational merchandise. You can help Family Life earn free merchandise such as computer games, audio/visual equipment, sports equipment, reference books, and musical instruments, simply by collecting UPC'S from Campbell products and dropping them off in the collection cans located in the east entrance outside room 205 or the Family Life office. It's easy to pitch in. Simply save UPC'S or lids from any of the following eligible products. For a complete listing visit [labelsforeducation.com](http://labelsforeducation.com) or pick up a list of eligible products from the Family Life office.
  - Campbell's soups(UPC'S)
  - Franco American Spaghetti O's Pasta
  - Prego Pasta Sauces
  - Pace Salsa and picante sauces(lids)
  - Campbell's Tomato Juice
  - Pepperidge Farm goldfish crackers(upc)
  - Campbell's Supper Bakes Meal Kits
  - Campbell's beans, gravies, canned pasta
  - Swanson broths and canned poultry
  - V8 and V8 Splash Juices(UPC'S)
  - Campbell's Foodservice products
  - Pepperidge Farm breads, cookies, crackers, frozen products
- The Family Life Program accepts donations of gently used or new toys, books and computers etc. If at any time you would like to donate anything to the Program please contact the office. For tax purposes a donation letter can be provided if requested.

## MEALS/SNACKS

- Parents provide morning snacks for the Program. Afternoon snacks are provided by the Program. Part-day preschool children are served one mid morning snack. Full day children are served one mid morning snack, one noon meal and one mid afternoon snack. A list of suggested snack foods is available at the back of this handbook. Lunch menus are sent home on a monthly basis. See attachments.
- Parents will be notified in writing if there are any children with food allergies in the classroom and be asked to provide snacks that meet the needs of all children. ie. Peanut allergy
- Teachers shall set up a rotating snack schedule for parents to follow. Healthy snacks are encouraged. Juice and water will be provided by the Program at snack time.
- For fulltime children a breakfast of cereal and milk are offered until 8:30am.
- For fulltime children a noon meal is provided by our cook who prepares the noon meal on site. Our meals are well balanced and meet the nutritional guidelines for children ages 3-6. All foods are stored and prepared in commercial UL or NSF approved appliances. Our kitchen is equipped with proper dishwashing/sanitizing equipment and is maintained by our church custodian and kitchen staff.

#### **BIRTHDAYS**

- For fulltime and kindergarten children a half gallon of ice cream may be brought to celebrate the child's birthday at the lunch hour. The Program will provide a cake to celebrate the occasion. Parents' and staff will arrange the date for the celebration. Parents are invited to join your child for lunch on the day of the celebration. Please confirm with your child's teacher if you plan on attending. We ask that no goodie bags/gifts be brought to exchange with the children. If you wish to pass out invitations we prefer it be done via the post office. This assures us that no one will have hurt feelings if he or she is excluded.
- It is up to the individual staff and families if they wish to celebrate birthdays for the part-day preschool children.

#### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS**

- By state law, the children are required to be informally screened daily for symptoms of illness, fever, and /or contagious conditions. See DCFS Regulations (407.310(c))
- If your child is going to be absent for any reason please call the office by 8:00am each morning.
- Please keep your child home with any of these symptoms of illness:
  - A fresh cold (sore throat, runny nose, cough, sneezing)
  - Fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (oral) or higher within the past 24 hours
  - An earache or discharge
  - Inflamed or discharging eyes
  - A unexplained rash
  - Stomach upset (vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps)
  - Mouth sores, unless deemed noninfectious by physician
  - Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
  - Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
  - Head lice until the morning after the first treatment.
  - Chicken pox (varicella) until at least six days after onset of rash.
  - Whooping cough (pertussis) until five days of antibiotic treatment has been completed.
  - Mumps until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
  - Measles until four days after disappearance of the rash.
  - Illnesses which prevent the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
  - Symptoms which may be indicative of one of the serious, communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 IL. Adm. Code 690)
- If the child is believed to be ill, the parents will be called to pick up the child. If the teachers are unable to reach parents, the emergency numbers will be called.
- The child will be separated from the rest of the group until pick up.
- The Program reports known or suspected cases or carriers of communicable disease to local health authorities. We comply with Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 IL. Adm. Code 690)
- Please contact the center at 630-968-0527 when your child will not be in school. If your child has a communicable illness, please notify the office so that we may notify the other parents as required by the health department.

