



TRINITY CHILDREN'S CENTER

FAMILY HANDBOOK:

POLICY and PROCEDURES MANUAL

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WELCOME TO TRINITY CHILDREN'S CENTER!

This guide is to answer your questions and to familiarize you with the school's philosophy, mission and curriculum, inform you of our procedures and policies, and help you feel at home at TCC. (If translation into other languages of any information about TCC is needed, please call the office at 656-5026).

TCC is a place for growth, finding support, and learning in new ways. It is a place for children and families, for students and for teachers. Teachers help one another in daily discussions and weekly staff meetings. Families are encouraged to talk to staff everyday about their children and their needs and interests both at home and at school. Please always feel free to ask questions and let us know if you need help. Attend our family functions, parent/guardian meetings and trainings. Let us know what your needs are. We are always ready to listen. Let us know what you question, like or dislike, or if you would like us to make changes to our program. Know that you are respected by our staff and that your contributions to our community are valued. Staff at TCC encourage all families to share and define their own race, religion, home language, culture and family structure.

We will try to keep you up-to-date about events here at TCC and also in the greater Chittenden County area. We have a great bulletin board in the hallway that lists lots of local events and parent training opportunities.

All TCC parents/guardians/guardians are welcome to visit at any time and share any talents or interests with the Center! If you are interested in opportunities to volunteer just let us know.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are committed to providing the highest quality of care and education for young children between the ages of three to five years. Enrollment is offered to all families in the community and will always include children with special needs and those with a broad range of socioeconomic and culturally diverse backgrounds. It is our intent to nurture the healthy development of young children and to strengthen and support the families from which they come.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that the child is at work developing a sense of self in relationship to the world in which he or she lives. Families guide and interpret the culture in which each child grows. The TCC staff

support the child in this exploration of self through a dynamic relationship with the child, the parents/guardians and the community.

The rights of the children at TCC are to live in beauty and order and in connection with the natural world. Children have the right to feel physically, spiritually and mentally secure and nurtured. Children have the right to freely explore divergent interests.

Children need to see that their parents/guardians and teachers are involved in a respectful conversation about their development: spiritual, physical, cognitive, social and emotional. They are encouraged to join in this interchange and to feel supported by their parents/guardians, peers and teachers as they explore their own identities through our curriculum.

TCC ADMISSION POLICY

TCC admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at TCC. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs. Priority is given to: children whose siblings have attended the Center in previous years, to children whose parents/guardians work at and/or attend UVM; children who have special health, developmental, or cognitive needs; and New American families. As a result of our Howard Center collaboration we offer 4 slots to families working with this agency and offer consultations to additional families when needed..

NAEYC ACCREDITATION

TCC is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC recognizes early childhood programs which meet national standards of quality. Accredited centers have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study and external professional review to verify compliance with the Association's criteria for high quality programs.

STARS (STep Ahead Recognition System)

TCC is recognized as a 5 STAR Early Care and Education Licensed Center in the state of Vermont. STARS is Vermont's quality recognition system for child care, preschool, and afterschool programs. Programs that participate in STARS are stepping ahead – going above and beyond state regulations to provide professional services that meet the needs of children and families. TCC has received the 5 STAR rating through a rigorous application process that scores the areas of Regulatory History, Staff Qualifications,

Families and Communities, Program Practices, and Program Administration.

YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER and PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

At TCC we are privileged to have an exceptional, well-equipped physical setting. However, the most important factor in your child's experience here is her/his teacher. Educated to teach and guide young children, they are knowledgeable, loving, sensitive and skilled. Their enthusiasm for continued growth for themselves and their students is inspiring. Each teacher assigned to a classroom has primary responsibility for working with that group of children for the school year. These teaching staff provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and immediate care as needed to protect their student's well-being. Efforts are made to hire and maintain staff with the cultural, linguistic, and racial characteristics of the families served at TCC.

You will find that while all of our classrooms follow the Center's philosophy, there are differences in the classrooms just as there are differences in the personalities of the teachers. They each have their own strengths and favorite ways of sharing themselves with your children.

The full-time Executive Director at TCC demonstrates commitment to a high level of continuing professional competence and an ability to promote teamwork. This person is always included in long-range fiscal planning and in operating budget preparation, reconciliation and review. Administrators at TCC systematically support an organizational climate that fosters trust, collaboration and inclusion. All fiscal and business related matters are approved by and managed by TCC's Business Manager CPA and TCC Board of Directors.

All permanent staff at TCC are provided with planning time, training and resources as needed. We recognize the importance of families and professionals across disciplines, and emphasize the need to work as teams and to build community partnerships. Our collaborations with the Howard Center, the Burlington School District, the VNA, COTS and other community agencies are examples of such partnerships.

STUDENT TEACHERS/STUDENT STAFF

Student teachers and Work Study staff come to us from UVM, Champlain College, and on occasion St. Michael's College. Their involvement adds a great deal to enrich the experience of the children and they are often a stimulus to the regular teaching staff. We hope you will help us make them feel welcome during their time

here. We try to post pictures and names of all full and part-time staff on one of the hallway bulletin boards. We believe that it is our responsibility to mentor and welcome future members of the Early Education profession and expand the quality of our Early Education landscape in Vermont.

SUPERVISION/RATIOS/MINIMAL TRANSITIONS FOR CHILDREN

Children at TCC are continuously supervised both through proximity, as staff interact with them, or visually. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., those who can use the toilet independently, who are in a reading area, or who are napping).

NAEYC suggested staff/child ratios are adhered to in all classrooms, during both inside and outside times and during transportation and field trips. Group size at TCC is 15 to 16 children in each room or group. Two full-time teaching staff are assigned to each group or classroom. In addition to this, we are extremely fortunate at TCC to have many extra student staff from The University of Vermont and other area colleges, as well as personnel from area EEE programs and the Howard Center.

The program is organized and staffed to minimize the number of group, teaching staff, and classroom transitions experienced by an individual child during the day and program year. Every attempt is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children.

Here at Trinity Children's Center we encourage you to inquire about our Active Supervision Policy, as it is a framework in which we care for the health, safety, and location of your child at all times. We encourage families to be a member of our team by reiterating that opening gates is an adult/teacher job, checking in with teachers during drop off or pick up, and helping your child move her/his picture from our Visual Attendance Board located on your child's classroom door.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Curriculum at TCC is developed within the spirit of our philosophy: the child is developing a sense of self with the guidance of his or her parents/guardians. The teacher enters into a relationship with the child and the parents/guardians as an active researcher to support and encourage this growth of self.

Our curriculum is child-centered - it grows and changes with the interests and needs of the children, the families and the teachers. Teachers are facilitators in supporting the diverse and extraordinary potential of each child. The teachers are researchers who develop

their own environment and the materials in it. They promote relationships with the classroom, center, families and the community.

