

# Family Handbook 2023-2024

Fisher Early Learning Center  
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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Fisher Early Learning Center is to provide children with a continuum of learning experiences in an inclusive setting that reflects research-based practices, celebrates diversity and addresses the uniqueness of each child. Through family and community partnerships and high professional standards, Fisher offers a quality program that establishes a foundation of skills and knowledge essential to the development of competent and caring young children.

## **Vision**

Through partnerships with families and communities, and a commitment to professional development, Fisher will serve as the model for high quality care and education that results in creating an optimal learning environment where all children achieve their full potential.

## **Philosophy**

Fisher Early Learning Center provides an innovative and creative model of early childhood education. Children of all abilities, from infants through preschoolers, are welcome to play, explore, and expand their repertoire of skills.

Fisher provides an active and engaging learning environment that fosters all aspects of development through comprehensive and multi-disciplinary activities. A curriculum comprised of structured and child-directed activities provides a diverse approach to teaching that facilitates children's abilities to master new skills and expand their horizons. Trained and skilled professionals from a variety of disciplines form teaching teams that provide quality care and education to children in an inclusive setting.

Family and community partnership development is strongly emphasized. These partnerships open new ways to increase, expand, and enhance the potential of each individual child.

## **Our Beliefs and Who We Are**

We believe children learn best in a setting that respects, values and encourages all aspects of the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of each individual child.

We believe children benefit from an interactive and play-based approach to learning.

We believe families provide the foundation, key experiences, and interactions that children need to grow and learn. We actively encourage a partnership with family members to enhance the potential of each child.

We believe Fisher Early Learning Center serves as a model inclusive learning program and an environment for professional development, research, and training in early childhood education.

We believe Fisher Early Learning Center serves as a model in community collaboration and partnership development for the delivery of quality services to children and families.

**Diversity Statement (Full Statement available upon request.)**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the mission of Fisher Early Learning Center. We recognize that learning starts at birth, and as early childhood educators it is our responsibility to promote these values. As such, we are committed to ongoing professional development, family and community engagement and implementing high quality anti-bias curriculum. Fisher is, and will continue to be, a safe and welcoming space for all individuals.

**Curriculum**

Fisher Early Learning Center utilizes two research-based curricula as the foundations for our practices: 1) *The Creative Curriculum* (CC) and 2) *Connect4Learning* (C4L). CC is used in our infant through preschool classrooms. C4L is used in our Prekindergarten classrooms.

We implement these curricula with visionary fidelity. The concept of visionary fidelity empowers our teachers to apply their knowledge and training within the foundational frameworks of the curricula. Our focus is crafting developmentally appropriate practices that consider the child's developmental level and provides opportunities for teachers to work with children who have various skills and abilities. Curriculum is delivered within a play-based format and integrates all areas of development including social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and the arts within the daily classroom routine and structure.

A foundational design of both CC and C4L is the project approach. Within this framework, learning and exploration incorporates the children's interests as well as their individual needs when planning short- and long-term activities. Using a combination of teacher- and child-directed explorations, learning opportunities are embedded into daily routines where children are allowed to be active explorers of their environment as individuals, as well as in small and large groups. Teachers are there to promote the children's unique interests and to facilitate opportunities for more in-depth acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Infants and toddlers

In the early years of development, establishing routines and creating a responsive environment are essential elements to building a nurturing caregiving environment in which very young children feel safe. Furthermore, trusting and responsive relationships with caregivers are also critical to a child's sense of security. Assisting children to understand themselves and trust their environment is the focus of CC for infants and toddlers. Promoting self-regulation as well as a desire to explore and engage in one's environment is facilitated through strong relationships with caregivers and partnerships with families.

### Preschool

In the preschool years, routines, expectations, relationships and the environment continue to be important factors in growing and learning. In addition, children begin to diversify their interests and assert their independence in various ways. CC addresses all areas of development and allows teachers to modify their instructional activities to meet the needs and interests of the children. The curriculum provides a very comprehensive set of objectives to ensure that all developmental domains are addressed, and also a flexible structure to ensure that children's voices and values are heard and respected as a part of their learning journey.

### Prekindergarten

In the PreK years, more intentional focus is devoted to thinking processes and diversifying project learning categories, as guided by the C4L framework.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Fisher utilizes the *MyTeachingStrategies* progress monitoring tool, which is designed for use with children from birth through kindergarten. As the term indicates, progress monitoring is a practice that is used to observe children's growth and development over a period of time and evaluate the progress of their skills and abilities. Progress monitoring allows teachers to assess children's abilities, interests and needs across all domains of development and learning (Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies and The Arts.) Furthermore, as teachers observe and document children's abilities and skill levels, they are better informed to plan curricular activities that will complement and challenge their growth and development. Teachers receive training to conduct these assessments of children through an online training program with *MyTeachingStrategies*. Fisher participates in the Colorado Department of Education Results Matter program, a statewide program that promotes the use of ongoing, developmental, observation-based assessment in early care and education settings. Results Matter serves as Colorado's unified child outcomes measurement system for many early childhood programs and services.

For more information about Results Matter visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter>

### **Inclusion**

Fisher is proud to provide an early childhood program where children with special needs can learn and grow alongside their typically developing peers. The inclusive practices of our program are respected throughout the community and are an element of our program that contribute to the high-quality work that we do. The collaborative efforts of the administration, teachers and Fisher Inclusion Team (FIT) result in an environment in which children with

identified special needs, as well as children at risk for developmental delay and/or with challenging behaviors, receive targeted support and strategies to help them reach their full potential. **All** children benefit from the opportunity to participate in an inclusive educational program. At Fisher we believe in and promote inclusion and welcome families to address our program staff with any questions regarding our inclusive practices. Please refer to pages 30-33 of our handbook for further information regarding inclusion and the Fisher Inclusion Team.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Fisher is a program of the Morgridge College of Education within the University of Denver, which is an equal opportunity affirmative action institution.

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EOIX) at the University of Denver exists to assure that the university and its programs comply with their policies on discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and to promote full compliance with all federal, state, and local discrimination laws. The University of Denver and The Fisher Center community are strongly committed to the pursuit of excellence by including and integrating individuals who represent different groups as defined by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, age, disability, national origin and religion.

Consistent with federal, state and local law and University policy related to non-discrimination, the EOIX conducts neutral investigations of complaints of discrimination (including harassment) on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, veteran status or genetic information; complaints of retaliation; and complaints alleging failure to provide reasonable accommodations for disability and religion. The EOIX's full statements, policies and procedures can be found at <http://www.du.edu/deo>.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

The facilities of the Fisher Early Learning Center meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements. Accessibility includes access to buildings, toilets, sinks, drinking fountains, outdoor play spaces, and all classroom and therapy areas.

### **Our Program**

Children from ages six weeks through five years are served in the Fisher Early Learning Center. Approximately 20% of our enrolled students are children with special needs.

We are open Monday through Friday from 7:45 am to 5:15 pm. Our program hours reflect the ideal planning for classroom learning opportunities, adult-to-child ratios, curriculum implementation, and individual child learning. Families of enrolled children may visit any area

of the facility at any time during the program's regular hours of operation as specified by the Center's policies and procedures.

### **School Calendar**

Fisher provides year-round programming. We end one school year in mid-June and begin the new school year immediately thereafter. We reserve the right, however, to close during unscheduled times due to severe weather or other unforeseen emergencies. For the most updated information regarding holidays and school closures, please refer to the current school year calendar on our website.

### **Planning/Professional Days**

School closures due to planning/professional development are valuable aspects of our program. Fisher will be closed for scheduled teacher planning/professional days each calendar year. Professional development and planning days build the foundation for having highly-qualified and well-trained teaching personnel. Professional workshops and conferences prepare staff in all areas of child development, special education, curriculum, health and safety. Professional days also provide time to develop individualized programming and to address progress monitoring for each child. These days assist in maintaining high-quality national standards and well-trained teachers for your child's classroom.

### **Staff**

The administrative staff of the Center is comprised of a Director, an Associate Director, a Curriculum and Instructional Specialist, Enrollment Coordinator, Program Coordinator and Business Officer. In each classroom, there are a total of 3 teachers: 1-2 Master Teacher and 1-2 Associate Teachers. Adult-to-child ratios and room capacities maintain all state and national standards and are posted in each classroom. We utilize the criteria provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) when hiring our teachers. Our staff is encouraged to continue their education and training to benefit the overall quality of the program.

When necessary, Fisher utilizes a carefully screened pool of qualified and trained substitute teachers. Student workers and graduate students from DU also work at Fisher and support our classroom teaching teams in various capacities. DU students and faculty members are an integral component of Fisher. They provide opportunities to enrich the quality of our services with best practices and current research on learning and development in early childhood.

### **Application Process**

The Fisher Early Learning Center is a resource for both the University of Denver and the larger community. We welcome all children and families to apply. Once your child is enrolled, it is

NOT necessary to apply each year to continue enrollment. Only siblings of *currently enrolled* children are given priority in the enrollment process and will be considered prior to lottery selections.

