

Children's Learning Center



Parent Handbook



2011-2012

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome

The entire staff of the Howard Community College Children's Learning Center would like to extend a warm welcome to your family. We are pleased that you have chosen our program for your child. We are committed to providing a loving, safe, and nurturing experience for your child and look forward to continued growth and communication in our new relationship with you.

This handbook will assist you in understanding the philosophy, policies, and procedures of our child development program. Please read the handbook carefully and then complete, sign, and return the form on the last page of the booklet. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Director or the appropriate classroom teacher at your convenience.

Thank you for choosing HCC'S Children's Learning Center. We appreciate the privilege we have in sharing this time with your child.

Mission

The Howard Community College Children's Learning Center provides high quality care in a safe and nurturing environment. The program promotes the positive growth and development of the whole child through a child-centered and developmentally appropriate curriculum. The staff operate in partnership with parents for the well-being of the child by establishing open communication and cooperation between home and school.

- Center staff value cultural, ethnic, religious, ability, and gender differences among children and families
- The curriculum celebrates diversity through multi-cultural and anti-bias activities.
- The center has an open door policy for parents, who are always welcome.

Parents will be encouraged to be active participants in all aspects of Center life. The Center provides a stimulating lab school environment, and works cooperatively with the HCC Early Childhood Program and other college programs.

The Children's Learning Center Philosophy Statement

The Howard Community College Children's Learning Center provides a high quality early care and education program in a safe and nurturing environment. The educational program promotes the positive growth and development of the whole child through a child-centered and developmentally appropriate curriculum that supports a young child's optimal learning and development.

The Children's Learning Center provides an early care and education program for children of students, staff, faculty, and community members. The staff value parents as partners in education and operate in this partnership with parents for the well-being of the child. This is done by establishing open communication and cooperation between home and school and by celebrating the diversity and uniqueness of each family. Parents are encouraged to visit and participate in school activities as often as possible.

The Children's Learning Center provides a stimulating lab school environment and works collaboratively with the Early Childhood Program and other college programs. These collaborations provide multiple opportunities for families and staff members to benefit from a wide range of programs and services within the college community.

The Children's Learning Center strives to provide ongoing staff development that meets individual and center needs. The staff work collaboratively to ensure the program is progressive and embraces best practices. On-going professional development is supported through multiple learning opportunities on campus and through the Children's Learning Center.

Accreditation

The Children's Learning Center is proud to be accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Accreditation means the quality of the services provided meet or exceed national or state quality standards. Accreditation standards represent the highest quality and reflect research-based best practices in early childhood education and indicate that services have moved beyond licensing and regulatory requirements. Exciting, positive and growth-oriented environments, stimulating learning environments that reflect the research and best practices of the field, and better preparation to enter public school primary grades are benefits of accreditation.

Laboratory School Setting

The Children's Learning Center (CLC) serves Howard Community College as a laboratory setting so that individuals interested in and/or involved in the study of young children can come and use the center in a variety of ways. Enabling students and faculty members to observe, participate, interact, and complete practicum experiences are some of the ways that the center is a part of the academic mission of the college.

- The Center serves as an observation and practicum site for education students.
- The Center collaborates with other programs to schedule appropriate use of the lab school.
- The Center holds education classes on site each semester.

Visiting individuals, college students, and faculty are always supervised by the classroom teacher. The observation booths will be used as much as possible to minimize disruption in the classroom.

Licensing

The State of Maryland Department of Human Resources Office of Child Care (OCC) licenses the HCC Children's Learning Center. A copy of the current OCC license is displayed in the lobby. A copy of the Child Care Center Licensing Regulations is available from either the director or at the front desk. The Child Care Center will be happy to share licensing information with any interested parent. HCC Children's Learning Center is committed to meeting and/or exceeding all licensing requirements.

Staff

The Children's Learning Center staff are professionals who are experienced in early childhood growth, development, and teaching techniques and methods. Each teacher continues the education process by taking courses and workshops designed to update skills and knowledge of the young child. Our faculty belongs to professional teaching organizations and groups designed to keep them current on the latest techniques and concerns of the child development field. Fingerprinting and background checks are conducted of all staff in conformity with state law and whenever possible a child is not alone with an employee, volunteer, or other company representative.