Children learn through active exploration and play which cannot be divided precisely into individual learning areas. The teachers are engaged in collaboration with parents/guardians to address learning areas that promote healthy development. The learning areas or domains at TCC are a combination of those used by The National Association for the Education of Young Children, Creative Curriculum and Vermont's Early Learning Standards.

We observe and assess children and communicate with families using narratives and reports from Teaching Strategies GOLD, child portfolios, daily classroom updates, many informal conversations, family newsletters, blogs, and documentations of classroom investigations. These individualized assessments help teachers make instructional decisions in their weekly planning meetings, and also help them align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of the children.

Children learn through all areas or domains in expected and unexpected places – we encourage math in the hallways, social skills in the lavatory, and writing in the block area. It is not happenstance - it is dynamic and meaningful to the child. The teacher nurtures the children's growth in this process through observation, reflection, communication and documentation.

Staff select and use materials, equipment, and furnishings to support the curriculum, meet program goals, and foster the achievement of desired outcomes for children. All TCC staff use their extensive knowledge of the Chittenden County community and the families it serves as an integral part of the curriculum and the children's learning experiences. Please refer to the Field Trips/Public Transportation section on Pg. 22 to learn more about some of our favorite locations to visit. We also share community events and resources with our families through our newsletters, flyers, and parent bulletin boards.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Curriculum goals and objectives always guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress.

1. To develop a positive concept of self as a person.
2. To achieve independence in making choices, decisions and judgments based on cognitive competence and a positive self-concept and to achieve interdependence with others.
3. To move from preoccupation with self and basic biological and physiological needs toward directing activity, interest, and involvement outside of self.

4. To cope with social change and with wider relationships. The ability to adapt grows out of an overwhelming curiosity to know what comes next and a realistic optimism about the future. There has to be trust for this to happen.
5. Staff use information shared by parents/guardians about family background and beliefs to make each child's learning experiences more meaningful. Curriculum is implemented in a manner that is responsive to the home values, beliefs, experiences and language of children's families. We take into account the home language of the child when working on literacy and provide children opportunities to learn in a language they are comfortable with.

LEARNING AREAS FOR PROGRAM CURRICULUM

(Correlate to the VT Early Learning Standards and to Creative Curriculum/Teaching Strategies GOLD).

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH/SAFETY

Children will understand and love their own bodies and respect the bodies of their peers. They will develop a knowledge of nutrition and safety that is suited to their development. Here at TCC the outdoor environment is used routinely. We are outside twice a day almost every day. The curriculum and materials are extended to the outdoors as much as possible.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION AND APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS

Art in all of its forms is self-expressive – we appreciate every effort by each child. The spiritual element of the arts will be encouraged, acknowledged and unrestricted. The use of tools of art will be presented so that children can explore their self-expression and communicate with each other with these tools. We present the arts with the rich diversity of the world.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

Play is at the center of our curriculum and the social climate must support both independent and cooperative play. Children will play and work in environments that are thoughtfully organized and conducive to independent choices. Our classrooms strive to encourage depth of thinking and therefore need to be dynamic places that continuously engage children and adults.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science is about exploring the world and young children are naturally unrestrained in this domain. At TCC we strive to invite children to engage with real elements of the natural world, space, planet earth, physical sciences and technology. We offer the tools of scientific exploration and encourage children to develop, explore,

and communicate their own theories.

EARLY MATHEMATICS

Children explore patterns, shapes, sorting and numeracy with varying styles. The teacher's role is to design explorations that encourage competence with the language and action of mathematics. These explorations need to correlate with the daily lives of children. The repetitions of these explorations will bring meaning, understanding and joy to the world of mathematics.

EARLY LITERACY

Literacy is at the foundation of communication. This need to be understood and to understand is a strong urge in the developing human. Children seek to communicate, they want to tell their stories, and they want to hear the stories of the world and their peers. They do this by sketching, dictating, acting out and listening to their stories and the stories of others again and again within a social context. Literacy needs to be woven intentionally and spontaneously into all the other areas of learning or domains.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL STUDIES

Young children are working very hard on their social identities. They need to experience many interactions that are grounded in the safety and guidance of teachers. At the foundation of these interactions is a supportive classroom that has clear values for how to be a safe, creative community. The conversations and experiences with the world outside of the school and family are also very important. Connections with the greater community (we define "community" as family, school, city and state) are naturally diverse and expansive and should also involve the parents/guardians. Trinity Children's Center uses the Second Step Curriculum weekly to discuss and teach an understanding of emotional identification, problem solving, self regulation, and pro-social behaviors. Weekly letters are sent home to families to inform you as to what your child's class has learned that week in their Second Step curriculum so that you may also adapt the language and skills to your life at home.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language development is a vital piece of the child's challenge in becoming part of the community. Children can enjoy stories, songs, poems and the sounds of words and letters. Language development can be encouraged through conversation, being read to, reading and rereading stories and noticing all forms of communication that may or may not be familiar. The role of the teacher is to listen, to show the child that they are heard, to place value on their thoughts and to help children expand upon their ideas. Please let us know if your child speaks a language other than English at home and if we

need to consider community language perspectives that are important to you.

We believe that a well-planned curriculum prevents many discipline problems and allows the teaching staff to discover children as individuals. It is important to us that each child is able to choose from many activities and move from one activity to another as they wish.

- *We want the child to learn in ways that are natural to them. It is important that the daily schedule gives large blocks of time to activities in the learning areas.*
- *We want the child to have many first-hand experiences. It is important that equipment and supplies are placed where the child can reach and return them without adult help.*
- *We want the child to become independent. It is important that supplies are organized and returned to their places after being used.*

ASSESSMENT

At TCC we use Teaching Strategies GOLD (GOLD is used for all kids within 3 months of TCC entry) and ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) to assess and keep track of your child's interests, needs, learning and progress in our environment so we can communicate this info to you. TS GOLD also helps us plan and improve our curriculum, teaching practices, and environments since it keeps us informed about what skills need to be developed. All TCC staff are formally trained to use the GOLD assessment system and interpret results. GOLD is based on observations taken by familiar staff about each child everyday, usually **during play**, inside and outside, when we feel children learn best. We will work with you to decide together what assessment methods will best suit your child. We will be looking at your child's growth and mastery in the following curriculum areas that correlate to the VT State Standards for Early Childhood Ed:

- Social Emotional/Social Studies
- Approaches to Learning
- Language Development
- Early Literacy
- Early Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Creative Expression and Appreciation of the Arts
- Physical Development/Health/Safety/Self-help

We will be reporting to you and sharing information about your child on a daily basis. Teaching teams meet at least weekly to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of the children. We have more formal parent conferences at least twice a year. At these

conferences you will receive a Development and Learning Report of both your child's current skills and what they will be working on next. During Parent/Guardian Conferences your child's teacher will also share a narrative summary of your child's glowing moments and allow for questions and comments. You may receive this or any other information shared with parents/guardians in another language - just let us know. We strive to be sensitive to all family values, culture, identity and home language and will schedule interpreters or cultural liaisons to ensure that this communication is available. Families always have access to info about all assessment materials used.