All application decisions are based on a lottery that occurs each year in February for the upcoming school year. The lottery database is developed using information provided on the application for enrollment. Once the lottery selection is completed, invitations will be extended in the month of March to enroll for the upcoming school year. Parents will be given 5 days to either accept or decline the invitation for the next school year. When selecting families during the lottery process, we fill spots in an effort to maintain a balance of 50% DU affiliated families and 50% families from the community. Please refer to Fisher's website ([www.du.edu/fisher](http://www.du.edu/fisher)) for more details and frequently asked questions regarding our lottery selection process. There is a \$100 non-refundable application fee each year an application is submitted for new families. Families applying for siblings do not pay an application fee.

### **Enrollment**

At the time of invitation and enrollment into the program, a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100 is required for each child. This enrollment fee applies to new families and siblings, and holds the child's spot at the Center. It will not be refunded should you choose not to enroll your child after accepting the invitation. During the enrollment process, a family meeting will be held with the classroom teachers to discuss the classroom placement, curriculum, family goals, and program policies. This meeting allows families and the Center team to discuss, plan and facilitate the child's transition into the program.

### **Yearly Classroom Assignments and Transitions**

Whether a child has been at Fisher for a number of years, or is beginning their first year, the staff works as a team to ensure smooth and successful transitions into and across the Center. To help reduce the anxiety of entering our program or a new classroom, a conference with your child's teachers is arranged prior to the start of the school year to plan for the transition. Classroom placement is a process involving the entire Fisher team. Careful consideration and thought are involved in the placement of your child in an appropriate classroom each year. In an effort to establish a positive and productive classroom culture, we take into consideration individual needs of each child, the strengths of each classroom team, and the enrollment needs of the Center. As the new school year approaches, we will notify families about the following year's placement in ample time to help their child prepare for classroom changes. Once children transition into a new classroom at the beginning of the school year, they remain with that classroom for the duration of the 12-month school year.

### **Schedule Options**

Fisher offers three schedule options for enrollment: a five-day/full week schedule (Monday through Friday), three-day per week schedule (Monday, Wednesday, Friday), or a two-day per week schedule (Tuesday & Thursday). There are limited slots for three-day and two-day schedules. These schedule options are offered at a defined monthly rate, which can be found on our website in a document titled Tuition Rates under Enrollment Process.

Priority is given to siblings of children already attending Fisher when filling the two- and three-day schedules. Families will be asked at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment to submit their schedule preferences to the Enrollment Coordinator for the following school year. Family preferences will be accommodated, if possible. Classroom or schedule vacancies will be filled through the lottery selection process.

### **Schedule Change Requests**

Families will be allowed to submit one schedule change request during each school year. The decision to grant a schedule change request will be based on availability. Please complete a Schedule Change Request form and return it to the Enrollment Coordinator to initiate any changes.

### **Tuition Payment/Late Fee Policies**

Your child's tuition is a flat, monthly rate based on his/her age and on the days he/she is enrolled. Families with two or more children enrolled in the Center will receive a 10% discount towards the monthly tuition for lowest paying sibling(s). Fisher operates on a monthly enrollment system, and tuition will only be billed for an entire month or half-month. Tuition may not be prorated into days or weeks. Tuition rates remain constant throughout the school year and will include all school holidays, planning days, and inclement weather closures. You do not receive credit for days in which your child is out ill or on vacation. We appreciate that parents notify the classroom teachers of any absences. All families are required to sign and follow a Tuition Agreement (a separate form included in the enrollment paperwork) for each school year.

*Tuition bills will be emailed. Please ensure that your email address(es) are updated with the Enrollment Coordinator. Tuition is billed the first week of each month for the current month. Tuition payment is due by the 15th of the month and should be deposited into the Tuition Drop Box located in the front lobby. Check payments, online bill pay, or payroll deduction (if employed by DU) are accepted forms of payment. All checks should be made payable to Fisher Early Learning Center. Receipts for payment and yearly statements may be requested*



*from the Finance Assistant. Fisher charges a late payment fee of \$25.00. Fees will be charged to your next bill if payment is not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.*

### **Materials Fee**

Fisher will assess an annual materials fee. The materials fee will cover the cost of classroom materials for specific projects throughout the school year. The amount of this fee depends upon your child's weekly schedule. If your child attends 5 days each week, the materials fee is \$50.00, 3 days is \$30.00, and 2 days is \$20.00. This materials fee should be paid with your first month tuition payment. However, please submit a separate check for the materials fee. Again, this is the only time you will pay this fee during the school year.

### **Withdrawals**

Student withdrawals are allowed only on the 15th or final day of a month. The Enrollment Coordinator must receive a Withdrawal Form **30 days** prior to the chosen departure date in order to avoid additional billing. Withdrawal forms may be obtained from the Enrollment Coordinator or Finance Assistant. Accounts with unpaid balances not paid within 30 days of departure will be turned over to the University of Denver's collection agency. Questions regarding the tuition payment, late fee or withdrawal policy may be directed to the Enrollment Coordinator or Finance Assistant.

### **DU Rate Eligibility**

Children of the University of Denver's faculty, students, and staff will be given a 15% discount off tuition rates. In order to qualify for the DU discount, you must be a current University of Denver appointed faculty member, a benefited full or part-time staff member, or a degree-seeking, continuously enrolled student. This DU discount does not apply to Adjunct Faculty or Alumni. At the time of enrollment, you will be asked to provide a letter from your department/school to verify your affiliation status.

### **Denver Preschool Program (DPP)**

Any family that lives in Denver County with a preschooler 4 years of age, or in their last year before Kindergarten, may apply to the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) to receive additional funding for their child's tuition. This funding is only provided for one year and is applicable from September-August of that school year. Your first DPP payment will be applied in November for the month of September and your final DPP Payment will be applied the following October for the month of August (if you attend our Summer Camp). Information about the Denver Preschool Program can be found at <http://www.dpp.org>. Applications are available at the front desk.

## **Financial Aid and Scholarship**

Approximately 5% of our total revenue, in addition to gifts and endowments, make up our annual financial aid fund. Financial aid for families in need of financial assistance is available on a limited basis and is based on family need. Financial aid awards are identified in May each fiscal year. Families must be enrolled at Fisher prior to requesting financial assistance. *(Please note: Fisher reserves the right to adjust a child's Financial Aid should they also receive tuition support from DPP in the same year.)*

In addition, the Donne and Sue Fisher Endowed Preschool Scholarship Fund provides scholarship support to preschool students with demonstrated financial need to attend the Fisher Early Learning Center. By filling the unmet need beyond what other preschool funds provide, this scholarship allows children to attend the Center who otherwise might not consider applying for admission. This will enhance the accessibility of quality early childhood education to underserved populations moving forward, as well as promote diversity within the Center. If you are interested in financial aid or scholarship, please contact the front office for an application or for more information.

## **FISHER EARLY LEARNING CENTER POLICIES**

### **Daily Arrival**

We encourage children to be dropped off between 7:45 and 9:00am. Establishing an arrival routine allows children to experience a predictable transition each morning when they come to school and join classroom activities. Your child's teachers can suggest simple ideas to facilitate a smooth separation and engage him/her with friends or prepared activities.

Infant classrooms encourage families to share your child's recent feeding and sleeping patterns verbally with a teacher and/or on the daily planning guide.

We ask that children are in their classroom and ready to start their day by 9:00 a.m. to maintain instructional continuity. Frequent late arrivals can disrupt class attention and your child's transition. If you anticipate arriving late, please advise your child's classroom teachers in advance. If your child arrives late to school and his/her class is on a field trip, he/she will join another classroom on the team until his/her class returns to the Center.

### **Combining Classrooms – modified practice due to COVID**

Occasionally, two classes in a department may gather on the playground during daily arrival and/or departure periods. Such classroom combining occurs if attendance or staffing is low in multiple rooms. However, please be advised that our staff adheres to required adult-to-child ratios and room capacity requirements at all times.

## **Inclement Weather**

The safety of Fisher's families and staff will be the primary consideration in keeping the school open or closed. The safety of everyone at Fisher is very important, as is the ability for children to be at school, and teachers and parents to work. Everyone's understanding is appreciated as we consider the balance between these competing priorities and make the best decision possible given the information at hand.

Fisher's decision-making process during inclement weather will always take into account DU and local school district decisions, including, but not limited to DPS.

- If there is a prediction for inclement weather (i.e. steady snowfall, freezing temps, etc.) overnight and/or into the morning hours, Fisher will most likely expect a delayed opening of 1-2 hours based on total accumulation and end time.
- If there is a prediction for inclement weather (i.e. steady snowfall, freezing temps, etc.) for the majority of the work day/Fisher operating hours, Fisher will most likely be closed that day.

For both of these scenarios, families will receive a message from the administrative staff by 10pm the day before the delay or closure.