In order for you to become better acquainted with the staff involved in the care of your child, information on each staff member is posted in the lobby. The Teacher's Profile specifies the staff member's experience, education, and specific qualifications, as well as hobbies and interests.



EDUCATION

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule outlines the day's events. It gives specific times when events are to occur and helps the teacher organize the day. The schedule supports the entire learning program. It offers a balance between active and quiet times, large group activities, small group activities, and times for children to play alone. It also balances indoor and outdoor play times and times for children to select materials (child-directed time) and for teachers to direct activities (teacher-directed time). Because we are working with children and cannot always predict the flow of the day, the exact times of activities may vary. The daily schedule for each individual classroom is posted on the parent bulletin board located outside the classroom door.

Educational Curriculum

- *The Creative Curriculum* is implemented in the classrooms at the Children's Learning Center. It is a theory-based curriculum that reflects the past 75 years of research about early childhood.
- Through the use of *The Creative Curriculum*, the teachers are able to put theory into practice in their classrooms. Activities are intentionally planned based on the interests and needs of the children.
- *The Creative Curriculum* encompasses Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Developmentally Appropriate Practice as defined by the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) is a framework that promotes young children's optimal learning and development.

Infant/Toddler Curriculum

Infants and toddlers are competent learners and the curriculum occurs naturally during the two main activities of the day; care giving and free play. The basis of the curriculum is interaction with people and with objects. To promote attachment, a primary care giving system is implemented where one caregiver is assigned to specific infants and young toddlers in order to enhance communication and ensure that individual needs are understood. Basic skills are introduced and enhanced as each child expresses interest and curiosity. The program includes free play, singing, story telling, self-help skill development, manipulative play, gross motor play, and other age-appropriate activities.

Preschool Curriculum (2, 3, and 4-year-old classrooms)

The Creative Curriculum provides a basic structure for a developmentally appropriate program. The curriculum focuses on the environment because young children learn best through active interactions with the physical and social environment. By continually changing and enriching the environment, teachers can support learning and creativity in children. Children are encouraged to ask questions and explore. This in turn enhances their ability to solve problems, recognize cause and affect relationships, and plan. Children are encouraged to try out their ideas, experiment, and use materials creatively. They use songs, storytelling, language, games, blocks, manipulatives, and other creative materials in more sophisticated ways as they get older and are given time to develop their own unique themes of play.

Rest /Nap Period

All children who spend a full day with us will be required to rest. Depending upon their age, children are expected to rest quietly or engage in quiet activities, allowing those who need to sleep the opportunity to do so. Children will be provided a cot and linen for rest time. They may bring a blanket, pillow, or cuddly animal from home to help them rest comfortably. Infants will use their designated crib and will be allowed to rest according to their individual needs.

Special Needs

In order for HCC Children's Learning Center to provide the best child care experience for your child; we ask that you consult with the director regarding any special needs required by your child, prior to registration. HCC will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable federal, state, or local laws in providing services to children with disabilities. Our goal is to meet the individual needs of the child within the structure of our program, while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all the children and staff. We will make every attempt to serve all children.

PARENT'S ROLE

- The center has an open door policy for parents, who are always welcome.
- Parents are embraced as active participants in all aspects of Center life. They are encouraged to participate in family programs that support this partnership.
- Center staff value cultural, ethnic, religious, ability, and gender differences among children and families.
- The curriculum celebrates diversity through multi-cultural and anti-bias activities.

Birthday Parties

We feel that every child is special and will celebrate each child on his/her birthday unless this is not acceptable to your beliefs. Arrangements can be made for the child's parents to come to the classroom to share the events of the day of the child's birth and to share the child's favorite book. The birthday child will wear a crown and the class will sing to the child. Please do not send Goody Bags or bring food items to share from home. Save those to enjoy during your family time.

Unless all children are included, please do not distribute birthday party invitations in the classroom.

Communication

A variety of methods of parent-teacher communication have been created to ensure that regular on-going, two-way communication is established and maintained as well as to keep parents informed of the day-to-day happenings and special events.