- A list of children and staff with known allergies is posted in each classroom and the kitchen.

#### FIRST AID AND MEDICATION PROCEDURES

- In the event that staff determines care beyond First Aid is necessary, paramedics will be called. The Director and parents will be informed immediately. At least one staff member in each classroom is trained and certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR.
- Current First Aid methods will be followed and the Director called as soon as possible.
- Accidents or illnesses which have occurred to the child at the facility shall be recorded on an accident form and placed in the child's file and a copy given to the parent.
- When a child is not permitted to attend the facility because of an accident or illness, the date of readmission to the facility shall be recorded. Readmission will be permitted upon written physician's statement.
- Any contagious diseases should be reported to the Director. Parents and the DuPage County Health Department will be notified by phone and/or address as necessary. Health Department guidelines will be used to determine readmission to the program.
- Immediate treatment shall be obtained for any child who sustains a bite or scratch from an animal. The Director and parents, and the County Animal Control Administrator or designated agent shall be notified and the provisions of the Illinois Animal Control Act (510 ILCS 5/1-) shall be followed.
- Necessary medications may be administered to a child at the facility provided that:
  - Doctor prescribed medication must be in original prescription container.
  - Container must be labeled with all of the following:
    - child's first and last name,
    - directions for administering the medication
    - the date, physician's name and prescription number
    - drug store or pharmacy name.
  - Doctor prescribed medications to be administered must be accompanied by appropriate release from parents. These releases shall be on file for each child for the administration of any and all doctor prescribed medications.
  - Non-prescription medications which may include but is not limited to sunscreen, bug spray and lip balm may be administered upon written parental permission for **full day** program only. Such medication shall be administered in accordance with package instructions and must be labeled with the child's first and last name and dated.
  - The facility maintains a record of the medicines, dates, hours, dosages, and the signature of the person administering them.
  - Medications shall be kept in locked cabinets or containers which are in an area well-lighted and out of the reach of children, even if medications must be refrigerated.

#### CHILD ABUSE

- All staff will follow DCFS guidelines as their responsibility as a mandated reporter.
- The Director must be notified immediately upon any evidence of child abuse.
- The law defines:
  - Abuse- refers to acts such as excessive beatings that lead to serious physical injury or excessive punishment; and or
  - Neglect-refers to a lack of action such as to provide food, medical services or emotional care
- See Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act on file in the Office or at [www.state.il.us/dcfs](http://www.state.il.us/dcfs)

#### PERSONAL CARE OF CHILDREN

- A child's wet or soiled clothing shall be changed immediately and placed in plastic bag to be sent home with the parent.
- All children should have a change of seasonable appropriate clothing in their cubby.
- Children should wear comfortable and washable play clothes. Weather permitting we have outside gross motor time therefore all children should be prepared by wearing socks and closed toe shoes.

- For full day children and Preschool 2 children during winter months we will make every attempt to go outside. It is easier to always send your child with boots, snow pants, waterproof mittens, warm socks and a hat.
- When in doubt send boots even in spring and fall. Please label and mark outdoor clothing. We have a beautiful park where we can go sledding and may even just take a walk around town.
- No child will be permitted to stay inside for any reason. If your child is too sick to go outside then they should not attend school that day. As going outside is considered a typical activity, no child should be deprived of going outside with friends. Fresh air is very healthy for us all.
- Every effort will be made to notify you that the children will be going outside so you can bring appropriate clothing.
- Children's hands shall be washed frequently in accordance with DCFS regulations. This includes:
  - at arrival and departure
  - before and after meals
  - after toileting
  - after nose blowing or contact with other bodily fluids
  - when moving to a new classroom
  - after coming in from outside
  - after handling pets or animals
  - before and after cooking or other food experience
  - before and after sensory/water play
  - playing with play-dough or any porous classroom materials
- The following technique for thorough hand-washing shall be used:
  - Wet hands under warm running water.
  - Lather both hands well and rub vigorously for at least 15 seconds.
  - Rinse hands thoroughly under warm running water.
  - Dry both hands with a new single-use towel
  - For hand-held faucets, turn off the water using a disposable towel instead of bare hands to avoid recontamination of clean hands.
- Any child who is unable to participate in indoor/outdoor activities due to illness or short term injury, may rejoin activities after evaluation by a doctor and the Program Director.