- If it is far too difficult to make a decision until the morning, a message saying that will be shared by 10pm and a follow up confirmation of the decision will be sent by 5:30am the next morning.
- There may also be times that an early closure is necessary, and families will be informed of that with an expected arrival time within 1.5 hours of when the message is shared.

***In the event of a closure, late start or early dismissal, the Center or your child's classroom will send an email informing families of our status.*** Fisher's status will be posted on all major television channels and their websites. We advise families, in any case, to check their email and Fisher's website during inclement weather for the most up-to-date information regarding whether or not Fisher is open. We encourage every staff member and family to exercise their best judgment during inclement weather situations.

## **Extreme Weather Conditions**

Staff members are responsible for protecting infants and young toddlers from extreme weather conditions. Thus, outdoor walks or activities must be limited when the temperature is below 32°F or over 90°F. Teachers of older toddlers and preschoolers should also take precautions during extreme conditions (as listed above) and limit outdoor walks and activities to 15-20 minute durations. During heat conditions, water and shade must be part of all outside activity periods. If a child has a special need or medical condition that is affected by extreme temperatures, special accommodations can be made regarding their participation.

## **Dress for the Weather**

Classrooms go outside in all kinds of weather! Please bring your child to school dressed appropriately for weather conditions throughout the day. During severe weather (extremely hot or cold) we will utilize the motor room for large muscle and physical activities; however, our goal will be to provide outside exercise daily. When we expect to be outside for an extended period of time, we are required to apply sunscreen to all children. Families are asked to sign a permission form for sunscreen application. Sunscreen may either be provided by the parent/guardian or purchased from Fisher at a minimal annual cost. **Our nurse consultant recommends against the use of aerosol products, especially in closed spaces. Therefore, we ask that you provide cream based sunscreen products instead of the aerosol products.**

Living in Colorado often means many different weather conditions in a single day. We strongly advise families to bring extra clothing for all kinds of weather for their child. During cold weather, we suggest boots, hats, mittens, and snow pants. During hot months, we recommend sunglasses and a shade hat. In all seasons, we recommend comfortable and durable play clothes and footwear for messy activities.

## **Screening Procedure**

In accordance with best practices in early childhood, every child in the Bearsie Bears through Purple Coyotes, and all new children in preschool and prekindergarten will complete an annual developmental and social emotional screening within the first three months of the school year. If a child enrolls at Fisher after the start of the school year, then that child will be screened within the first three months of his/her attendance.

Children will be screened with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 and Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional. All families have received information about the screening procedure and tool being used with their child in the enrollment paperwork. These tools are available for review at the front desk.

Teachers are trained to administer these tools and children will be screened by a member of their classroom teaching team. Following a typical screening, the teacher will send a letter home, explaining the results to the parents. Following a screening where additional developmental support is indicated, the teachers or the FIT Coordinator will contact the parents and the Fisher Inclusion Team to discuss the results and subsequent steps.

## **Guidance and Discipline**

At Fisher Early Learning Center, the terms guidance and discipline are positive terms. Through intentional observation we gain an understanding of what a child is seeking through the behavior and support him/her to learn positive ways of getting their needs met. When a child exhibits actions or patterns of behavior that cause consistent interference with his/her

ability to engage with peers and the environment, Fisher staff members partner with families to intentionally and thoughtfully design supports to promote social-emotional development.

Below are principles that guide our practices.

- We believe guidance begins as we design our environment for children in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- We believe in positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior through modeling examples of effective problem solving, redirecting, and providing choices and options.
- We believe in involving parents whenever possible in the development of self-control and guidance decisions.
- We believe in fostering creativity, independence, and responsible decision-making through clear expectations and routines, adequate environmental planning, and problem solving with adult support in naturally occurring situations.
- We believe that children’s feelings deserve respect. Our expectations will be clearly stated in positive and proactive language. We will help children identify their feelings, discover common ground, communicate verbally, and learn to negotiate and develop friendships.
- We will model and teach “cool down” techniques and strategies for making choices that foster inner control and maintain self-respect and confidence.
- Children must not be subjected to physical or emotional harm or humiliation.
- Under no circumstances is it permissible for employees of FELC to use physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child including, but not limited to, pinching, shaking, spanking, punching, biting, kicking, rough handling, hair pulling, shaming, ridiculing, any humiliating or frightening method of discipline, forcing a child to sit/stay down, or forcing a child to perform an action.
  - Appropriate use of restraint for safety reasons (i.e. to protect the child or others from harm) is permissible.
- Discipline must not be associated with food, rest or toileting. No child should be punished for toileting accidents. Food must not be denied to or forced upon a child as disciplinary measure.
- Separation from activities, when used as discipline, must be brief and appropriate for the child’s age. The child must be in a safe, lighted, well-ventilated area and be within sight and hearing of an adult. The child must not be isolated in a locked, closed room or closet.

Fisher incorporates a variety of resources to support families and their child(ren)’s social emotional development. One resource that Fisher utilizes is the PTR-YC (Prevent Teach

Reinforce for Young Children) model to support children with challenging behavior through the design of individualized positive behavior supports. The PTR-YC process:

- Promotes a collaborative partnership between teachers and families
- Includes data collection procedures to identify and define a child's challenging behavior(s) in observable terms
- Includes data collection procedures to identify the function of a child's challenging behavior(s)
- Helps to identify one target behavior to decrease and several replacement skills to increase
- Supports teachers and families in developing an individualized plan to address challenging behavior(s)
- Includes support strategies to prevent, teach, and reinforce positive behaviors

It is **not** our practice to “disenroll” a child for disciplinary reasons. The above stated guidance and discipline policy and PTR-YC process is in place to limit the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures. Should a thorough use of PTR-YC not result in the successful inclusion of a child, Fisher staff will work with the child's family to determine if exclusion is necessary. If so, Fisher staff will support the family in the next steps involved in accessing services and identifying an alternative program/placement for the child.

- Fisher Early Learning Center follows the Rules Regulating Childcare Centers for the State of Colorado for discipline (7.702.66 Discipline) and complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

### **Security and Safety**

A member of the administrative team will greet you when you arrive or leave for the day when at all possible. Additional precautions, such as security access cards, surveillance cameras, outside phones, and remote door access, control access to the building and the safety of the children.

**The parking lot is a very busy place during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. Children should be walking (not running) at all times, and should never exit the building without holding the hand of, or being in close proximity to an adult.**

### **Safe Children Policy: Fisher Early Learning Center is a Body Safe School!**

The Fisher Early Learning Center is committed to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for all children. Every student should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. In order to ensure each child is safe and to minimize the risk of child sexual abuse, Fisher has put several preventative measures, guidelines and policies in place.

## Preventative Measures

- ❖ Anyone working with children at Fisher must complete a thorough background check and fingerprinting process. This includes staff, graduate students as well as student employees.
- ❖ Beginning with the interview process, we share our principles for keeping children safe from abuse and provide various scenarios for the candidates to problem-solve.
- ❖ An annual staff training and orientation regarding body safety practices and protocols are provided to all staff. The body safety policies are also introduced to anyone newly hired and any volunteers working in the classrooms.
- ❖ Clear communication between families and staff is one of our primary priorities. We work to ensure that this process begins with parents before they even enter our school, starting with the center tours during which we inform families that we are a “Body Safe School”. During the initial family meeting, we are diligent to discuss our policies and guidelines and to gather information about the family’s expectations and rules. We practice daily communication with families either face- to- face or through written daily reports.
- ❖ Body safety rules are taught to children and are as follows:
  - **No one is allowed to touch your private parts.**
  - **You should not touch someone else’s private parts**
  - **No one is allowed to take pictures of your private parts.**
  - **If somebody tries to touch your private parts, say “No!”**

## Center Guidelines

Each classroom is visually accessible through either the glass doors or the second floor observation windows overlooking all classrooms. Additionally, the following guidelines are in effect throughout the center to help keep all children safe.

- ❖ Staff in infant and toddler classrooms position themselves in the room so all children can be seen and heard at all times. Staff in preschool classrooms maintain sight of children most of the time; supervision for a short time by sound is permissible as long as teachers frequently check on children who are out of sight. For example, a preschooler who is using the toilet may sit alone for a short time while a teacher conducts frequent visual check-ins. Another example could be while playing in a tunnel in the motor room, a preschooler may sit alone inside the tunnel while the teacher frequently peeks inside.
- ❖ Classroom bathroom doors stay open in classrooms with children who are potty trained. Infant and toddler classrooms have split doors and the bottom half

- remains closed for safety; infants and toddlers are accompanied by a teacher in the bathroom at all times.
- ❖ Body safety rules are discussed openly with children throughout the entire school year using language appropriate to their developmental level.
  - ❖ Body safety practices are introduced to infants during diaper changes. Teachers explain what is happening and why.