Another part of Teaching Strategies GOLD is a portfolio containing collections of your child's work that shows progress and demonstrates special interests and talents. This information can be shared with you at the end of the year. The learning areas or "standards" in Teaching Strategies GOLD do correlate with the Vermont State Standards for Early Childhood Education. The staff at TCC will work with all parents/guardians to meet their child's individual and/or special needs. We will let you know if we are concerned about your child's development - please talk to us and let us know if you have any concerns at all about your child. We can help you do a referral to your school district's Early Essential Education program or to our on-site Early Childhood Consultant from Howard Center so that your child can receive a more formal screening. We have a wealth of information about support services available here at TCC and also in the surrounding communities. When formal assessments are used, they are always combined with the informal methods listed above.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Norm-referenced and standardized tests are used primarily when seeking information on eligibility for special services or when collecting info for overall program effectiveness.

TRANSITIONS TO KINDERGARTEN OR OTHER PROGRAMS

At Trinity we strongly believe that the early care and education of your child does not end the moment their time at Trinity ends. Teachers are always available to assist with your child's transition to kindergarten or to another program. We strongly believe in communicating with future teachers, providing insight on strengths, goals, and strategies and are enthusiastic to have the opportunity to do so. Administration fully supports sending teachers to future Team Meetings at your elementary school if their expertise is welcomed.

Program staff use established linkages with other early education programs and local elementary schools to help families prepare for and manage their children's transitions between programs, including

special education programs. Here at TCC we have a long tradition of working closely with Burlington and other school districts, which always includes transition meetings with new teachers and principals in the spring. Watch our parent bulletin board for notices of kindergarten sign-up dates, open houses and procedures, as well as brochures for local elementary school options, both public and private.

GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE/CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS/EXPULSION POLICIES

At TCC we believe that social-emotional development is one of the most important areas of learning. Since 1998 we have used ***Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum – Preschool/Kindergarten Edition*** to help teach social-emotional skills. This curriculum is designed to reduce aggressive behavior and increase social competence in children. We truly believe that socially competent children can learn to cooperate, show consideration for others, manage their feelings appropriately, and succeed in solving problems. ***Second Step*** is user-friendly and fun – and the lessons can be shared with parents/guardians during weekly communication with the classroom.

Physical punishment, such as shaking, hitting, yelling, threats, derogatory remarks, psychological abuse or coercion is never used at TCC. Staff never withhold food or send children to “time out” as a form of discipline. Redirection and talking through difficult or harmful incidents are examples of some strategies we might use. We also offer Parent Support Groups and/or our center Howard Center Clinician to help parents/guardians with behavior concerns they may be having at home. We are always available for further information, questions, or meetings.

When a child has challenging behaviors, the teacher(s) observes and assesses the function of the behavior in our environment. If behavior becomes more problematic we will work with the family as a team to develop an individual plan to support the child’s inclusion and success. We use positive support strategies whenever possible. In addition, an on-site social worker and a behavior interventionist from Howard Center are available to all families for further consultation. TCC does not philosophically believe in or support the act of “expulsion”. We believe that if we have tried all possible means of early intervention, strategies, accommodations, and exhausted all supports through our collaborations with EEE and the Howard Center then we will meet with the learning and family teams to discuss the implications of “best fit for the child’s success”.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

TCC has many partnerships with family agency support services in the area. The following is a partial list of some of these agencies:

- All Chittenden County School Districts
- Howard Center (area mental health agency)
- Visiting Nurses Association
- COTS – Committee on Temporary Shelter
- US. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
- Association for Africans Living in Vermont
- UVM, CCV, Champlain College, St. Michael's College
- Mercy Connections
- Feeding Chittenden

INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

As stated above, our enrollment has always, and will always, include children with special needs. We believe in each classroom representing the greater community with “typically developing ratios” and as a result we use intentional enrollment to expand capacity to special populations. Many of these children are enrolled as a result of our collaboration with area EEE programs, and others are identified as having special needs after being enrolled here. Our staff feels a strong commitment to serving all children, and we work hard to procure the services needed to enable them to have a successful experience here at TCC. We work with parents/guardians and school districts to develop and use educational plans (IEPs and IFSPs) to support their child's (children's) full inclusion in our program. Staff also address the needs of parents/guardians of children with special needs.

If staff suspect that a child has an unidentified developmental delay or other special need, we attempt to communicate our concerns to the family in a sensitive, supportive and confidential manner. In addition, families are provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps and information about community resources for further assessment. We encourage and support families to advocate to obtain services for their child. We believe that early intervention is the most critical step in helping all children reach their potential.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Please know that any information about your child, including assessment and screening, is always kept confidential by staff at TCC and files are kept in a secure locked location. Please understand that we may not give parents/guardians information about other families in the Center. The only individuals who will have access to your child's screening and assessment results are the teaching staff and the EEE staff if your child is on an Individual Education Plan (IEP)

for special education services. We screen and observe all children continuously to determine their developmental level and to plan the curriculum accordingly.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment is due on the first of each month or the first of the week if you choose to pay weekly. You can calculate your monthly payment by multiplying your weekly fee by the number of Mondays in that month. There will be a \$20.00 charge for any late payment received after the end of the month in which it is due. These charges will continue to accrue monthly until the entire amount is paid. (If your account is delinquent at the end of the month we may ask that your child's enrollment be terminated).

All parents/guardians will receive a contract for the school year at the time of registration. Your weekly rate will be listed on it. It must be signed and returned within two weeks. The contract will be in effect for the entire school year (September through June) – payment must be received even when the Center is closed. Payment for the eight week **Summer Program** is separate and will also require a contract agreement. If you withdraw your child from TCC unexpectedly, you must give us at least 4 weeks notice. In addition, you will be held responsible for payment for this 4 week notice period.

Anyone who is eligible to receive funding from the State of Vermont for child care must notify us when they enroll their child. The required state paperwork must be filled out with TCC before their child begins school. Subsidy rates are connected to family income. When your rate is determined, office staff will give you a daily, weekly and monthly amount if there is any co-payment at all.

We also ask that every parent pay an **activity fee** per child per academic year in September and a separate activity fee per child per summer program in June. The activity fees are deposited in a special account to be used specifically for field trips and special events. Families that can not financially afford this fee, please speak with the Director to fill out a waiver form.

"ACADEMIC YEAR" PROGRAM

The Academic Year typically begins the Tuesday after Labor Day and ends the first or second Friday in June – the specific dates for each calendar year will be on the TCC Calendar you receive with the enrollment packet.

During the academic year we open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 4:30 p.m. each day. Please see your child's classroom Daily Schedule posted outside of their classroom for a typical snapshot of the day. TCC

closes at 1:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of most months for staff development. These dates, as well as other closures and early dismissals are included on the TCC Calendar.