#### **CHILD'S DAILY DISMISSAL**

- A child shall be discharged from the facility only to the child's parent(s) or guardian, or to a person designated in writing by the parent(s) or guardian to receive the child.
- Staff shall refuse to release a child to any person, whether related or unrelated to the child, who has not been authorized, in writing, by the parent(s) or guardian to receive the child. Persons not known to the staff shall be required to provide a driver's license (with photo) or photo identification card issued by the Illinois Secretary of State to establish their identity prior to a child's release to them.
- When a child is released, in accordance with the written instructions of the parent(s) or guardian, to a person other than the parent(s) or guardian, the facility shall maintain a record indicating to whom the child was released, their signature, and the date and time that child was released.
- Court orders of protection on file with the Director will be abided.
- All children should be picked up no later than 6:00pm. If a parent arrives after 6:00pm the parent will be charged at a rate of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes after 6:00pm.

#### **CHILD'S RECORDS**

- It is the Classroom Teacher's responsibility to maintain files on each child in their care. These files should contain the materials supplied by the Director. A medical report on forms prescribed by the Department shall be on file for each child.
- The initial medical report shall be dated less than six months prior to enrollment of all children. DCFS requires all children to have a current (last 6 months) TB test screening and a lead screening test prior to starting school. The medical form for preschool is good for two years. When entering kindergarten an updated medical is required in

accordance with the Illinois School Code (105 IL CS 5/27-8.1). A dental and vision exam are required for all children entering kindergarten.

- To best help you and your child and to stay within DCFS and health department regulations, please make sure that all information is up to date for us: home address, phone numbers, work place and phone number, emergency contacts and health records.
- Vision and Hearing screenings are scheduled by the DuPage County Health Department each year in the spring and are a state requirement for all children in preschool and kindergarten. There is a small fee required to be paid by the parents.
- Each Classroom teacher shall maintain accurate daily attendance records on all children enrolled. If a child attends on a part-time or irregular basis, this shall be noted in the attendance record.
- **Confidentiality:** Information pertaining to progress, health or discharge of an individual child shall be confidential and limited to facility staff designated by the Program Director unless a parent of the child has granted written permission.
  - No information will be released to other persons/agencies without written consent of the parent/guardian with the exclusion of DCFS and the county Health Department.
  - Your child's class roster with names, addresses and phone numbers will be handed out to your child's class.
- All records are kept, confidentially, for five years, per DCFS regulations, after which they are destroyed.

#### **WHAT I NEED TO BRING TO FAMILY LIFE**

- A change of clothes labeled with first and last name. Includes underwear, socks, seasonal appropriate pants and shirt. An extra sweatshirt or jacket in case it gets cool.
- A blanket and small pillow that will fit in my cubby. (full day programs only)
- A soft comfort toy if needed for nap.
- A backpack or tote bag to carry papers to and from home.
- A family photo to display in the classroom and for comfort.
- Additional items may be requested by individual classroom teachers at the start of each year.

#### **DISCIPLINE OF A CHILD**

- If disciplinary action is necessary these guidelines are considered:
  - Recognize the child's need for security of known limits.
  - Set necessary limits
  - Be consistent
  - Adapt limits to the needs of the individual
  - Give the child time to conform to situation expectations
  - Respect the child's feelings
  - Be alert to recognizing the need to help the child establish self-control
- If a child is too disruptive to the classroom and the teacher feels the child needs individual attention, she may call the Director to help in the classroom.
- It is recommended that all preschool children be screened by their home school district at three years of age.
- When necessary or when requested by staff or parents, the behaviors of children in the classroom learning environment will be observed and documented. Parents may be asked to give permission for early childhood professionals from the school district to come in and observe your child should it be deemed necessary.
- Under no circumstances shall a child be subjected to corporal punishment and/or verbal abuse.
- No child shall be deprived of regularly scheduled meals or snacks.
- No child shall be punished for toilet accidents.
- Removing a child from the group, if a child is disruptive. A child will be within sight of the staff member until the child feels they are able to join the group. The staff member will discuss the situation with the child when they are ready return to the group. If a child is consistently disruptive the director will be called to assist the staff and a conference may be called between parent, staff and director to create a behavior action plan. In extreme cases after all options have been exhausted a child may be dis-enrolled if the Program feels they cannot meet the child's needs.