***When changing a child's diaper, the teacher may say, "Sharon, your diaper is wet. I am going to lift you onto the changing table, take your pants off and take off your wet diaper. Now I'll put on your clean dry diaper."***

- ❖ While it is acceptable to show affection, the Fisher staff do not touch children without also telling them how, where and why we are going to touch them. Kisses are for family only.
- ❖ A "Buddy System" is utilized where children go to the bathroom, or other areas of the classroom and Center with another child or small group of children.
- ❖ Adults and children spend their days in groups with one another. There are rare occasions when adults must be alone with children. When a situation requires that an adult be alone with a child they must adhere to the following procedure:
  - Inform another adult in the classroom of the situation.
  - Identify the child who needs to leave with the adult and the reason.
  - Tell the adult exactly where the adult and child will be.
  - Tell the adult how long you expect to take care of the situation.
  - Assist the child to take care of the situation
  - Upon returning, check in with the same adult to ensure they are aware you have returned.

***If a teacher must change a child when the class is on the playground, he or she may say, "Ms. Judy, Sam has wet himself and his clothes must be changed. I'm taking him inside so he can change his clothes and we will be back in 10 minutes."***

- ❖ Parent education classes are offered to families to ensure all adults in our community understand our policies and procedures for a Body Safe School. Additionally, the book titled *Off Limits* co-authored by Sandy K. Wurtele, Ph.D., and Feather Berkower, M.S.W. is available to check out from the Center library upon request.
- ❖ All volunteers receive a staff handbook and the important "body safe" guidelines are emphasized. Teachers are also encouraged to reinforce these policies with students and volunteers in their classroom.

### **Sign-in and out**

On arrival and at departure parents, designated family members or guardians **must** sign children in or out of the Center using the ProCare attendance tracker. **This is a mandatory**



**practice. Please ensure that your child is signed in and signed out of the Center every day.** This process is also used to verify the head count in the classroom and within the Center throughout the day. It is important to follow this procedure, not only for state regulatory purposes, but also for your child's safety.

Parents, designated family members or guardians must drop off or pick up children directly in the classroom or on the playground with a classroom teacher's acknowledgment. This drop off and pick up procedure also allows for the classroom teacher to connect with the parent/guardian about the child's night or day. Exchanging helpful information at these times of day supports the child's success at school and home.

### **Late Pick-up and Fee Schedule**

Please be on time to pick up your child. The Fisher Center closes at 5:15p.m. We ask that families gather their child's belongings and leave the classroom generally five minutes before that time. A \$15 fee will be charged for the first 1 to 5 minutes after the center closes and an additional \$1.00 fee for each one-minute increment after that time. This applies to each child (i.e. per sibling). All applicable fees will be added to your monthly bill.

If late pick-up becomes a chronic concern, families will be contacted to discuss your child's attendance with the Director. We will ask for a back-up plan for your child's pick-up schedule. If a child is not picked up within 45 minutes and we are unable to locate an emergency contact on the child's emergency contact list, we will contact police or social services for assistance. The Director or administrator in charge does a nightly walk through to make sure all children have left the building.

### **Drop-in Day Requests & Procedures**

The Fisher Early Learning Center will attempt to meet requests for "drop-in" attendance whenever possible. Drop-in days are only available when your child's classroom is **under** classroom-licensed capacity, and the required child-to-teacher ratio is maintained. Classroom capacity and child-to-teacher ratios for each age group are posted in your child's classroom. The following policies and procedures have been established to ensure that drop-ins are successful:

- Drop-in days are available for enrolled children only.
- Drop-in days are restricted to the classroom for which your child is currently enrolled.
- Drop-in days are available only on the days when the classroom is under ratio/room capacity. They are **not guaranteed** regardless of when the request is submitted.
- Drop-in days are based on a first come, first served basis.

- Drop-in days should be arranged at least 24 hours prior to desired attendance; a Drop-In Request Form must be completed and turned in to the front desk.
- Drop-in days are considered an additional day, therefore an additional \$80 fee will be charged to your child's tuition.
- Fisher Center reserves the right to refuse a drop-in day due to staffing, planning times, conferences, or team meetings.
- Part-time students cannot "swap" a day of attendance to make up for any missed days.

Please remember enrollment is continually changing and available days may vary. You should request a drop-in day as soon as you are aware of the need, however, you may also request a drop-in day at the beginning of any day for that day by phone as well as in person, but it is not guaranteed. Availability will be identified at the time of request.

On the morning of the drop-in day, parents must call to confirm availability and ensure that the correct forms have been completed. Plan to use your arranged drop-in day, as you will be charged for that date whether it is used or not. Parents must sign your child in as you would on any normal day. Signing in with ProCare is required to ensure an accurate count of children within the Center for emergency and legal purposes. A drop-in charge of \$80 will be added to your monthly tuition bill.

### **Authorized/Emergency Pick-up**

Children will only be released to individuals listed on the child's emergency form, and who are authorized by parents/guardians for pick-up. We must have written authorization to release your child to anyone other than the parent or guardian. All authorized persons will be asked to show picture identification prior to the release of any child. Families who have specific legal custodial arrangements must provide on-file documentation stating custody guidelines. We expect that a family member or authorized person is accessible by phone at all times in case of an emergency.

### **Identifying Children's Location**

During the day children are supervised by their teachers and/or Center staff at all times. When the children leave the Center with their teachers for field trips or outings during program hours, their teachers are responsible for signing them in and out of the building at the front desk.

### **Supervision During Naptime**

**Infants & Toddlers** - When infants and toddlers are sleeping, they will be within sight and hearing of staff at all times; including when staff are engaged with other children who are awake. A staff member will visibly check on the sleeping infants and toddlers frequently.

**Toddlers and Preschoolers** - If a child does not sleep during the designated naptime, he/she may rest quietly or will be offered a quiet activity. Teachers, associate teachers, or teacher aides are aware of and positioned so they can hear and see any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, especially when they are actively engaged with children who are awake.

### **Adult-to-Child Ratios/Attendance**

Colorado state licensure ratios of children to adults will be adhered to at all times. Ratios are posted in each classroom. Teachers are responsible for knowing where children are at all times during the Center's hours of operation. A head count system, along with written attendance is used in the classroom throughout the day. The teachers review head counts upon entering and leaving the classroom as a group. The written attendance is taken with the class to the playgrounds and on any outdoor excursions.

### **Absences**

If your child is sick or will be absent, please call the classroom or front desk directly to inform the teaching team. Each classroom has an independent answering system to record messages throughout the day.

### **Visitor Policy**

Visitors must sign in and out at the front desk. Parents are always welcome in their child's classroom, at special events or to be involved in important experiences for your child and other children. If you would like to have an extended visit with your child inside the classroom, it is advised that parents make prior arrangements with classroom teachers as some age groups have difficulty with separation during these visits.

### **Observations**

Fisher is a training arena for the University of Denver, thus, students and community partners in training will often conduct observations at our site. We welcome the richness that visiting educators bring to the Center. These visitors are always under the supervision of staff and administration. Generally children are not affected by visitors and welcome them into their classroom. We use our discretion when inviting observers into the rooms and will ask that they use the windows upstairs primarily for the infant rooms, as these classrooms are smaller in size and the disruption can be greater with this age group.

Families are welcome to use observation windows that are available above each classroom. Extended observations or observations of other classrooms may be arranged with your child's teaching team.

## **Photographs and Videotape**

Photographs and videotapes are a strong component of the programmatic approach towards training and professional development. Families will be asked to sign a permission form for release of images. These photos and videotapes will be used for instructional purposes only. When a specific situation (newspaper, brochure, or center pamphlet) requesting these images or a research study arises, families will be contacted and additional permission will be sought ahead of time. The Fisher Early Learning Center will follow the University of Denver's and established state guidelines for any and all research to be conducted within the Center.

## **Confidentiality**

Personal information about your child and family is kept in your child's personal folder in a locked file cabinet. Access to this information is limited to the child's parents/legal guardians, regulatory authorities, and authorized Fisher employees at the discretion of the administrative staff.

## **Health**

The Health and Safety Policies and Procedures are included in this handbook. These policies must be read and the acknowledgment signed by a parent or guardian before a child begins the school year. All precautions will be taken to ensure the health and safety of children within the Center. Please use the appropriate forms you will receive from us to indicate any specific health concerns you may have about your child. Fisher contracts with a registered nursing service that has someone available by email or phone at all times to Fisher staff.

In accordance with national childcare standards, walk off mats are provided by each regularly used exit to the outdoors. Wiping or taking off shoes upon entering the building is strongly encouraged. In addition, our infant classrooms (Bearsie Bears and Roly Polys) maintain a "shoe free zone" policy in their classrooms.

Fisher also discourages idling vehicles in our parking lot and pick up/drop off circle. Idling is permissible to maintain interior or engine temperatures in extreme cold or heat. Otherwise, please observe the signage located around the parking lot.