SUMMER PROGRAM

We operate a separate summer program for 8 weeks (or 9 occasionally depending on when Labor Day falls) in the summer.

TCC is closed for two weeks on both ends of this session for program planning, staff vacations and intensive cleaning and building repairs (parents/guardians are not charged for these weeks). The summer program is open from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. each day. Tuition rates remain the same as the academic year. You may choose to enroll or not enroll in the summer, and will still have your enrollment slot saved in the Fall regardless of what you choose.

DROP OFF/PICK UP INFORMATION

All children and parents/guardians are greeted by one of their full-time teachers when they arrive.

Parents/Caregivers will drop off and pick up using your child's classroom back door located on the Trinity playground.

MORNING DROP OFF:

- If you are dropping your child off between the hours of 8am and 9am, you do NOT need to call before entering the playground.
- If you arrive after 9am, please call your child's classroom to notify them that you have arrived so they can greet you at the back door.
- We do ask that you are mindful and respectful of the space of others also dropping off their child.
- It is Trinity Children's Center policy that you drop your child off at school **no later than 9:30 am**, except in the case of specific and infrequent circumstances, such as appointments, in which case we ask that you notify us ahead of time.

Helpful tips for Morning Drop Off:

- Use the walk/drive to school as your "goodbye time."
- Ask for suggestions from your child to create your own plan for how you say goodbye!

AFTERNOON PICK UP:

- If you are picking up your child off between the hours of 3:30pm-4:00pm (OR between 12:30pm and 1:00pm on Wednesdays) you do NOT need to call before entering the playground.
- If you arrive before 3:30pm (or 12:30pm on Wednesdays), please call your child's classroom to notify them that you have arrived so they can help your child gather their things and greet you at the back door.

- We do ask that you are mindful and respectful of the space of others also picking up their child.
- It is Trinity Children's Center Policy that you pick up no later than 4:00pm.

**** OPENING AND CLOSING CLASSROOM GATES IS AN ADULT OR TEACHER JOB. PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO OPEN OR CLOSE THE GATES, AS THIS IS INCONSISTENT WITH OUR CLEAR MESSAGES AROUND SAFETY RULES.**

At TCC we try to ensure the safety of all children as pedestrians and as passengers. (When you are walking to or from your car please never allow your child to run in the parking lot or take off without you).

Staff of the Ready to Go van or the Burlington School District EEE bus who transport children to TCC must check in every day with a teacher in each classroom to notify them who they are bringing in or picking up. In addition to this, children transported by the van or bus must be signed in and out on the attendance clipboards in each classroom.

When you pick up your child, please be sure to let your child's teacher know that you are taking him/her and teachers will record the time of departure. Children will only be released to a parent/guardian or an individual on their approved pick up list. If you would like someone else to pick up your child We will not release a child to anyone via a phone call. We will ask for identification if the person who comes to pick up your child is not familiar with anyone on the TCC staff. You may add a name or names to your child's permanent file at any time. See a staff person in the office to do this.

Please be prompt in picking up your child. Make sure you arrive in time to have your child(ren) leave by 4:30 p.m. If you want to spend time chatting with a teacher or another parent, please arrive a few minutes early or schedule a meeting within school hours. Please respect this 4:30 rule. Late fees will be charged if this policy is violated. (Please see the "Late Fees" section for details).

Also, it is the policy of Trinity Children's Center to release a child to either parent unless otherwise stipulated in a court agreement. This is clearly stated in the Parental Agreement Form which every family signs. If one parent is prohibited from picking up a child, please immediately make available to the office staff a copy of that portion of the court agreement or court order stating a particular person is not allowed access to the child.

IMPORTANT - Whether we are outside or inside in the afternoon, please never forget to tell a permanent staff person (not a student or TA) when you take your child(ren). Don't assume that someone sees you taking your child. You must make verbal contact with your child's full-time teacher.

We do not transport children here at TCC, however we occasionally do provide transportation for field trips. Whenever children are transported at TCC, car and booster seats are used according to the manufacturer's instructions and children are always accounted for a minimum of four times using our Field Trip Attendance Forms and Active Supervision Policy Guidelines.

Your child's safety is a primary concern to us. This concern extends through the release of the child to her/his parent or guardian at the end of each day. Children must be placed in appropriate car restraint systems in the vehicle in which they leave. In the event a person comes to pick up a child and is visibly impaired (having difficulty walking and/or slurred or incoherent speech), staff will encourage that person to refrain from driving and suggest that a relative, friend or a taxi be called for transportation. If the parent insists on driving, staff may call the UVM Campus Police with the name of the driver, passenger(s), vehicle description and license plate number (if known). **Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying anyone designated to pick up their child of these policies.**

LATE PICK-UP FEES

The Center closes at 4:30 p.m during the school year and during the summer weeks. If your child is here after 4:30 p.m., there will be a \$5 charge for every 5 minute block of time until the child is picked up, or you and your child have left. Any late fees incurred should be paid to TCC. The staff member will be compensated by us. When children are left here longer than ½ an hour and all resources to find parent or emergency contacts have been exhausted, the police will be notified.

ATTENDANCE AND FREQUENT ABSENCE POLICY

Studies repeatedly show that children with strong attendance records outperform others in learning achievement and social/emotional competence. That means a stronger likelihood of successful transitions into elementary school, and continued success through their education and career. By contrast, children who are frequently absent literally miss out on those opportunities to form the habits they need for learning achievement and competence. Sadly, the impact reaches well beyond the early education years. As a result, we strongly encourage families to maintain routine attendance and communicate any time a child will be out and the reason for the absence.

Unless children have an appointment or are ill (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash, currently or within the past 24 hours as described in the Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Programs), we encourage that they attend on time on a daily basis. Of course, there are extenuating circumstances that strengthen families – family gatherings, infrequent special days off with a caregiver, or a holiday/vacation – that we both understand and encourage. Chronic absences, or frequent absences without communication are discouraged and may result in the discontinuation of enrollment to allow for other families the opportunity to enroll.

If a child is not in attendance and does not notify the center, teachers/ administration are responsible for calling the family to check in. If a child misses 4 days or more in one month, the family will be contacted to discuss possible barriers. If a child misses more than 10 days in a row, the family will also be contacted. If these absences are unexcused, the child's enrollment will be at risk. All absences will be coded to identify barriers (vacation, transportation, sickness, etc...). Before any child loses their enrollment, the administrative, teaching, and collaborative agencies will schedule a family meeting to assist the family in overcoming barriers to achieve more consistent attendance.