## **Safety & Security**

## **FIRE DRILLS**

- Monthly fire drills will be held as per state requirement.
- Evacuation maps of exits in each room of the building used by the Program are posted by the exit doors.
- Children should leave the rooms in an orderly fashion and should use the nearest exit to their room. Classrooms should follow the exit route posted in the classrooms and proceed to Fishel Park.
  - 202/203 exit out the West doors
  - 204/205 exit out the East doors
  - Fellowship Hall exit out the East Curtiss Street door
  - If these exits are blocked, proceed to the next safe exit.

## **TORNADO / SEVERE WEATHER ALERTS**

- In case of a tornado/severe weather alert warning, children will evacuate to the Mayflower/Coffeehouse hallway until the Director or Director Designee gives the all-clear sign.
- Tornado drills are held at least twice yearly as per state requirement.
- The Program is equipped with a weather alert radio. A weather radio is also located in room 205. Follow instructions from the Weather Station when warning is sounded.

## **ANIMAL/PET POLICY**

- The Family Life Program has no animals or pets on the premises. Staff are instructed to:
  - Supervise children outdoors to avoid provoking or hand feeding a wild animal such as a squirrel.
  - Do not bring an animal into the Program facility if there is no documentation for current inoculation against rabies.
  - Instruct children in appropriate action toward animals to avoid fear and reflex bites, scratches, etc.
  - If there is a child with allergies to animals we will not allow any type of animal to visit the Program as long as that child is in attendance.

## **PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY**

- The Program has an ongoing contract with Anderson Pest Solutions to assist with our pest control. Our custodian works closely with the serviceman to monitor pest activity in the building.
- The staff notifies the custodian by reporting a pest sighting on the Pest Management Log that is located in the Utility Closet on Level 2 of the building. If it is life threatening the custodian is contacted immediately.
- If it does not present an immediate danger to the children and staff, the custodian will report the sightings to the contractor when he arrives for his monthly visit.
- If there is to be any special chemicals applied to the area where the children will be exposed the custodian makes arrangements for it to be done on a Saturday when no one is present.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

- In case a building evacuation is necessary and there is no longer access to the building the children will be brought to the Downers Grove Library, which is across the street from the Program on Curtiss Street. All parents will be notified by the staff and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible.

## **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTION PROCEDURES**

- To prevent the spread of diseases that are spread by blood or bodily fluids, the following universal procedures must be followed at all times and with all adults and children in our program. These procedures are followed for nosebleeds, open wounds, or for other instances involving tissues or body fluids.
  - Adults who help with first aid or provide assistance must put on sanitary gloves before helping children. Gloves are available near all sinks. Staff members must wear gloves if they assist children with toileting accidents.
  - Open wounds or sores must be covered with a band aid.
  - Contaminated surfaces must be cleaned immediately with a disinfectant quat cleaner. Bottles of cleaner are located in each classroom cabinets by sinks as well as janitorial closet located in hallway and kitchen.
  - Strict hand washing procedures must be followed to prevent the spread of serious diseases.

## SECURITY OF FACILITY

- Director or Staff shall immediately challenge an unauthorized person's presence and contact local police for assistance if necessary or perceived necessary to ensure the safety of all persons in the program.
- During operating hours the doors leading out of the hallway shall remain locked unless a church function requires they remain unlocked.
- The East entrance is the main entrance to the Family Life Program. All childcare and kindergarten families should enter through the first classroom (Room 205) door equipped with a security keypad. The code to the keypad is changed yearly. We ask that you do not give the number out to anyone who is not scheduled to pick up your child on a regular basis. Part-day preschool parents may enter at either the East or West entrances. If you arrive late for drop off or early for pick up please report to the Family Life Office located on level 2 to gain entrance to the classroom.
- When the hallway doors are unlocked the classroom hallway doors will be closed and locked.
- Visitors are required to check-in at the Family Life Office before visiting the classrooms.