The methods are as follows:

- **Arrival/Departure** Quick messages and communication to the staff at the start of the day are helpful and always encouraged. Feel free to check in with teachers at the end of the day to see how your child's day went.
- **Bulletin Boards** A bulletin board is located outside each classroom door. Please check the bulletin board each day for notices about illnesses, field trips, program updates, or any other news. Lesson plans, snack menus, and a list of center closings can also be found on the classroom bulletin board.
- **Center Tour** An individual center tour with the Director or Administrative Assistant is part of the registration process. Center policies and procedures are reviewed at this time and an overview of the center philosophy is provided. Each family should spend time in the appropriate classroom for their child to be sure the center will meet the child's needs.
- **Conferences** Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and in the spring of each year for all children. This gives both staff and parents the opportunity to exchange information. This is also an ideal way for staff and parents to work together to provide a positive environment for the children. Feel free to contact your child's teacher to schedule additional conference times should the need arise.
- **Newsletters** Each month, a newsletter will be emailed and posted on the center website. The newsletter will include messages from the office, classroom news, activities, songs, and a calendar of future classroom events. Please read the newsletters carefully because they will provide you with important information about the Children's Learning Center.
- **Phone Calls** If you would like to talk to a classroom teacher at length about your child but feel that you might detain them from attending to the other children, please feel free to call the classroom during naptime (1:00-2:30) for a prolonged conversation. The center Director and Administrative Assistant are also just a phone call away. Classroom phone numbers can be found at the back of this book.
- **Suggestion Box** A suggestion box is located in the front lobby and is emptied weekly. All suggestions and concerns are welcomed. Be sure to include your name to facilitate a response if one is requested.

- **White Board** A small white board is updated each day at naptime and then mounted outside each classroom door, detailing the day's highlights in the classroom. A large white board is frequently set in the front entryway with important center-wide announcements listed for parents.
- **Concerns** Parents are encouraged to speak directly with the classroom teachers and/or director regarding any difficulties or differences that may arise while the child is attending the CLC. Individual meetings or special conferences will be scheduled to attempt to resolve any conflicts.
- **Survey** A program evaluation will be distributed to parents during the year. Your assessment of program strengths and weaknesses will help in setting future goals. Please take a few minutes to complete this form and return it to the receptionist desk. Your honest comments are greatly appreciated.
- **Visits** Parents are encouraged to visit the center at any time. Feel free to come and share project time or lunch with your child for a special treat. Volunteering time in your child's classroom, helping with special classroom projects, and helping with social events is always appreciated. Center functions are held periodically to allow teachers, parents, and children to meet informally.



ADMISSION PROCEDURES AND FEES

Changes

All enrollment changes should be submitted to the director on the Schedule Change/Drop Form. A 30-day notice of any change is required for the appropriate tuition adjustment to be guaranteed.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Parents are asked to be sensitive to the needs of the teaching staff. They, too, have commitments to other classes, families, and personal lives at the end of the day. The college clock on the computer will be used in case of disputes about time. The accumulation of late pickups will begin with each new fiscal year. **Fees for late pick-up are as follows:**

First time late: less than 15 min past closing--no charge; more than 15 min past closing--\$1.00 per minute*

Second time late: \$2 per minute* past closing

Third time late: \$30 per 15-minute* increment past closing

Fourth (or more) time late: \$60 per 15-minute* increment past closing

**Late fees will continue to accrue until the parent and child are ready to leave the building.*

Student Registration

For the purpose of qualifying as a HCC student for child care registration, the minimum college enrollment needed is 6 credits. Students must register for college classes **prior** to registering for child care.

Students must bring their college registration with them when registering for child care in order to apply for any subsidies. Students who withdraw from classes at the semester withdrawal date may keep their children in child care until the end of that semester. Infant and toddler slots will be offered as full day only and are available only to HCC students. Students will be offered a choice of 2-, 3-, 4-, or 5-day schedules in the Grasshopper, Beetle, Dragonfly, or Butterfly Rooms.