FORMS

The forms necessary for enrollment are listed here:

- Enrollment Form & Family Questionnaire - due on your child's first day at TCC
- Child Immunization Certificate and Health Record: Please bring this in or have your pediatrician's office forward the information to us as soon as possible. We must have this information for the State Department of Health in October.
- Parental Agreement Form: This form is due on your child's first day and is critical since it gives us permission for things like field trips, sunscreen, walking field trips, emergency care, etc. This is also the place for you to list the names of people who may pick up your child at the end of the day and your health insurance information.
- Contract: This should be signed and returned to TCC within 2 weeks of receiving it. This documents your intent to keep your child enrolled in the program for the entire school year. It also lists your weekly fee.
- Act 166 Confirmation Form: This form is due on your child's first day (if your child is 3 years of age by September 1st of that year) to confirm that all Act 166 Pre-K Registration Paperwork has been completed

- CACFP (food program) Paperwork: Both Income Eligibility and enrollment forms are due regardless of your intent to participate (not applicable for 2021-2022 school year)

LIST OF SPECIAL ITEMS

Please bring the following items on the first day of school:

- Change of clothing labeled with child's name
- Small light blanket labeled with child's name
- Crib sheet to cover rest mat labeled with child's name

PARENT/GUARDIAN PHONE CALLS TO TCC

If you call the office number listed below, we can connect you to any classroom. The office staff can also convey information to any of the classrooms. Please try to limit your calls into the classrooms during the day. We also ask that you not call into individual classrooms between 1:00 and 3:00 since children are sleeping. The office has the main voicemail service which will be periodically checked.

OFFICE (Executive Director and Assistant Director)	656-5026
SUNSHINE ROOM	656-5011
RAINBOW ROOM	656-5012
STAR ROOM	656-5013
CLOUD ROOM	656-5014
FAX	656-5015

PARENT/TEACHER/CENTER INTERACTIONS

Parents/guardians may visit the Center at any time. We ask that you call ahead to discuss with us but welcome and encourage your presence! You are invited to help plan events, be on committees and take on leadership roles - we try to accommodate your schedules and availability in our requests for help. There are many ways for parents/guardians to be involved in our program, such as visiting and helping in the classroom, joining us for field trips, and participating in special events and activities. The teachers will keep you informed about day-to-day happenings and special events, and will suggest ways that parents/guardians can be helpful in these activities. Teachers post weekly lesson plans detailing what will occur each day as well as reminders of any upcoming special activities. These notes are located near the sign in/sign out sheets for each classroom or may be shared electronically by your child's teachers. For bigger leadership or committee roles, these opportunities will be communicated through our quarterly TCC Family Newsletters. *(If translation into other languages of any information about TCC is needed, please call the office at 656-5026).*

Teachers communicate with parents/guardians daily to ensure that the children experience smooth transitions during the day (from home to program or from one program to another). If you need to

have a lengthy discussion with a teacher, please make an appointment to do so – we can usually accommodate this request quickly.

Parents/guardians are informed daily about injuries and any changes in children's health or eating habits that teachers notice. Parents/guardians are informed about TCC's program and any policy or regulatory changes that affect it through newsletters, frequent notes, meetings, telephone calls and bulletin boards.

A reminder here for parents/guardians, family members or friends who are on-site to drop-off or pick-up children at TCC - when you arrive and **connect with a full time staff**, you become responsible for that child/children from that moment on. You need to take responsibility to collect their belongings, get them dressed and assist them in exiting the building safely. Our responsibility for knowing where children are at all times ends when you arrive.

CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER PARENTS/GUARDIANS

At TCC we offer Parent Education Nights on various topics of interest – Back to School Nights happen in October. These are usually held in the early evening and are a good opportunity to network with other parents/guardians as well as gain valuable information from the child development professionals who lead these events. Feel free to introduce yourself to other parents/guardians whenever you are here at TCC - they can often be an invaluable resource. Ask us to facilitate these introductions if you like. Interpreters representing the languages present in each classroom are available.

PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

There are two formally scheduled conferences between parents/guardians and teachers to discuss your child. These happen in the fall and spring. Feel free to call for an additional parent conference anytime you need to talk. We can have interpreters available if needed. It is important to let us know if there is anything different going on at home that may impact your child (parent away, illness, job problems, a new baby coming, company, death, or if it is just one of those mornings). The more we know about your child and family backgrounds and beliefs, the better we can understand, and the more supportive and helpful we can be. We may ask if our Howard Center clinician can join the team, as they have a high level of experience and expertise on family changes, transitions, and materials that may help (social stories, etc...) Talk to us a lot... we are here for you and your child.

PARENT PROBLEM SOLVING

If a parent disagrees with something that a TCC staff person has done or a parent is not satisfied with the way a situation was handled, they are encouraged to follow these procedures: call, email or talk to the staff person and tell her or him how you feel. If you need more time to talk with a teacher, request a meeting time. If you are still not satisfied, then discuss the situation with the director. We encourage families to raise concerns and work collaboratively with us to find mutually satisfying solutions that teachers may be able to use in classroom practice for your child. Interpreters are always available – just let us know.

YEARLY PROGRAM EVALUATIONS and PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

At our Fall Open House on the Friday before we open at TCC, we will report to all families about our goals and objectives for the year, including ongoing program planning, operations and improvements. We are always open to parent suggestions, especially at this time.

Each year at our Parent Conference Day in December parents/guardians are given our annual parent evaluation to complete. This information from parents/guardians helps us collect evidence on all areas of our program's functioning and helps us further establish goals and objectives for the year. The information obtained from this form will become a part of the comprehensive program evaluation which will also include feedback from our TCC board, the center staff and the community agencies with which we collaborate. This evaluation will then be shared with families, staff and the board at TCC and the results will be used to inform future budget planning, professional development and program quality-improvement activities, as well as to improve operations and policies.

FIELD TRIPS/PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Walking field trips are often a part of curriculum planning here at TCC. Permission is granted (or not) for all field trips on the Parental Permission Agreement that you fill out each year. You will typically be notified before they occur, unless it is a short walking field trip based on the spontaneous nature of a child's curiosity. Parents/guardians are always welcome to accompany us. We are always adequately staffed for these events. We are fortunate to be in a small city where there are many places to explore. We sometimes take the College Street Shuttle bus to get downtown. The ECHO Science Center, Church Street, and The Fletcher Free Library are some of our favorite places.

Staff will always have a first aid kit, emergency contacts, and a cell phone with them on each field trip. Alternate transportation

arrangements can be made with someone in the office if there are problems with any vehicles during the trip.

On all field trips additional staff people are hired to help give extra support for children with disabilities and to ensure the safety of all children as pedestrians and as passengers. These extra staff can also be assigned to specific areas that are near equipment where injury could occur.

NAPTIME

We do have a rest time every day at TCC. Most children do sleep. Parents/guardians should send a crib sheet to cover our sleeping mats and a favorite blanket (please not too large) from home. It is a Vermont Child Care Licensing requirement that each child is given this rest time every day. If your child has outgrown naps, we believe that this should be celebrated and your child is allowed to partake in quiet activities after a 30 minute "rest". We believe that resting is an important skill that children can learn to regulate, promote self-care, and practice relaxation techniques that are explicitly taught to children here at TCC.