## SAFETY GUIDELINES

For the safety of all, the Staff will guide children in adhering to the following guidelines:

1. Walk; don't run, in halls or between rooms.
2. Look through windows; do not bang on them.
3. Doors, cabinets and furniture movement should be controlled by teachers.
4. All liquids and foods hotter than 110° are kept out of reach of children.
5. Water in hand washing sinks is kept between 110-115° by the installation of mixer valves.
6. Furniture is not to be stood upon.
7. Cots are for sleeping, not jumping or standing upon.
8. Use equipment for intended use only.
9. Bikes are to be ridden in the same direction and in the designated areas.
10. All blocks are to be stacked no higher the child's bellybutton level and are to be taken down one at a time.
11. Gun/sword play is not permitted.
12. Objects are not to be thrown unless part of a game or by direction from the teacher.
13. Verbal and physical abuse of others is not permitted.
14. One teacher/aide should always be in front of the line and one teacher/aide at the back of the line for general walks. One staff member should always block walkways and driveways from on-coming traffic while children are crossing.
15. Gym shoes and socks should be worn by children at all times including naptime.
16. When outside the classroom, a head count is continuously made.
17. Playground equipment rules:
  - Slide - go up the stairs and then feet first down the slide.
  - Swings - no standing or spinning
18. Children are not left unsupervised.
19. Follow the agreed-upon routines for:
  - Fire evacuation
  - Storm warnings

Emergency evacuations

20. Water tables, and toys are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis following the cleaning and sanitation frequency checklist in the classrooms.

## Calendar

The calendar for the year shall be set by the Director and approved by the Board prior to the start of each school year.

- The part-day preschool shall be open the first Tuesday in September and end the Thursday before Memorial Day. The part-day preschool may be closed the following days:
  - Thanksgiving Day                      Christmas Day
  - Day after Thanksgiving              New Years Day
  - Christmas Eve                          Memorial Day
- A Meet the Teacher Day will be scheduled every year during the week prior to the start of the part-day preschool year.
- The full-day childcare and kindergarten program shall be open five days per week during the hours set by the Director and Board. It shall be open throughout the year with the following possible exceptions:
  - Labor Day                                      Good Friday
  - Thanksgiving and the day after              Memorial Day
  - Christmas Eve Day                          Heritage Festival Friday
  - Christmas Day                                  July Fourth
  - New Year's Day
  - \*Other Days as approved by the Board
- Every attempt will be made to continue full day classes in inclement weather.

## SPECIAL PROGRAM EVENTS

- The Board and Director shall decide yearly on the special events and their dates. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend.
  - Open House
  - Parent Education Programs
  - Family Festivals
  - Supper Night
  - Other staff/Parent related activities

## TUITION/FEES

- The Board shall decide annually the tuition, registration and activity fees for the program. Payment shall be made in accordance with the signed Financial Agreement.
- Fees are due in full regardless of absence due to illness, vacation or holiday, except during the months of June, July and August.
- If your child is not picked up by the end of normal operating hours, a late pick-up fee will be charged.
- The Program's Tax ID Number is 362361106.

If you have questions contact the Family Life Program at (630) 968-0527 or [cathys@uccdg.org](mailto:cathys@uccdg.org) or [radikaj@uccdg.org](mailto:radikaj@uccdg.org)  
Check our website at [www.flpreschool.org](http://www.flpreschool.org).

The program is located in the First Congregational Church at  
1047 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515.

Family Life Tuition Schedule for the 2009-2010 School Year.

[www.flpreschool.org](http://www.flpreschool.org)~ [cathys@uccdg.org](mailto:cathys@uccdg.org)

## FULL DAY

Pre-Kindergarten

Room - 205

Ages - three, four, and five

Hours- 7:00AM until 6:00PM.

Kindergarten

Rooms- 204

Ages - five and six

Hours- 7:00AM until 6:00PM

**ALL PROGRAMS--Registration Fee - \$50.00(Non-refundable) Activity Fee - \$30.00 Due September 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**If your child is returning from the previous year, the registration fee will be credited to tuition the first week of September.**

**\*All tuition rates are evaluated in December of each year.**

**THE FULL DAY TUITION ARE WEEKLY RATES**

<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u>	<u>Full Day</u>	<u>Half Day</u> (AM ONLY)	<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Half Day</u> (AM OR PM)
2 DAYS	\$122.00	\$73.00	NA	NA
3 DAYS	\$151.00	\$100.00	\$161.00	\$107.00
4 DAYS	\$177.00	\$114.00	\$179.00	\$119.00
5 DAYS	\$205.00	\$132.00	\$205.00	\$148.00

These rates include lunch. Take \$2.00 off per day if your child is not scheduled for lunch.