Tuition Assistance

A special student subsidy is available to assist HCC students with child care payments. The rate will be determined by student income eligibility as defined by the Department of Social Services Purchase of Care program and the Howard County Department of Housing and Community Service. Parents are responsible to pay the difference between the cost of tuition and the subsidy payment.

Tuition Payment

Accounts must be paid in full at the beginning of each weekly or bi-weekly payment period. You may also opt to pay monthly or even for an entire semester at once! Payments made by check can be placed in the tuition box by the Director's office. Write your child's full name and your assigned account number on every payment.

Credit card payments are made by phoning the Howard Community College Cashier's Office at 443-518-1862 (choose option 5) Monday through Thursday between 8:45am and 8:00pm and Friday between 8:45am and 5:00pm. Cash payments are accepted at the Cashier's Window in room RCF 211 (second floor of the Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Building). For each cash payment, request a second receipt to place in the CLC tuition box as proof of payment. Please do not leave payment in your child's backpack or lunch box.

Tuition is due for holidays and all days a child misses due to absence. There is no tuition due for the week of spring break and one week of winter break. If an account is two or more weeks in arrears, a family may be asked to disenroll from child care due to nonpayment.

Returned Check Policy

A tuition check returned by the bank due to "*insufficient funds*" will be resubmitted a second time. If returned again, verbal and written notification will be given to the family. Ten business days are allowed to make repayment for the amount of the check plus a \$25 returned check fee. Payment should be made by money order at the CLC or by cash or credit card at the cashier's window on the second floor of the RCF building. If payment is not made within 10 business days, the total of the check plus the \$25 check fee will be sent to a collection agency. The collection agency will charge a 25% collection fee in addition to the total amount due. If mutually agreed upon, alternate payment arrangements may be made in writing with the CLC director prior to the 10-day deadline.

Withdrawal

A 30-day notice is required if it becomes necessary for you to withdraw your child from our program. A Schedule Change/Drop Form (available from the office) should be completed and signed. If a 30-day notice is not given, you will be charged tuition for the thirty day period.

GENERAL POLICIES

Babysitting

On occasion, parents ask teachers and center staff to baby-sit. The HCC Children's Learning Center does not authorize or take responsibility for any services that HCC employees may provide outside the HCC programs. Any such services are arranged solely between employees and parents. HCC maintains no liability for any such arrangements.

Clothing

Simple, sturdy, washable play clothes are recommended as children are encouraged to use materials such as paint, water, sand, and clay. Rubber soled shoes are required for playground use. "Flip-flops," sandals, and dress shoes are inappropriate. Coats and jackets with large buttons and zippers are easiest for children and promote self-help skills.

One complete replacement set of weather-appropriate, clothes (including underwear and socks) in case other clothing becomes soiled or wet is to be provided. For infants and toddlers, two complete sets of clothing are recommended. All clothing and footwear should be labeled with the child's name.

Federal Identification Number (Tax ID Number)

The Howard Community College federal identification number is **52-0900106**. This is the number needed for tax reporting purposes or to claim reimbursement for dependent care flexible spending accounts.

Gifts

Gifts made to the Children's Learning Center should be made to the classrooms. Staff would love to be honored with a book, a set of glitter markers, a board game, or something similar. These gifts are much more exciting than personal gifts and can be shared with our little friends, too!

Items from Home

Please discourage your child from bringing personal toys from home to the center. It can be traumatic to a child when a personal toy is lost or broken. The center cannot be responsible for these items. If parents wish, a child may bring in a cuddly, soft stuffed animal for naptime. Please be sure to label the stuffed animal with your child's name.

Lost and Found

Please inquire as soon as possible if your child is missing anything. It is much easier to return a lost item if it is labeled with the owner's name, so please remember to label everything (bedding, toys, clothing, etc.). It is not uncommon for children to have similar or identical items and labeling reduces confusion. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each month.

Lunches and Snacks

Snacks Morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack will be served at the CLC. Morning and afternoon snack will be prepared at the center. Snack menus are prepared on a monthly basis. If your child has food allergies or if there is a dietary preference, it is asked that you review the snack menu each month and cross off the snacks that cannot be served to your child. The menu should be signed and returned to the office. An alternative snack will need to be sent in for your child on days she/he cannot eat center food. Please label the snack with your child's name.