BRINGING TOYS TO SCHOOL

Transitional items are often needed by a child starting school or by a child having major events in their life such as a new baby, a hospitalization, a family breakup, etc. Children may want their special cuddly toy at naptime. We ask that no weapon toys (guns, knives, swords, etc.) be brought to school.

However, other toys from home such as cars, dolls and planes often cause problems such as items getting lost and children not wanting to share. Please tell your child "no, this is a toy for home - it will be here when you come home". Don't make deals and please don't bring the child in for us to tell her/him "no". We will talk about it here at school if you want us to do so. We believe parents/guardians can set limits and that consistent limits are crucial for children. Please let your child know that there is a reason - not that it is just "a rule". Let us know if you need help with this.

BIRTHDAYS

Parents/guardians often like to celebrate their child's birthdays at school with special treats they bring from home. This is not a requirement, but it is welcome. We strongly encourage healthy treats such as fruit salad with whipped cream, whole fruit popsicles, etc... NO candy or gum. We also have a no balloon policy for safety reasons. If your child's special day falls on a non-school day, we can still celebrate on another day. You should arrange for this with a teacher in advance. Please check in with your child's teachers to determine if a treat will meet the dietary needs of the class and how

many children will be at school that day to celebrate. If your child would like to celebrate with a treat, and this presents a challenge to your family, please let your child's teachers know.

HOLIDAYS

We like to acknowledge all kinds of holidays here at TCC, and we encourage children and parents/guardians to share their special events with the rest of the class. Your child may want to bring in a book or music that is important to your family's celebration or a parent might like to come in and lead a small group in a special activity. These experiences can be very enriching for everyone.

We do recognize that sometimes the holidays can add stress to children's lives, and we feel the need to keep a routine of predictable daily experiences for their security and control. If it seems like we're down- playing a season, perhaps this is the reason.

HEALTH REGULATIONS/SICK CHILD POLICY

Your child must have a complete physical examination by their doctor before entering school. Health records are required by state license regulations and must be updated each year. We need to provide verification to the State that all the children enrolled at TCC have received full and appropriate immunizations for their age. If the immunization(s) are not completed before entry, evidence of an appointment for these services must be provided by the family. In regards to religious or medical exemption, a signed waiver must be provided. If a child is under-immunized, his or her health records must document this and explain why. Under-immunized children may be excluded from care if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs to which children are susceptible.

Upon entering the program each day, children are naturally and visually scanned for any injuries that may have occurred after they were last seen at school, as well as for any signs or symptoms of suspected communicable disease. We will typically document any of these serious concerns and ask that you provide us with a cause of injury or a health update for the suspected communicable disease. This is a licensing regulation, but most importantly is a great way for both parents/guardians and providers to work together to monitor a child's health. This documentation is available to you if you need it.

If your child is sick at school, you will be called to take your child home. We will make your child comfortable in a location where they are supervised by a familiar caregiver until you arrive. We are required by the State to abide by this regulation. If we are unable to reach you, we will call the emergency contact person you have provided to come pick up your child.

Children who are vomiting, have excessive diarrhea, or have a fever of 100° are considered to be “sick” and cannot be in the center. Children should always remain at home for 24 hours after a fever has returned to normal without the assistance of any fever-reducing medication, like Children’s Tylenol, before returning to school. If you are keeping your child home for any reason, please give us a call to explain the absence.

Please report all communicable conditions (like strep, chicken pox, head lice, scabies, measles, or giardia) immediately so that staff and other parents/guardians may be notified of exposure and given information about how to protect themselves and their children. Please refer to the Signs and Symptoms Chart in Appendix A in the CBCCPP.

Parents/guardians should always let us know of any allergies, food or otherwise, that their child may have. Likewise, if your child has any other medical condition such as asthma or diabetes we ask that you fully inform us. If your child has a special medical plan, we request that you provide the information in writing so we may keep it in your child’s file.

We check all children at TCC routinely for head lice. We have found that regular checks help control the spread of this condition. If lice or nits are found, we will call you immediately and ask you to call your pediatrician for advice about which shampoo to use. Your child should then be taken home for treatment. We ask that children remain at home until all lice and nits are removed from their hair.

MEDICATION POLICIES

Here at Trinity we highly encourage medications, if at all possible, to be given at home, either before or after school. Please note that you are not allowed to drop your child off at TCC after administering the first dose of a new medication. Your child should always be kept home to monitor for side effects. If you are leaving medication (either prescription or over-the-counter) for us to administer to your child, you must obtain a note from your child’s pediatrician and fill out and sign a Medication Information & Permission Form. We may not give any medicine without this. Please give any medicine directly to a permanent staff person when dropping off your child. Never put medicine in your child’s lunchbox. Any medicine given at the center must be clearly labeled with the child’s first and last names, the date that the prescription was filled, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer’s instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication and instructions how to administer and store it. A child may not receive the first dose of any medication here at the Center. TCC will not

administer any cough drops, lozenges or similar medications because of the potential choking hazard. All medications are kept in a locked container. Please ask staff or administration for a copy of our Medication Administration Policy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION FOR EACH CHILD

TCC requires that health (including dental), safety and other contact information is collected from families and is maintained on file for each child in the office. Parents/guardians are asked to update these files as needed. The content of these files is confidential, but is immediately available to:

- Administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian
- The child's parents/guardians or legal guardian
- Regulatory authorities, on request
- Emergency contacts listed in Enrollment Form

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The University of Vermont Medical Center is located across the street from TCC and is the primary site for emergency care for all children and staff, unless otherwise notified by parents/guardians or staff. In the event of a severe emergency, 911 will be called and an ambulance will arrive. Parents/guardians are required to provide TCC with relevant health insurance information for emergency medical or dental treatment and transportation arrangements. All permanent teaching staff at TCC have current first aid and CPR training which includes providing rescue breathing, management of a blocked airway, and any special procedures that physicians of enrolled children have documented for the child. Emergency care plans for children with known medical problems that might require special care are kept on file and are followed in an emergency. Teaching staff who administer care to children requiring special medical procedures are competent in the procedure and guided in writing by the prescribing health care provider.

PROTECTION FROM WEATHER, SUN INJURY AND INSECT BORNE DISEASE

To protect against cold, heat, sun injury and insect-borne disease, the program ensures that:

- Children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather.
- Children have the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun, they wear sun-protective clothing, apply skin protection, or both. Applied skin protection will be either sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher that is applied to exposed skin (only with written parental permission to do so).

- When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET are used. (We have never experienced this in our many years of operation, but if we were required, we would only apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental permission). ** If there is no PSA about high risk for insect-borne disease, TCC may use natural repellents for mosquitoes and ticks.