## **Hand Washing**

Frequent hand washing with soap and water is the best prevention of the spread of disease and bacteria. Children and adults will wash hands before preparing or eating food, before and after play, wiping their nose, and toileting. While changing diapers, caregivers wear disposable gloves (changed and discarded for each child) and the table is sanitized after each changing. Additionally, parents of infants and toddlers are required to wash their child's hands upon arrival in the classroom. Parents and visitors are asked to wash their hands prior to

entering any classroom. The use of alcohol-based hand rubs in lieu of hand washing is not recommended for childcare settings. If these products are used as a temporary measure, a sufficient amount must be used to keep the hands wet for 15 seconds. Since the alcohol-based hand rubs are toxic and flammable, they must be stored and used according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

### Medication Administration

Whenever possible, we advise parents to request medication from their physician that can be given at home before and after school attendance. However, some medications require specific dosage over a number of days after the child has improved or for specific health concerns. Parents are welcome to come to the Fisher Early Learning Center to administer medication to their children. Parents/Guardians may also request that the Center’s staff administer medication. If a physician has ordered a specific medical management procedure for a child at Fisher, including, but not limited to medication or oxygen administration, tube feedings, asthma care, etc., Fisher will collaborate with the Nurse Consultant to train those working closest with the child on the necessary procedure(s). One adult trained in the procedure(s) will be on-site whenever the child is present.

- No medications will be administered at the Center without the written, signed and dated instructions from a health care professional. Forms are available at the front desk, and can be faxed to (303) 871-7805.
- All medication (both over the counter and prescription) must be in its original container, labeled with the child’s name, name of the drug, directions for administration, date and physician’s name.

Types of Forms you need:	Purpose of the form and instruction:
<b><i>Medication Administration Parent Permission</i></b>	Must be completed by a licensed health care provider (M.D., P.A., D.O., and N.P). The form must include name of medication, dosage, time of day that the medication should be administered, the reason for the medication such as cough or allergy, length of time medication should be administered and any special concerns. (i.e. Tylenol, Neosporin, prescription med, etc.)
<b><i>Colorado Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan and Medication Orders</i></b>	Must be completed by a licensed health care provider. You need this form, <i>instead of</i> Medication Administration Parent Permission form if the medication is included in the child’s emergency care plan (i.e. EPI pen and Benadryl, etc.)

<i>Colorado Asthma Care Plan and Medication Order for School and Child Care Settings</i>	Must be completed by a licensed health care provider. This form is required if your child has Asthma and needs medication to treat Asthma at school. (i.e. Albuterol)
<i>Seizure Action Plan</i>	Must be completed by a licensed health care provider. This form is required if your child has Seizures and has emergency seizure medication at school.

- No medicine, vitamins, or special diet can be administered without a properly signed form. There will be NO exceptions.
- State health guidelines prohibit distribution of homeopathic medications by staff or nurse practitioners.
- Medicine is dispensed and recorded by persons trained in First Aid and Medication Administration.
- Staff members are trained annually and authorized to administer medications.
- Over the counter medications must be provided by the parent for each child.
- Siblings cannot share the same bottle of over the counter medications.
- Over the counter remedies can be administered for up to three consecutive school days unless specifically directed by a licensed health care provider.

Medication will be stored in areas inaccessible to children and according to pharmacy instructions. Each child’s medication will be bagged individually with his/her name on the bag, and instructions for administration placed in the bag. When medications expire or are no longer needed, they will be returned to parents/guardians. Emergency medication, such as Benedryl and EpiPens, will be stored in the classroom and will accompany your child on all outings.

### **Emergency Response Procedures**

All staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR annually. First Aid kits and emergency backpacks with exit plans are located in every room of the Center. Fire/evacuation, tornado/shelter in place and active shooter/lockdown drills are practiced on quarterly basis (i.e. one per month on a 3-month cycle) at the Center. When we practice drills, we teach children to listen to directions from teachers and DU’s Campus Safety about what to do in an emergency. When evacuating the building, teachers take **emergency backpacks**, which include a first aid kit, prescribed medications (e.g. EpiPens), emergency contact information for all children in the class and a record of the day’s attendance.

If there is an actual emergency requiring evacuation, we will evacuate to the Morgridge College of Education in Ruffatto Hall (1999 E Evans Avenue, directly across High Street) as our designated safe place to assemble. We continuously account for each child and staff member, and provide comfort and aid as needed. All non-mobile toddlers and infants will be evacuated

in emergency evacuation cribs. In addition, children with special needs are accounted for by a teacher to ensure that they are able to move safely and efficiently with the group. Accommodations made for children with special needs will vary based on age and their needs. These accommodations will be reviewed with the child's family and each staff member in the classroom. The effectiveness of the accommodations will also be assessed after each evacuation drill to ensure the child can be safely evacuated with the group. Adjustments will be made as necessary to their evacuation plan.

Center staff members will stay with all children until a parent or authorized person can pick them up at our safe assembly location at the Morgridge College of Education. An email will be sent to all families to inform them of the evacuation and where they can pick up their child(ren). In the event that a family cannot be reached via email, a phone call will be made.

### **Accident or Unusual Incident Reporting**

Should something unusual or an accident happen while your child is at the Center, a staff member will notify you. All head injuries are reported to families immediately and recorded by Center administration. If an incident is major or severe, staff will contact 911 for emergency medical assistance and parents will be notified immediately. If it is a minor incident, parents will be notified with an incident/accident report form via email. Teaching teams are required to complete an incident/accident form for all incidents.

You will be required to complete a form for emergency notification. ***Please remember, it is critical to keep this information updated. Fisher expects that a family member or family contact is available by phone at all times.*** We will utilize the emergency contact list to the best of our ability. If no family member is available at the time of an emergency involving your child, a judgment will be made by administrative staff about the course of action to follow considering what is in the best interest of the child.

### **Transportation**

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting children to and from the Center. Fisher does not have a vehicle for transporting children; we utilize parent volunteers to transport children when a field trip is planned. When a special outing is planned, parents/guardians will fill out appropriate permission forms for a child to ride in a parent volunteer's car. Copies of a valid driver license and current car insurance are needed for any volunteer driver. All transported children must have a car seat or booster to participate in a school field trip. Assisting parents are expected to supervise their small group, conduct regular head counts, and assist the teaching teams in providing a safe and enjoyable trip.

First Aid kits are always taken on all trips away from the Center. Required ratios of children to adults are maintained on these excursions. Children are provided with an identification tag that states the name and number of the Center. All children must be assigned to staff members, parents, and/or guardians in designated groupings.

### **Walking Excursions**

We have multiple resources for learning experiences on campus. You will be asked to sign permission forms that allow staff members to take children on walks around the University campus. State ratios of children to teachers will be maintained on these outings. The Fisher administrative team is notified and teachers record pertinent information regarding all walking excursions before leaving the Center. Cell phones accompany each walking trip.

### **Television and Video Viewing**

As a general rule and in accordance with best practices, Fisher does not utilize television or videos as part of our curriculum and daily planning in infant, toddler and preschool classrooms. However, there may be some special learning occasions when viewing could enrich some topics of interest. Examples include: real-life animal videos, walking on the moon, time-lapse photography, or actual videos of children in the classroom. We will inform you by note or newsletter if permission needs to be given for viewing. Infants and toddlers under the age of two years do not watch programmed television while at Fisher. The C4L curriculum for PreK classrooms uses computers to help children learn at their own pace; offer opportunities to explore; and provide helpful, neutral feedback while children earn new material.

### **Children's Belongings**

The Fisher Center has individual cubbies where children can store their personal belongings. Please make sure that **ALL** clothing and personal possessions are labeled with your child's name. Children need to bring in seasonal outerwear and change of clothes, a fitted crib sheet, and blanket for rest time. Your child may also bring a small special object or quiet toy for rest time if they would like. ***Remember that all items that are brought to school must fit in their small cubby.*** Limiting the size and quantity of your child's belongings at school helps us to meet Health Department regulations about separating children's belongings and maintaining proper placement of these items in a safe and health-conscious manner. Please do not send money or valuables with your child to school.

### **Classroom Pets/Visiting Animals**

Classroom pets and animals visiting the classroom must appear to be in good health. Additionally, pets or visiting animals must have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so



protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. The teaching staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to the animals. The Fisher staff will ensure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. *Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk for salmonella infection.*

### **Family Partnerships**

Positive and frequent communication between families, teaching teams, and administration is important. We encourage families to visit the classroom and spend time getting to know your teaching team. Planning as a team (family and teaching team) helps us to coordinate an effective plan for assisting your child to grow, learn, and play. We welcome any suggestions or ideas you might have.

### **Classroom Communication**

Information will travel back and forth from Center to home via your child's informational folder placed in their cubby or mailbox, or via email. Parent boards are located in every room to keep families informed about daily classroom events. The Infant, Toddler and Preschool teams also have their own bulletin boards in the hallway that share information about the teams and their work. In addition to weekly classroom newsletters, we will leave messages on the ProCare check-in system for families regarding Center-wide news.

### **Family Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences (generally 30 minutes) will be scheduled to meet the needs of each child and family at least once a year, and more frequently as deemed necessary. You will also receive a mid-year progress report. New Family meetings are also scheduled as children enter a new classroom.