Lunches Lunch, including utensils, will be brought from home. Refrigeration will not be provided for lunches; a freezer pack should be used in the lunch box if cooling is needed. Microwaves are not available for lunch warm ups.

Open Door Policy

We have an "open door" policy at HCC's Children's Learning Center. Parents may visit their children in our facilities any time they wish. We do ask parents who plan to visit their children frequently to follow the classroom routine. We also ask that you make an appointment if you wish to meet with the Director or a staff member.

Parking

Five minute parking is available without a permit in the parking spots around the circle drive in front of the Children's Learning Center. Two of the spaces are for people with disabilities who have authorization (sticker or placard issued by DMV). Unauthorized parking could result in a fine/ticketing. Parking in other campus lots requires a permit. Permits are to hang from the rearview mirror of the vehicle. Parking permits are available from the Welcome Center and parking regulations are available from Security Office. Both offices are located on campus on the ground floor of the Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Building.

Student Information

All requests for student information will be referred to the Office of Records and Registration in accordance with FERPA regulations.

HOURS OF OPERATION, PROCEDURES, AND CLOSINGS

Arrival

Parents are **required to sign in** each child upon arrival at the center and **sign out** at pick up. Signing in a child means the child is healthy to attend school. Sign-in sign-out books are located in the classrooms. Parents must escort their children into the classroom and can assist them with hanging up coats, hand washing, etc. It is important for your child to start the day on a happy note. Allow enough time for your child to get settled. Do not leave until a staff member has received your child and remember to say good-bye when you leave. This will help your child learn to trust that you will come back at the end of the day. In order to ensure the safety of the children, parents must remain with their children at all times before drop off.

Quick messages and communication to the staff at the start of the day are helpful and always encouraged. Try not to detain the classroom staff from attending to the children. If you need to speak with your child's teacher at length, please arrange for a conference by calling the Center.

Pick Up

Authorization for Pick Up The center can release a child only to the parents or legal guardian(s) or to individuals indicated on the *Daily Pickup* section at the bottom of the Emergency Information Form. The center may require a person who arrives to pick up a child to show identification. All persons authorized to pick up a child must be at least sixteen years old. Under no circumstances will a child be released to a person who is not designated in writing as an authorized person or who is under the age of 16. If you need to have someone pick up your child who is not listed on the Emergency Information Form, please send a note, a fax, or an e-mail specifying who will pick up your child. A telephone call or other verbal communication must be accompanied by written permission. As with drop-off, parents must also remain with their children at all times after pick-up.

Both Parents Right to Pick Up Under the laws in the state of Maryland, both parents have the right to pick up their child unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent, who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list, must file an official court document (ie: current restraining order, sole custody decree, or divorce decree stating sole custody). Without that document, the center may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.

Emergency Closing Policy

The college makes decisions regarding closing due to inclement weather or other emergency condition independent of the Howard County Public Schools. Do not assume that if public schools are closed, the college will also be closed. **When Howard Community College is closed due to hazardous weather or any other emergency condition, the Children's Learning Center will be closed.** Listen to the local radio or television announcements for closings and hours of operation – or, you may call:

443-518-4150 443-518-4526 443-518-1000

You may also check the college website: www.howardcc.edu

Or...if you want to be the first to know about closing due to weather or other emergencies on campus you can receive instant alerts by phone, email, or pager. For more information or to sign up go to:

http://www.howardcc.edu/about_hcc/news_and_events/alert/index.html.