OUTDOOR TIME

Children are outdoors twice a day almost every day at TCC. Please make sure your child has the appropriate clothing for the weather. We make sure kids get outside in cold weather, even if it's just a short amount of time. When outdoor times for large-motor activities are not possible, the program provides similar activities inside - equipment is arranged spaciouly enough to be safely used, on safe flooring and is supervised at the same level as outside equipment.

Children often get dirty here! Sturdy, comfortable, washable clothing is best for school. All clothing must be marked with your child's name. Please think ahead and dress your child for the weather everyday. Mittens and snow pants may be needed sooner than you think. Clothing that keeps your child dry and is layered for warmth in cold weather is required. Raincoats and boots are essential when it's wet, as we try to get outdoors twice every day. We insist that children always keep their shoes on, to prevent injury as well as to keep their feet dry and warm. A complete change of clothing should be brought in and kept in your child's cubby for emergencies. Please remember to check frequently to make sure this clothing is still in your child's cubby. Also, please take nap blankets and crib sheets home every Friday for laundering and always return them on Mondays.

LUNCH/SNACKS/MISCELLANEOUS FOOD POLICIES

At TCC we are committed to providing adequate nutrition for all children and adults on-site. TCC sponsors a Food Service Program in conformity with the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), as well as the Federal Performance Standards, making lunch available to all enrolled children. Families are given a monthly menu and can choose to purchase lunch from the menu or bring lunch from home. Sign up for the Hot Lunch program must be done before 8:30 in the morning. (You can sign up on Monday for the whole week). Health, nutrition, and safety policies and procedures address USDA guidelines for food preparation, service and storage.

You may pack lunch for your child every day. Please keep it nutritious – yogurt, sandwiches, fruit and veggies are favorites – ask if you need new ideas. TCC provides milk during breakfast and lunch

times. State licensing regulations require that lunches must always be dated and stored in the refrigerator. Sorry - we are not able to heat your child's lunch; you may use an insulated container from home for heated foods.

Staff may not offer children younger than four years the following foods: hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds) whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, large chunks of raw carrots, or pieces of meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Breakfast and afternoon snacks are provided free of charge for all children. They are served family style in the morning and the afternoon close to 9am and 3:00pm. Lunch is at noon. Staff sit and eat with children and engage them in conversation at snack and meal times. Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Staff must discard food with expired dates.

WATER PLAY

Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. No child drinks the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh potable water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children comes to participate in this activity. When the activity period is completed with each group of children, the water is drained. Alternately, fresh potable water flows freely through the water play table and out through a drain in the table. The water play table is clean and disinfected daily after being drained.

FOOD ALLERGIES OR SPECIAL NUTRITION NEEDS

For each child with food allergies or special nutrition needs, the child's health provider gives the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. The program protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. With consent, the staff posts information about that child's food allergy with the child's picture so it is a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the program day.

SMOKE FREE FACILITY

TCC, as well as the University of Vermont, is a smoke-free facility, both indoors and outdoors. No smoking is ever permitted in the presence of children. We must note that this prohibits smoking in vehicles on the UVM parking lots.

AIR POLLUTION

Program staff protect children and adults from exposure to high levels of air pollution from smog or heavy traffic by limiting outdoor and physical activity as a precaution during smog or other air pollution alerts from the health department.

PROTECTION FROM HAZARDS

Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including air pollution (children would be kept inside), electrical shock, burns or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Firearms and smoking are never permitted on our premises. Liquids and foods hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of the reach of children. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping or slipping.

Staff are always assigned to specific areas near equipment where injury could occur e.g. climbing structures. Maintenance of the facility and all permanent equipment is the responsibility of our landlord, The University of Vermont.

The Ira Allen building where we are housed is maintained by the Environmental Safety Facility at The University of Vermont which also monitors lead and asbestos containment in our building.

Documents that conform to Public Health Requirements are available on site of all testing and yearly procedures.

POTABLE WATER TEST RESULTS

TCC ensures that all tap water served to children has been tested through the Vermont Department of Health and is potable.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Parents/guardians or emergency contact people listed in your child's file will be notified immediately by phone should an emergency situation occur. These situations could also include school closings due to weather or facility issues such as furnace malfunction.

Emergency evacuation and disaster preparedness procedures are posted next to classroom doors leading to the outside. **Please ask to see our Emergency Preparedness Plan and Policy in our TCC Policies Manual.** Evacuation procedures are practiced monthly with children.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

- Evacuation signal is given (fire alarm or siren from megaphone)
- Children and teachers line up
- One teacher accesses the attendance clipboard (from door) and takes head count, proceeds to designated safety area (at least 300' from building, against fence) where another head count is conducted again.

- Second teacher conducts a quick scan of space, including bathroom and loft, grabs the Emergency/First Aid Kit Backpack (which includes emergency contacts) located by the back door, closes the door and immediately follows the group to the designated safety area for second head count.
- Second head count is reported to Director or designee
- Designated person (director) will access the **Parent Emergency Contact Backpack and a cell phone** at the evacuation site.
- Remain with class. Be prepared to wait. Remain calm and reassuring. Do not speculate about the cause of the evacuation.
- If given the order to relocate, follow the directive calmly and as a group.

RELOCATION PROCEDURES

Relocation means moving students, staff and visitors from the school or evacuation areas to identified relocation areas. The primary relocation site is Mann Hall (UVM building on the other side of playground). The secondary relocation site if Mann Hall is unsafe is the Ira Allen Chapel on University Place.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

- Lockdown signal is given by person who notices the need and calls 911
- Teachers and staff clear hallways near their room or area.
- Close and lock classroom doors and pull down shades.
- Turn out all the lights.
- Gather students in a safe location. Assess direction of danger, if possible. Avoid windows, doors, and outer walls.
- Use basic “duck and cover” techniques.
- Take attendance of students in your room.
- Be prepared to wait. Remain calm and reassuring. Do not speculate about the cause of the lockdown.
- Stay alert and ready to move if directed to do so.

Evacuate only if directed to do so by police or administrators, unless the situation warrants immediate movement.

MODIFIED LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

If a modified lockdown is called, ALL doors to school are locked, including classroom doors and main doors. Teachers are notified of a modified lockdown. Pull shades in all areas. Students and staff follow routine, however they remain on alert and avoid windows.

LOST OR MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE

Children are always grouped and counted whenever they move from one environment to another. If a child is missing, staff must notify other teachers and office staff immediately. Designate a few adults

to search the facility – if a child is not found within 5 minutes, notification of officials is necessary. Notify police, then parents/guardians, then Department of Children and Families, and lastly collaborative partners in that order.

Fire drills occur monthly, except for the month of September in which we do two drills. Lockdown drills are conducted in October and May.