### **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**

Parent representatives are asked to serve on PAC to facilitate communication between Fisher's parents, teachers and administrative staff. PAC gives parents a voice, ensuring that their concerns, comments or requests are heard and addressed. Members of PAC also help other parents become involved in the Fisher community by communicating upcoming Fisher needs and/or events. It may gather information, brainstorm solutions to problems, and make recommendations as appropriate. It facilitates the planning of major fundraisers for the school and promotes school spirit. It is a group that supports Fisher's mission of serving families and developing a model early childhood curriculum. Parents interested in serving as a PAC representative can inquire with the Director for identified position vacancies.

## **Room Parents**

Room Parents are also an essential part of our program. Each classroom would like at least one Room Parent to assist in the organization of classroom events for families, orienting new parents, providing a link between home and school, as well as various other tasks. These parents are an essential link in building strong family partnerships and are valuable resources. If you are interested in volunteering to be a Room Parent for a school year, please speak with your teaching team.

## **Volunteer Policy**

Volunteers are a welcome addition to our program. Children benefit and enjoy adults investing time and energy telling stories, reading books, painting or singing with them. Your involvement and participation at the classroom, program or event level is important in building strong partnerships and establishing effective and mutual lines of communication. Work with your classroom teaching team to offer your unique talents and assistance by volunteering.

This volunteer time can be given in many ways such as:

- at home cutting shapes for a class project
- assisting with playground activities and maintenance
- reading with the children; recording books on tape
- helping with the computer
- going to the library to pick out a related storybook or tape
- hanging up artwork, sewing a costume
- participating as a Room Parent
- planning a classroom event or assisting on a field trip
- leading a small group of children in a cooking or art activity
- working with the Parent Advisory Council on fundraising activities

This is only a small selection of the work and “play” available at the Center. Parents and volunteers are a valuable resource to our program! The Fisher staff ensures that all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language are included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities. These opportunities consider ways to integrate each family's interests and skills and the needs of program staff. However, please remember that all non-parent volunteers must be screened and trained using the same rigorous process used to hire, recruit, and train staff members.

## **Birthdays, Holidays & Family Traditions**

We recognize that families celebrate holidays and birthdays in many ways and have a variety of traditions within their homes.

Turning 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 is certainly worth celebrating...and we love celebrating your children's birthdays during these special years at Fisher! As a general policy, we ask that goodie bags *not* be given out at school. Some great ways to celebrate include doing an activity with the class, reading to the kids and/or donating a book to the classroom. Edible birthday treats are also welcome! Please talk with your child's teacher to identify what types of treats are suitable for the age group and all the children in the class.

Individual classrooms and teaching teams are responsible for designing curriculum and experiences around holidays and traditions that reflect their classroom culture, inclusive of children, families, and teachers. Annually, teaching teams will define their professional intent regarding this curriculum topic. Designing curriculum around holidays and traditions will consider the children's interests, developmental appropriateness, and the values and cultures of the families and teachers. At the beginning of the school year, teaching teams will inform their families of this intent and what to anticipate throughout the year.

Celebrations, and curriculum embracing holidays and traditions will exemplify Fisher's play-based, emergent curriculum and reflect the age groups in each class.

### **Laundry Policy**

All families are asked to provide a crib sheet (for mats and cots) and small blanket for your child. Linens must be taken home for laundering weekly. The infant department is not responsible for laundering mattress sheets or blankets if soiled or wet during the day. Parents/Guardians are responsible for removing wet and/or soiled clothing and blankets as needed daily. We will put soiled items in a marked plastic bag for home laundering when you pick up your child.

### **Food Safety Policy (Meals, Snacks and Liquids/Beverages)**

Fisher serves breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack to all classrooms. The food is prepared and provided by Sodexo catering services with the University of Denver. We follow federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutritional and size portion guidelines appropriate for your child's age. (Infants under one year gradually participate in our whole food program with parent permission.) The following steps are taken when providing food/drinks to ensure food safety and support children's health:

- The staff does not offer children younger than four years the following foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.
- Food is cut into pieces no larger than 1/4-inch square for infants and 1/2-inch square for toddlers/twos, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability.

- Sweetened beverages are avoided. If juice (only 100% fruit juice is recommended) is served, the amount is limited to no more than four ounces per child daily.
- Children under 2 years of age will be given whole cow's milk once off formula or breast milk. One percent cow's milk is served to all children over two years of age. After the age of two, if a child is required to have whole milk, a note from their physician is required.
- All fruits and vegetables are washed prior to eating (usually addressed by Sodexo).
- Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110°F are kept out of children's reach.
- Staff must discard any and all foods with expired dates.
- Food/drinks are never to be microwaved using plastic or polystyrene (Styrofoam) containers, plates, bags or wraps.

Meals will be served family style with staff members overseeing a comfortable community-building process. Children will not be forced or coerced to eat. Rather, teachers will model "trying" everything. Food will not be used as a reward or punishment. If cultural or developmental concerns vary from the above feeding pattern, please discuss your child's feeding/eating or dietary needs with the teaching team.

If your child has an allergy to foods, we will follow the information provided on a health form signed by a physician. Please note that Fisher is an ALLERGY AWARE Center. Other unique food allergies are discretely posted within your child's classroom. Due to individual health risks, families must consider classroom dietary restrictions when bringing treats or food into the building. Any treat for an entire class must be store-bought and have ingredients clearly labeled on the package.

For infants and any child with special feeding needs (e.g. food intolerance/allergies, health concerns, specialized feeding equipment), staff will document the type and quantity of food the child eats on a daily basis for each meal, and convey the information to the child's family.

The teachers will take steps to ensure the safety of food brought from home. The staff will work with families to ensure that foods brought from home meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) food guidelines. All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child's name and the date. The staff makes sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served and that all foods are discarded if they have expired dates. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

### **Infant Specific Dietary Policy**

Defined commercial infant formula (only milk-based) will be provided for infants up to one year of age. If your child requires a different type of formula for medical reasons, we need a note from their physician. Families may choose to provide their own formula. Families of infants (6 weeks to 12 months) are asked to bring in other appropriate nutritional treats for the day as preferred by your infant's appetite or snacking style. These will be stored in an individually labeled basket in the classroom refrigerator.

Infants are individually fed and held by caregivers. They are gradually encouraged to sit and hold their own bottles with milk or water in later months. If a mother should wish to breastfeed her child, she is welcome to use a private area or stay within the classroom to nurse. Commercially prepared formula is mixed according to instructions and placed in a bottle you have provided with your child's name. All pre-mixed bottles of formula or breast milk must be appropriately labeled with the child's full name, dated (with date expressed for breast milk) and refrigerated. Any unfinished and unrefrigerated formula or breast milk will be discarded after two hours. Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. When staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in water at no more than 120°F for no more than five minutes.

### **Rest or Quiet Time**

We provide a quiet rest time or naptime for all children during the day. Each classroom's daily schedule is posted on its parent board. Infants are put to sleep on an individual mattress and on their back until they turn one year of age. Toddlers and preschoolers sleep on cots. Infant and toddlers/twos teachers, assistant teachers, or teacher aides are aware of, and positioned so they can hear and see any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, especially when they are actively engaged with children who are awake. Teaching teams will encourage sleep/resting using calming and quieting techniques (soft music, dimming lights, and back rubs). Many children have a special routine for going to sleep and a favorite blanket or toy sent from home may help them to rest and relax at school.

Children who do not need a nap or are not able to fall asleep will still need a period of quiet restfulness. This is an important aspect of learning to self-soothe, calm, and self-regulate. If children do not fall asleep, after a maximum of 30 minutes, we will provide them with quiet toys or activities approximately after a one-hour period of quiet time.

### **Diapering and Toilet Training**

The staff is trained in proper diapering techniques. Universal precautions that guard against disease require a change of disposable gloves, washing of children's and caregiver's hands, and sanitation of the area between the changing of each child. Children will not be left

unattended on the changing table. Fisher staff are happy to assist families in toilet training when children reach the Colorado Department of Health Services minimal age of 18 months or older. (There are not toddler toilets in Roly Poly or Bearsie Bear classrooms, and toilet training will not occur in these classrooms.) When you are toilet training your child, please let the teaching team know the procedures you are using and what works best for your family. We will try to use the same techniques you use so that we can work towards the common goal of potty training together.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Policy**

It is important that parents/guardians know that the teaching teams and staff at the Fisher Early Learning Center have a legal responsibility to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect. These reports are made to the Denver Department of Human Services (720-944-3000). Child abuse does not include the normal bumps, bruises and skinned knees all children experience growing up, but instead focuses on physical abuse, sexual abuse and/or neglect which may threaten the health and welfare of a child. We encourage parents to become familiar with Child Abuse and Neglect Laws and to report suspected incidents of abuse or neglect.

Any accusation of abuse or neglect of a student by an employee is also reported to Human Resources at the University to be addressed according to the University's policies and procedures. This procedure typically involves placing an individual on immediate administrative leave with pay during the investigation.