Hours and Days of Operation

The HCC Children's Learning Center is open Monday - Friday from 7:15 am to 6:00 pm all year (January - December) with the exception of the specific holidays/closures listed below:

July 4	Independence Day
August 22	Fall Convocation (Professional Day)
Sept 5	Labor Day
November 24-25	Thanksgiving
December 23	Professional Day
December 24-January 2	Winter Recess
January 16	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
February 20	Professional Day
April 2-8	Spring Recess
May 21	Spring Convocation
May 28	Memorial Day

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Accident Policy

Our primary concern is your child's safety. Children will be supervised and every precaution will be taken to prevent accidents from happening. However, children are active and, occasionally, accidents will occur. Should an accident occur involving your child, the director will determine the severity of the injury. Immediate notification will be made. An Accident/Incident Report will be filled out for every accident that cannot be cured by a hug. The Accident Report will be shared with the parent and kept on file in the office. If a child exhibits an unusual degree of aggression or a pattern of hurting other children, incident reports will be completed by the classroom teacher and shared with the parent.

In case of an emergency, our consulting physician is Dr. Aruna Khurana. It is comforting to know that a pediatrician is on call for us at all times.

Allergies

Please document your child's allergies on their medical paperwork. (see Lunches/Snacks for more information on food allergies)

Attendance

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the center. If your child is ill, you should notify the center as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. When your child comes to school each day they will be expected to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Payment will be due for each day enrolled, whether or not a child attends. If your child has to leave the center for an extended period of time, please discuss your plans with the Director as early as possible and make payment prior to the period of absence.

Biting

Incidents of biting will be handled on an individualized basis. Parents will be consulted with each episode.

Child Abuse

All staff members are required by state law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services.

Child Custody

If only one parent has custody of a child, the center must be notified upon enrollment. If a non-custodial parent is not authorized to pick up the child, the custodial parent must provide the Center Director with a certified copy of the court order confirming that one parent does not have guardian or visitation rights. Without such a court order, the law grants parents joint custody and the center is not allowed to refuse release of the child to either parent.

Dropping Off and Picking Up your Child

All children **must** be escorted to the classroom and signed in each day. We realize that this may not always be convenient. Please understand that this is a state regulation designed to keep your child safe. Failure to sign in and sign out each day could result in dismissal from the program. When you sign in/out each day, please check the bulletin board for notices and new information.

Your child will only be released to the person(s) listed on the Emergency Information Form. If you need to have someone pick up your child who is not listed on the Emergency Information Form, please send a note, a fax, or an e-mail specifying who will pick up your child. A telephone call or other verbal communication must be accompanied by written permission. Please prepare the person picking up your child by having him/her bring a driver's license or photo ID to show to the CLC employee on duty. If a last-minute situation occurs, please call the center. A faxed note will be acceptable. If there are any problems involving the legal custody of your child, please let us know.

Emergency Information Forms

Children may not attend the program without an emergency form on file. **Please keep the information on these forms up-to-date!** This is the only way we have to contact you and, during an emergency, it is not helpful to have a form with old phone numbers and emergency contacts. **Let us know of any**

changes in address and phone numbers immediately. All persons listed on the emergency information form should be able to reach the Children's Learning Center within 30 minutes.

Emergency Medical Care

Staff members will document all accidents or injuries occurring at the center. Parents will be notified of any such accident or injury. If the Center feels that a child needs emergency medical care beyond basic first aid, the center will take the appropriate steps to secure such care for the child. These steps include, but are not limited to:

1. Attempt to contact parent or guardian
2. Attempt to contact parent or guardian through emergency contacts
3. Attempt to contact child's physician (in cases involving chronic medical condition or transport to hospital)
4. Contact paramedics/ambulance (911). If child must be transported, she/he will be taken by emergency vehicle only (staff will never transport children) to Howard Community General Hospital or the appropriate facility as deemed appropriate by Emergency Medical Services personnel. Whenever possible, a staff member familiar to the child will remain with the child until a parent or authorized person takes custody of the child at the hospital.

Expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the child's family.

Food Policy

Nut-Free Environment

Several children at the Children's Learning Center have severe nut allergies. Please help us maintain a nut-free environment. Do not put foods containing or processed with peanut or tree nut products in your child's lunch, such as peanut butter, peanut butter crackers, trail mix, granola bars, and Snyder's brand products.

We ask that you check the labels on your child's food to ensure that items are nut free.

Choke Hazards

Please make sure that the food in your child's lunch is not a choking hazard. Foods such as grapes and hot dogs are common choking hazards, and should be cut into smaller pieces. We will not serve popcorn to children under the age of six.