**Half Day children must be picked up no later than 12:00pm if not scheduled for**

**lunch. If scheduled for lunch, pick up is no later than 1:00pm. Any child staying beyond 5 hours is charged \$5.00 per extra hour.**

**PART DAY PRESCHOOL-MONTHLY RATES**

**Room 202 Days T W TH \$166.00/month**  
**Ages three and four**  
**Hours 9:00-11:30**

**Room 203 Days T W TH \$166.00/month**  
**Ages four and five**  
**Hours 9:15-11:45**

**\*The same registration and activity fees apply as for full day programs.**

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## Family Life's "Developmentally Appropriate" Practice

You may have noticed when you enter our classrooms that the children seem to be "just playing". In recent years, a trend toward increased emphasis on formal instruction in academic skills has emerged in early childhood programs. This trend toward formal academic instruction for younger children is based on misconceptions about early learning (Elkind, 1986). Despite the trend among some educators to formalize instruction, there has been no comparable evidence of change in what young children need for optimal development or how they learn. In fact, a growing body of research has emerged recently affirming that children learn most effectively through a concrete, play-oriented approach to early childhood education.

Research shows that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. The Family Life Program also strives to nurture in each child an attitude of love and respect for themselves as persons, to be concerned for others, to have a sense of wonder and curiosity about the world around them, and to experience the joy of learning for its own reward. Based on such knowledge about what children age 3-6 are like, we design our program to fit them. It works better than expecting children to adjust to the demands of our program.

The concept of developmental appropriateness is twofold:

1. Knowledge of typical development of children within the ages of 3-6 provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.
2. Both the curriculum and adults' interactions with children should be responsive to individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with materials, ideas, and people. Children's play enables them to progress in all developmental areas. Therefore, child-initiated, child-directed, teacher supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice.

Attached to this explanation of "developmentally appropriate practice" you will find a description of the learning centers that your child will be exploring while enrolled in The Family Life Program. The teachers are also encouraged to introduce resources within the church and community by exploring our neighborhood and what it has to offer. The preschool aged children receive and use a copy of the Weekly Reader, a preschool enrichment tool to supplement the teachings in the classroom. The kindergarten receives and uses the Weekly Reader enrichment tool and the Science Too enrichment as a supplement to the curriculum already taught. To encourage a child's musical interest, a bimonthly music session is provided by a church member to all children enrolled in the program. We are excited to learn as much as we can about each child's family, cultural background, past experience, and current circumstances to meet the needs of the families in our community.

The Family Life Program

# Family Life Program Approved Snack Food List

2008

Dear Parents:

We need your help with providing our morning snack. We will provide juice and water to drink. **Please provide enough snack for \_\_\_\_\_ children.** Each month a new snack calendar will be provided. In the event you are unable to bring it that day you may bring in the snack a few days ahead of time or we can trade with someone else or use Family Life supply. Below is a suggestion of healthy snacks to get you started. We encourage the children to try new foods and they seem to enjoy doing this. To ensure that they have choices, we encourage you to bring something from each side of the list.

**Example: Crackers and fruit.**

This is especially important when there is a food allergy. In the event that there is a food allergy we will let you know. If you have any questions about what to bring please let us know, we will be happy to help. Thanks for helping our children have fun eating and exploring the World of Food! **The list below is a sample but please stay away from sugary snacks unless for a special occasion.**

Thank You,  
Family Life Staff

\*\*\*\*\*

Column 1	Grain/Bread Item	Column 2	Fruit/Vegetable/ Dairy
pretzels	animal crackers	Fresh Veggies w/dip, carrots, celery, green peppers, cucumbers etc.	Apples, pears with or w/o dip
bagels	raisin bread	cream cheese	yogurt
granola bars	cereal bars	cheese cubes/slices	Real fruit snacks
tortilla chips	mini PB & J sandwiches	cheese sauce	string cheese
graham crackers	vanilla wafers	Dried fruit snacks	pudding
muffins	trail mix	fruit cups	bananas
popcorn (4yrs and up)	english muffins w/ butter	oranges	grapes if cut in half
snack crackers	Teddy Grahams™	ham slices or other luncheon meat	strawberries



If you are not sure if it is an appropriate snack please ask one of the teachers. Thank you for teaching our children healthy eating habits.