### **Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Center**

At the Fisher Early Learning Center, we have an open door policy. If you have concerns regarding any aspect of the Center, we hope that you would contact us directly. Should a parent or family member experience difficulties or differences with classroom teaching staff, they are encouraged to reach out to the Director directly via phone, email or in person. Should further discussion with the Director not resolve the conflict or differences, the University Ombuds or the Dean of the Morgridge College of Education will be accessible to the parent or family member.

If you feel that the practices or policies of the Center are endangering the health, safety or welfare of the children at the Center, you may contact:

The Colorado Department of Human Services  
Division of Childcare, 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203  
(303) 866-5948

## FISHER INCLUSION TEAM (FIT)

### What is Inclusion?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) states that children with disabilities should be educated with typically developing peers to the greatest extent possible and include the routines and activities in which (young) children participate, also called the Least Restrictive Environment.

Frazeur Cross, et. al. (2004) found that in order to be successfully included the child must make progress on their individualized outcomes and goals, make gains in their personal development and acquisition of the knowledge and skills anticipated for all children, and parents must be pleased with these gains and be satisfied that their child appears comfortable and happy in the group setting. Staff and peers in the program should welcome all students to the program and accept students who have disabilities as full members of the group. Parent and provider/caregiver relationships have been identified as critical to the success of inclusive experiences.

Frazeur Cross, A., Traub, E., Hutter-Pishgahi, L., and Shelton, G. (2004). Elements of successful inclusion for children with significant disabilities. *Topics in early childhood special education*. 24:169.

### What is FIT?

The Fisher Inclusion Team is a transdisciplinary team that is comprised of a Team Coordinator, Early Interventionist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist and Social Worker. In addition, graduate students and faculty members from the Morgridge College of Education also serve on the team. While these individuals comprise the “Fisher Inclusion Team,” we consider each child’s parents, teachers, and private service providers to be vital members of each child’s team. FIT provides consultation, modeling, and support for children, families, and teachers as part of Fisher’s mission to serve children of all needs and abilities. The transdisciplinary approach allows the different team members to discuss next steps collaboratively, ensuring that all areas of development are considered prior to recommending services. Additionally, with this approach, the team is able to work together to create classroom strategies and goals with a common focus.

***FIT began operation at Fisher in 2005 and we are continually refining our practices in order to best meet the needs of the children, their families, and their teachers.***

### To Contact FIT:

Fisher Inclusion Team 303-871-2772 or [fisherinclusionteam@du.edu](mailto:fisherinclusionteam@du.edu)

### The FIT Inclusion Philosophy

The Fisher Inclusion Team (FIT) ensures that children of all abilities are able to play and learn and engage in the experiences available to them at the Fisher Early Learning Center (FELC). FIT primarily provides teacher support, which allows all children to access learning opportunities, increase engagement, cultivate social relationships, and create independence

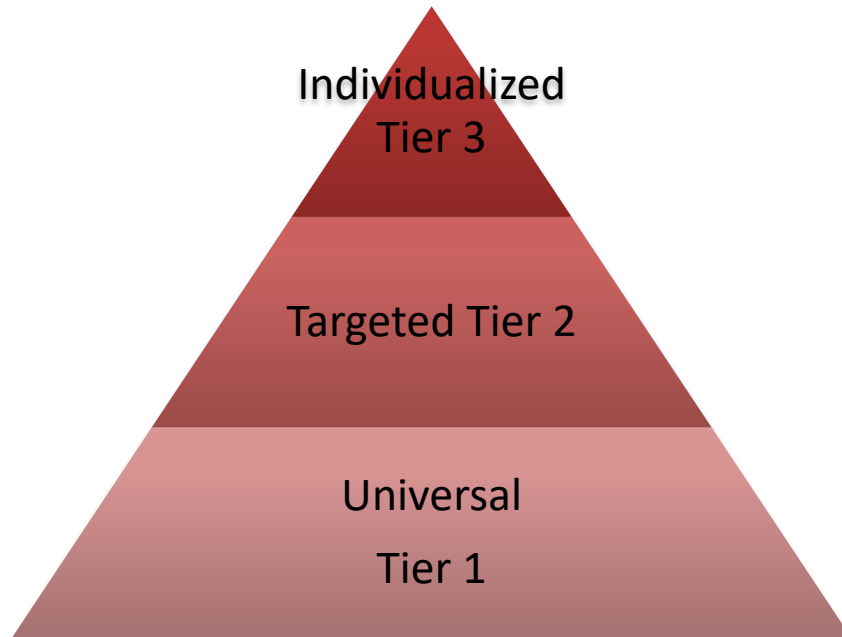
within the routines of each classroom. Children are provided services to best support their overall development (including but not limited to: cognitive, language, social emotional, physical development, self-help skills, and health).

FIT members adhere to guidelines established by their specific professional organizations, The Division for Early Childhood (DEC), and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct, as well as the legal and ethical practices set forth by the Colorado Mental Health Practices Act.

**FIT Modified Application of Response to Intervention (RTI) Model**

FIT will provide services to children at Fisher using a modified RTI approach. They will provide services at the Universal level, which involves creating a classroom environment that meets the needs of children with special needs as well as their peers. They will also provide targeted approaches to groups of children within the classroom setting, which will again allow the children to function optimally within the classroom setting. FIT will not provide tier 3 interventions, so if a child requires one-on-one individualized intervention this will remain the responsibility of the parents via outside providers. The visual below illustrates the model. FIT will provide services at the Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels (the mauve levels).

(Explanation of RTI from Riley, 2011)





## Referral Process

Referrals can be made to FIT in a number of ways:

1. Parent Request: Parents may request an observation by asking their teachers, administration, or FIT. After a FIT observation, recommendations will be given to families and teachers as the therapist outlines next steps.
2. Teacher Request: Teachers may request FIT to observe a child. Teachers will discuss this with parents prior to any FIT involvement and will require signed permission before any formal observation is done.
3. FIT Request: As team members in each classroom on a regular basis, the team may request a more specific observation for a child. In this case the teacher or someone from FIT will contact parents prior to any formal observation.
4. Screening: A child may be identified through classroom screening. All children are given a developmental screening evaluation within three months of program entry.
5. Evaluations: Based on the screening and referral process some children may be referred for a more in-depth evaluation either through FIT or outside professionals within your child's school district.

(Please also refer to the FIT Referral Process Diagram at the end of this section.)



# Health & Safety Policies & Procedures

## Health/Illness Policies and Procedures

### Introduction:

The Fisher Early Learning Center is dedicated to the health and well-being of the children, families and staff that spend time at the center. Our goal is to keep the environment clean and safe so that infection and illness can be kept to a minimum. Unfortunately, illness is very common in young children because they have emerging immune systems that need exposure to illness in order to make them able to fight infection later in life. Studies have shown that children who attend childcare in their early years have a lower rate of absenteeism than those who do not attend a group care setting when they move on to elementary school. Increased rates of illness and infections are prevalent in childcare/ preschool environments because the children are in close, daily contact with other children and staff members. Illness at FELC is inevitable, especially in the fall and winter months, when the incidence of illness is increased in the community.

### Prevention Strategies:

The Fisher Early Learning Center administrative and teaching teams have established the following guidelines to help prevent the incidence and spread of illness and infection at the center.

1. All staff have been trained in appropriate hand washing technique. Washing hands before and after diaper changes, food preparation, upon entering the classroom, and any time the hands are soiled.
2. All staff are trained in **Standard Precautions**, which includes the use of gloves and protective equipment to avoid contact with potentially harmful exposure to body fluids (blood, stool, urine, respiratory secretions, breast milk, etc.)
3. The generous use of disinfectant solution, as required by the health department, on all potentially contaminated surfaces (diaper changing tables, table top surfaces, food preparation areas, toilets, cots, cribs, toys, etc.)
4. The appropriate handling, preparation and serving of food as directed by the food supplier and state regulations.

***Please see the guidelines for handling breast milk on pp 42-43.***

5. Appropriate maintenance of toys and other playthings.
  - a. Daily cleaning of toys including soaking in a disinfectant solution for 20 minutes, rinsing and air drying overnight.
  - b. Laundering linens and washable items on a no less than weekly basis. Changing of soiled linens in a timely fashion.
  - c. Use of disinfectant spray on toys or equipment that cannot be laundered on a daily basis.
6. Appropriate use and storage of potentially harmful substances.
  - a. Medications must be provided by the parent, in the original container, labeled with the child's name, and stored in the nurse consultant's office in a locked cabinet.
  - b. All poisonous substances are kept out of the reach of children and/or in a locked cabinet. The Rocky Mountain Poison Center phone number (800-222-1222) is listed in each classroom.
  - c. When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET are used, and these are applied only on children

older than two months. Staff apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental permission.