Healthy Lunches

At the Children's Learning Center, we promote snacks and meals that are healthy and well-balanced. As a result, we do not allow candy to be eaten at the center. We highly discourage sending Lunchables for your child. They are extremely high in fat, sugar, and sodium, and contain little nutritional value. There are a variety of books available in the parenting section of our library with helpful insights into packing healthy, well-balanced lunch for your child.

Guidance

All children should experience success. Positive guidance techniques will be used at the CLC to encourage desirable behavior and support the achievements of the children. The CLC provides a nurturing environment with consistent, age-appropriate limits - both in the classroom and outdoors on the playground. Most behavioral issues are minimized in this atmosphere.

If a behavioral problem occurs, the CLC staff will strive to help the child learn problem-solving skills and take responsibility for his/her actions. In cooperation with the parents, the following techniques will be used to help children develop personal responsibility and self-discipline.

1. **Redirection**
An alternative behavior is offered to a child engaged in undesirable behavior. The basic goal is to take a child's attention from a difficult or challenging situation and focus on a situation that produces immediate and appropriate satisfaction. For example, a new activity is suggested, a different toy is presented, or a different play partner is proposed.
2. **Logical consequences**
CLC staff may impose logical consequences as a result of inappropriate behavior. The consequence is related to the misbehavior and involves no moral judgment on the part of the adult. For example, a child may need to wipe up the floor after pouring water from the sink on to the floor. As a result of cleaning up, a favorite activity may be missed by the child.
3. **Ignoring a behavior** or not paying attention to the anti-social act of a child can be effective in certain situations. Often, a child will stop inappropriate behavior if no one is paying attention to him/her. Obviously, this can only be used if a child will not physically hurt him/herself or anyone else.

4. **Verbal Intervention**

CLC staff may discuss inappropriate behaviors with the children and give reasons (age appropriate) why certain behaviors are not acceptable. At the same time, staff will encourage children to think of alternatives to their behavior that would be more appropriate. If the children are unable to suggest alternate behaviors, staff will help them in this process. Emphasis will be given to the fact that the behavior (not the child/ren) is inappropriate.

5. **Take a Break**

A child may be asked to leave the group and go to an area of the room with a calmer and more relaxed atmosphere. When he/she has regained composure and has determined that he/she is ready to return to the group (and has verbalized to the best of his/her ability how to handle the situation in a more pro-social manner), he/she can return to the group.

Behavioral Expectations

The Children's Learning Center reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of any child whose behavior (or whose parent's behavior) creates a significant risk of harm to other children, staff, or the child him/herself or seriously disrupts the program to the disadvantage of other children. Physically or verbally abusive behavior by adults is not acceptable and will result in immediate dismissal from the program. A spirit of cooperation and partnership with all CLC staff is essential to each child's success. If a family has repeated, unfounded complaints about the program offered at the CLC they will be given notice to locate a program that is better suited to meet their needs.

Guns and War Toys

The Children's Learning Center strives to provide an atmosphere of respect and cooperation by teaching children the value of caring for one another. Accordingly, no item of a violent or aggressive nature will be allowed in the center. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Clothing depicting aggressive or violent characters
- Clothing representative of war or war activities
- Weapons - including all types of toy guns (including squirt/water guns) knives, slingshots, swords, etc.
- Pictures of violent, aggressive acts
- Aggressive or violent character toys - including Power Rangers, G.I. Joe, Ninja Turtles, Batman, or any other popular character/super hero that displays such behavior.

The Children's Learning Center respects the rights and desires of individual families in making these items or characters available to their children at home. However, the center asks that parents respect the Center's desire to provide an atmosphere without the direct influence of such characters and behaviors.

Health Procedures

The Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care, requires that each child submit the following completed forms prior to participation in the HCC child care program.

- Immunization record
- Health inventory form
- Emergency form (updated annually)
- Lead screening form
- Developmental history

Please provide the office with documentation of any additional immunizations or health updates your child receives during the school year so that we are able to keep your child's records current.