## **Family Life Assessment Methods and Procedures**

Progressive assessments are done on all the children. These are done using observational techniques and play experiences. In the fall an assessment of how your child has acclimated to the classroom will be sent home. Included in this assessment are the teacher's observations of your child's social interactions with others as well the areas they have shown interest in the classroom. Also, a form asking you to share your thoughts and expectations for your child will be handed out at this time so the teachers may plan their goals and objectives accordingly. A face to face conference is offered at this time if you wish or we may request one if we feel there is concern. All parents are encouraged to have their preschool aged child screened by the Downers Grove School District #58 or their own home school district. A letter with the dates of the screenings will be passed out to the parents by the mid September when the schedule is posted by the school district. If you have concerns you may contact the school district at 630-719-5800 to answer any questions you may have. The purpose of the screening is to determine if there are developmental concerns. Early detection of developmental delays are in the best of interest of the child and we work very closely with the school district to aid in assisting with any implementations necessary to help the child succeed.

In the spring of each year a hearing and vision screening will be done by the DuPage County Health Department. There is a small fee for these screenings and it is required for all preschool children who are not under a doctor's care for vision or hearing problems to be screened.

In the spring you will receive an assessment of your child's progress for the year. It is based on the developmental milestones appropriate for your child's age. You will be offered a face to face conference with your child's teacher to discuss accomplishments and the skills your child has acquired during the year as well as suggestions for continued growth. The skills assessed are aligned with our *Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives as well as the Developmental Checklists for Children 3- 6 years of age*. If you wish to receive a copy of either of these documents please request one by calling the office at 630-968-0527.

At any time during the year you have concerns or would like to discuss your child's progress please speak with your child's teacher or call the office to speak with the director. We are always available to offer guidance and work with the family to see that each child receives the best early childhood experience possible.

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## Family Life Program Curriculum Philosophy Overview

Our curriculum for both preschool and kindergarten is based on the *Creative Curriculum* and over 40 years of early childhood experience. The teachers use the *Creative Curriculum* as a guide to develop individual lessons for their classroom based on the interests and developmental needs of the children in their classroom. They are encouraged to use their knowledge and outside resources to enhance their curriculum.

- We want each child to be a successful member of our program
- In order to do so we need to work with the child to accomplish some basic goals that will enable the child to have a positive experience in the classroom.
- We guide the child in making choices throughout the day that will empower the child to be successful and give the child the desire to learn.
- Teachers use positive guidance techniques, such as modeling and logical consequences, to help the child learn appropriate behavior rather than punishing, criticizing or comparing other children.
- Parents, extended family members, teachers and child act as partners in the education process. Adult volunteers are always welcome to share their talents and time.
- Curriculum and teaching methods are designed so that children not only acquire knowledge and skill, but they acquire the disposition or inclination to use them
- Children learn at their own pace.
- Curriculum and instruction are designed to develop the child's self esteem, sense of competence and positive feelings toward learning.
- Learning takes place through playing and conversations with peers on a daily basis.
- Promote pro-social behavior. Private time alone with the teacher or a close friend.
- Set clear limits in a positive manner.
- Children are engaged in active rather than passive activities. Enhances self-esteem.
- Child centered interest areas
- Focus on all areas of development to empower the whole child in the areas of physical, social and emotional, mental and spiritual growth.
- Children select activities that interest them.
- Provide opportunity to work in small groups on projects that "provide rich content for conversation" teachers facilitate discussion among children by making comments and soliciting children's opinions and ideas.

A good childcare facility does more than meet minimum standards set for licensing by the local, county, state and/or federal regulating agencies. The Program continually seeks new avenues in which to grow.

**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Parent Handbook and Discipline Policy**

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(please cut here and return to the Family Life office)

I have read and understand the information contained in the Family Life Parent Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Child(ren) Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_