7. The Fisher Early Learning Center is an ALLERGY AWARE building. Although we cannot monitor every item that comes through our doors, we ask for everyone's cooperation in allowing NO PEANUTS or TREE NUTS to enter our building.
8. Latex balloons are strictly prohibited in any form. Latex causes a significant allergy. Mylar balloons are acceptable in the classroom.
9. Health and Immunization Requirements:

The Fisher Center maintains updated health information on every child in the center. Colorado state childcare regulations require that a health care form and immunization record, signed by a licensed doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant, must be submitted to the center **at time of admission**. Child health records should include names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child.

***Updated health care and immunization forms must be submitted using the following guidelines:***

- a. **Infants 0-12 months: at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, and 12 months.**
- b. **Toddlers/ Preschoolers: at 15 months, 18 months and 2 years of age, then annually thereafter.**
- c. **According to the pediatrician's action plan. The doctor must document this plan for our files.**

***Failure to provide updated health and immunization information can result in suspension from the Fisher Early Learning Center until the forms are returned. Parents are notified when updated forms are needed.***

10. Children with special health care needs will be identified as early as possible and each child will have an Individualized Health Care Plan created outlining any special precautions, medications, or procedures to be followed. Individualized Health Care Plans must be updated annually or as changes occur.
11. Immunization records are required for each child and staff member. The nurse consultant is responsible to make sure that all children and staff are fully immunized and their records are up to date.

***Any child not appropriately immunized per Colorado law faces exclusion from the Fisher Early Learning Center in the event that there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease (chicken pox, pertussis, wild polio, measles, mumps, and rubella) in the community.***

12. Appropriate and thoughtful exclusion of children who are sick.

Each child will be screened for signs of illness when they arrive at the Center each day. This screening will consist of verbal communication between the parent and classroom teacher and a brief observation of the child for obvious signs of illness (e.g. green or yellow eye discharge).

### **Exclusion Criteria:**

Generally speaking, most minor illnesses **DO NOT** constitute a reason for excluding a child from a childcare setting. Please refer to the following policy in determining when exclusion is necessary for your child.

## **When to Keep Your Child at Home**

Young children frequently become mildly ill. Infants, toddlers and preschoolers experience a yearly average of six respiratory infections (colds) and can develop one or two gastrointestinal infections (vomiting and /or diarrhea) each year. Deciding whether to keep your child at home or when to send a child home from school can be difficult. It is important for parents and caregivers to discuss what observations have been made and agree on a plan of action.

Parents should contact the childcare program or school when their child is sick and describe the illness and symptoms. If your health care provider makes a specific diagnosis, (such as strep throat or conjunctivitis) let your child's teacher know so other families can be alerted.

### **There are three reasons to keep sick children at home:**

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in usual activities, (such as; extreme signs of tiredness, unexplained irritability or persistent crying).
2. The child requires more care than teachers and staff can provide, without affecting the health and safety of the other children.
3. The symptom or illness is on the list below, and staying home is required.



### **How Sick is Too Sick?**

#### **When Children and Staff Should Stay Home from School or Child Care**

#### **There are three main reasons to keep sick children and adults at home:**

1. *The child or staff member does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, a child is overly tired, fussy or will not stop crying.*
2. A child needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for the other children.
3. The symptom or illness is on this list, and staying home is required.

**Remember, the best ways to stop the spread of infection is through good hand washing and staying home when sick.**

**Please use [this link](#) to access the most recent How Sick is Too Sick? document.**

**Documentation:**

There will be careful documentation of observations made by the teachers, administrative staff, or nurse consultant related to the presence of illness (e.g. rash, fever, eye drainage, cough, vomiting, and diarrhea).

**Accidents and Incidents**

An Accident/Incident Report will be completed whenever an observation of signs of illness is made and parents will be notified of the issue and planned disposition. The center administrators or nurse consultant must sign the form. A copy of the form should be:

1. emailed to the parent.
2. placed in the child's file at the center.

**Staff Responsibilities:**

1. Follow the health and safety guidelines as outlined.
2. Practice careful hand washing practices.
3. Provide clear communication with parents.
4. Provide rapid identification of children with potentially infectious illness, serious illness, or a symptom or illness that is a criterion for exclusion as outlined above.
5. Notify parents in a timely fashion. The parent should be notified within 30 minutes of identifying a potential reason for exclusion.
6. Arrange for isolation of the child until the child is picked up.
7. Complete appropriate documentation.
8. Maintain confidentiality.

**Parent Responsibilities:**

1. Submit health care forms and immunization records following the aforementioned schedule.
2. Avoid bringing any peanuts, nuts or latex in any form to FELC.
3. Keep the child home when there are signs of illness that dictate the child should be excluded from childcare.
4. Provide clear communication with the staff.
5. Make every attempt to respond rapidly when called to pick up an ill child from FELC. A parent or designated other should pick the child up within 1.5 hours of notification.
6. Follow the guidelines pertaining to when a child can return to childcare after an illness or infection.

The Fisher Early Learning Center strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for the children and faculty. These policies and procedures should help us all to meet this goal. The faculty and administrative staff appreciate your cooperation and hope that all of the children at FELC can enjoy a happy and safe environment.

### **Diapering:**

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

1. Staff 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 documents the medical reason).
2. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit.
3. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
4. Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces: at least every 2 hours when children are awake and when children awaken from nap.
5. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
6. Staff changes children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
7. Each changing area is separated by a partial wall or is located at least three feet from other areas that children use and is used exclusively for one designated group of children.
8. At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when the child is being changed on an elevated surface.

### **Napping/Rest/Quiet Time:**

To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in infants (younger than 12 months):

1. Infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission.
2. Soft items, e.g. pillows, blanket, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft items are not allowed, per child care licensing regulations, due to suffocation hazard. Approved sleep sacks may be used for warmth.
3. Swaddling of infants is permitted with a health care plan completed and signed by the child's physician.
4. All children who arrive to school asleep or fall asleep in equipment not specifically designed for infant sleep (e.g. car seats, strollers, swings), will be placed to sleep on their mat or cot immediately.

After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.

### **Safe Storage and Handling of Breast Milk:**

The following guidelines are intended to promote the safe storage and handling of breast milk at the Fisher Early Learning Center:

1. Breast milk is a body fluid and Universal Precaution guidelines should be implemented during handling.
2. Breast milk that is brought to the Fisher Early Learning Center should be labeled with the following information:
  - a. Child's full name
  - b. Date the milk was expressed and put into storage
  - c. The amount in the container
3. It is important to keep frozen breast milk frozen until ready to be used.
  - a. Partially thawed breast milk (thawed by  $\frac{1}{2}$  only) can be refrozen or stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.
4. Milk may be stored:
  - a. In the refrigerator (1-5 ° C or 34-40°F).
    - i. Thawed milk may be refrigerated for 24 hours maximum.
    - ii. Freshly pumped breast milk may be refrigerated up to 48 hours.
  - b. In a home freezer for 3 to 6 months at -4°C or 20-28°F.
  - c. In a deep freeze for up to 6-12 months at -20°C or 0°F.
5. Breast milk should be thawed or warmed in warm water.
  - a. Avoid thawing in a microwave oven because the germ fighting properties of breast milk can be destroyed and you may create "hot spots" in the milk that could cause injury to the baby.
6. Gently swirl warmed breast milk to mix the fat before a feeding.
7. Thawed breast milk must be used within 2 hours if left at room temperature.
  - a. Freshly pumped breast milk can remain at room temperature for up to 4 hours.
  - b. After two hours, unfinished and unrefrigerated breast milk will be discarded.
8. Any breast milk left after a feeding must be discarded because of contamination caused by the baby sucking on the nipple.

Source: Lactation Support Services at The Children's Hospital in Denver, Colorado. 2/02



## Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for Primary and Secondary Education Programs

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the University of Denver receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school director a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The director or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write the school director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); or a person serving on the board of trustees. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Under FERPA, the school may disclose directory information without the written consent of the parent or eligible student. The University of Denver considers directory information for Ricks Center and Fisher Center students which may be released as name; date and place of birth; gender; grade level; participation in officially recognized activities; degrees and awards received; dates of attendance and photographs. The

parent or eligible student has the right to object to such disclosure annually, in writing to the director of the school.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

### **Additional Disclosures Permitted by FERPA**

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for

- the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
  - To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
  - To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
  - To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
  - Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

#### **Additional Information**

Questions about FERPA may be directed to the director of the school.

#### **Notification of Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer to from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The University of Denver has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The University of Denver will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The University will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific noted activities or surveys and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The University will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the University has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

**Family Handbook & Health and Safety Policies and Procedures Agreement**

I have read and understand the 2023-2024 Fisher Early Learning Center Family Handbook and Policies. I understand that if I have any questions or concerns regarding the policies and practices at the Fisher Early Learning Center that I am welcome to bring my concerns to the Center's Director or Associate Director.

I have read and understand that our family will follow the 2023-2024 Health and Safety policies and procedures for The Fisher Early Learning Center at the University of Denver. I know that if I have any questions, I am to contact the Director, Associate Director or the Nurse Practitioner to answer my questions.

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Child(ren)'s Name – Printed

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Classroom(s)

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Parent/Guardian – Name

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Parent/Guardian – Signature

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Date