SNOW CANCELLATIONS AT TCC

Trinity Children’s Center follows the Burlington School District school closing guidelines due to weather. If BSD is closed due to inclement weather, we are as well. In very rare cases, if travel is too dangerous for our families that drive a vehicle to drop off and pick up their children, we may cancel regardless of BSD’s decision. BSD does not bus their children and makes cancellation decisions based on the limited vehicle travel by their families. These rare cases would be determined based on the percentage of Chittenden County School closings, as well as traffic safety reports. Safety for all of our families is our number one priority. We will try to have closings announced by 6:30 a.m. on the following:

WVMT (AM 620)

WXXX (FM95)

WNCS (FM104.6) the point

In addition to these radio stations, we will notify WCAX TV (channel 3), WPTZ TV (channel 5), and VPR so that the closing will be listed on the bottom of the screen during the early morning news broadcast and school closing pages of their websites. We will also leave a voicemail message at 656-5026, the TCC office number, and send out a TCC email to families.

Please understand that individually notifying all of the above-mentioned agencies or systems takes time, so **if you see a cancellation on one but not others, please assume that we are closed.** You may just be checking in the middle of the process when we haven’t completed the closing protocol. Lastly, **if Burlington School District is closed and we have not yet announced it on our end, please also assume that we are closed,** and know that you will receive a notification directly from Trinity Children’s Center shortly.

FIRST AID KITS

Fully equipped first-aid kits are readily available and maintained for each group of children. First aid kits are accessible to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

CUSTODY DISPUTES

It is the policy of TCC not to provide information on a voluntary basis to any party involved in a custody dispute unless a TCC staff member has reliable and compelling information related to the child's safety. TCC staff members recognize their obligation to respond to a subpoena. The purpose of this policy is to enable TCC staff to sustain and develop positive relationships with both parents/guardians of the child (whenever possible). During a custody dispute, each parent must continue to have confidence in the staff and assurances that forthright communication continues between them and the TCC staff.

PARKING/BUILDING SECURITY AND ACCESS

TCC is located at the rear of the UVM Campus. Parents/guardians or other designated pick-up people have access only from the parking lot next to our playground. **Just a reminder, both idling your car and leaving a child in the car unattended is illegal.** If a sibling or child is left unattended in the car, we are required to report this to the Department of Children and Families.

Anyone picking-up or dropping off children must have a TCC parking placard which can be obtained from the TCC office. If this placard is missing from the dashboard, you will probably be ticketed by UVM. These tickets are very expensive and can cost up to \$90. If you change cars with anyone, please come to the office to get another placard. No parking or even "pulling up" is allowed on Fletcher Place.

The interior doors leading to the adult bathrooms are always kept locked to prevent access to our space from the other tenants in our building. Should you need to use these bathrooms, please check in with your child's teacher to borrow their classroom key. If you do not bring a key, you will need to walk around the building to re-enter.

The UVM Police Department is responsible for the security of our building on a 24 hour basis – they can be at our site at a moment's notice.

TCC MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

HAND WASHING

The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and children are taught hand-washing procedures and this skill is periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing would reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.

- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task. Children wash independently or with staff assistance.

Children and adults wash their hands

- on arrival for the day
- after diapering or using the toilet
- after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or touching any mucus, blood, or vomit)
- before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving food, or after handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry)
- after playing in water that is shared by two or more people
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals
- after outdoor play

Adults also wash their hands

- before and after feeding a child
- before and after administering medication
- after assisting a child with toileting
- after handling garbage or cleaning

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include

- using liquid soap and warm running water
- rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a single-use towel; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water)

Staff always wear rubber gloves when contamination with bodily fluids may occur. Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material. In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

PROCEDURES FOR STANDARD SANITARY, HEALTH PRECAUTIONS and NUTRITION ARE USED AND INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Surfaces that may come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of a material that can be sanitized.
- Staff use barriers and techniques that minimize contact of mucous membranes or of openings in skin with potentially infectious body fluids and that reduce the spread of infectious

disease (e.g. use of gloves, Kleenex, Band-Aids, coughing into elbow...).

- When spills of body fluids occur, staff clean them up immediately with detergent, or bleach (on nonporous surfaces), followed by water rinsing.
- After cleaning, staff sanitize nonporous surfaces with bleach mixture.
- Staff clean rugs and carpeting by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam cleaning.
- Staff dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie - it is then placed in a closed container.
- Ventilation and sanitation, rather than sprays, air freshening chemicals, or deodorizers, control odors in inhabited areas of the facilities and in custodial closets.
- Staff must always discard foods with expired dates

PROCEDURES FOR CLEANING TOYS

A toy that a child has placed in their mouth, or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion is either to be (a) washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, sanitized, and air dried or (b) washed and dried in a mechanical dishwasher before it can be used by another child.

PROCEDURE FOR RENOVATION:

Whenever rooms are renovated, ventilation is always used before children are present. An example occurred during the week of Aug. 18th, 2006 – new rugs were installed on Monday and Tuesday of the week before staff came back for a week of in-service and two weeks before children began the new school year in September, 2006.

Major cleaning (carpet extraction, floor stripping) of the Center happens during weeks off in summer and in December when children are not present and ventilation is always used.

DIAPERING PROCEDURES

Most children are potty trained. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the program makes sure that:

- Staff always wear rubber gloves and use only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use (the health provider must document the medical reason).
- Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing and with little handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or soiled at least every two hours when children are awake and when children awaken. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled within

5 minutes of discovery, unless circumstances clearly make it difficult to do so.

- Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- Staff post changing procedures in their changing area. These procedures serve as a clear reminder and are followed by all staff.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding. Changing surfaces are cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers are kept closed with a step pedal for opening. Containers are not accessible to children.
- Staff whose primary function is preparing food do not change diapers until their food preparation duties are completed for the day.

STATE OF VERMONT LICENSING REGULATIONS

TCC is licensed by the State of Vermont to operate as a Child Care Center – a copy of the licensing regulations for early childhood programs for Vermont is always available in the hallway, in your child's classrooms, through the TCC office, as well as online at https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Docs/Licensing/CBCCPP_Regulations_FINAL.pdf

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING

All TCC staff are mandated reporters and are required by the State of Vermont to report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) any suspected case of child abuse or neglect within 24 hours. This policy complies with federal, state and local laws. The Executive Director at TCC is notified before a report is made.

Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect at TCC are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

If you as a parent/guardian are concerned or suspect abuse or neglect, please call Family Services Division (FSD) at 1-800-649-5285. They are available to take your call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect of a child at TCC, the staff person will be removed from the classroom immediately and will be assigned other duties away from children. This staff person will have no contact with children at TCC until the incident is investigated. Upon a report of non-substantiation by Vermont State authorities of this incident, the staff will be allowed to resume work with children. If the report is substantiated, this staff person will no longer be employed at TCC.

If you are concerned about potential safety or licensing violation concerns, or if you simply would like more information about a program, please call the Child Care Consumer Line at 1-800-649-2642,

**STATE OF VERMONT CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY FOR LICENSED
CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

This policy is followed at TCC and is available to all families on page 38 in Child Care Licensing Regulations which is available in all classrooms.