Medicine

Children and parents are prohibited from taking any medication into the classroom. At this time, MSDE regulations do not allow CLC staff to administer inhalers or nebulizers. Parents may bring other medication prescribed by a doctor for their child and leave it in the office. A Medication Order Form must be completed and signed by the parent. Prescription medications must be in their original container. Please do not send in any "over-the-counter" medications as they cannot be given to your child. Remember, what may seem normal practice at home may not be beneficial for the larger group of children at the center. **All medications should be given to staff and never left in children's belongings (i.e. backpacks or lunch bags).**

Outdoor Activities

Outdoor play is an integral part of the daily curriculum. The American Association of Pediatrics recommends that children play outside every day when it is not raining, etc. Teachers use their judgment in determining when children are outdoors and how long they will remain outside. Dress your child appropriately for variable weather conditions. Children who attend are expected to participate in all scheduled activities. If a child is well enough to attend school, s/he is considered well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play.



Sick Children

Children in a group setting are inevitably exposed to germs carrying disease and illness. The CLC cannot completely prevent the spread of disease. However, measures will be taken to reduce the spread of disease whenever possible. This includes requesting that children exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness remain at home. When sick children come to the center, they jeopardize the health of every other person in the center. Despite attempts of staff to prevent children who are sick from attending, parents should realize that children in a child care setting are likely to be exposed to germs and illness.

CLC staff are responsible for assessing each child at arrival each day for signs and symptoms of illness. If a child is ill, the parent will be asked to take the child home. When your child comes to school each day they will be expected to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Signs and symptoms of illness for which a child can be excluded from care include, but are not limited to:

Illness	Symptoms	Return
Appearance/Behavior	Child looks or acts differently than usual; unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken, fever of 100 F or above	See "fever"
Breathing/Cough	Difficult or rapid breathing, severe cough, high pitched croupy or whooping sound after cough	
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Red, watery, itching or burning eyes, swollen eyelids, and sensitivity to light. A thick discharge may cause the eyelids to crust over and stick together during the night. Conjunctivitis is highly infectious.	Children will be excluded from the center until 24 hours after treatment begins.
Diarrhea	Two abnormally loose stools or an uncontained episode of diarrhea in the previous 24 hours.	A child may not return to school until 24 hours after the last diarrhea episode.
Eye/Nose Drainage	Thick mucous or pus draining from the eye or nose.	
Fever	Any child with a temperature of 100 F or above is considered to have a fever. Temperatures under the arm are one degree lower than oral temperatures; therefore, one degree Fahrenheit should be added to a reading taken under the armpit.	A child may not return to school until 24 hours after the fever has subsided.
Hepatitis A		Child will be excluded until at least one week after onset of illness.
Coxsackie Virus (Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease)	Fever, cold symptoms, rash and/or blisters on hands, feet and possibly in diaper area, sores in mouth	A child may not return to school until school until 24 hours after the fever has subsided and all blisters are crusted over.

Illness	Symptoms	Return
Impetigo	Red, round rash, which may be oozing. Small blisters containing pus-like material that may break and form a flat, honey-colored crust. Most commonly seen on the face and around the mouth. Is often itchy.	Children will be excluded from school until 24 hours after treatment begins <i>and</i> all blisters are crusted over.
Lice	Grayish tan insects that live and breed in human hair.	A child found with lice or nits (eggs) will be sent home immediately for treatment. The child may return when all lice, nits and egg cases are removed from the hair.
Rash		Skin rashes require a note from the doctor stating it is appropriate for the child to attend school.
Sore Throat	Sore throat and/or difficulty swallowing especially with the presence of swollen glands or fever.	
Whooping Cough	Acute onset of cough, which becomes repeated and violent within 1 –2 weeks and lasts for 1-2 months. There also may be thick mucus and vomiting after coughing spell.	Child will be excluded for 5 days after antibiotic treatment begins.
Unusual Color	Eyes or skin – yellow or jaundice Stool – Grey or white Urine – dark tea	
Vomiting	One episode of vomiting within the previous 24 hours.	A child may return to school 24 hours after the last vomiting episode.



No Smoking Policy

Howard Community College is a smoke- and tobacco-free campus. Smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited.

Transportation

At no time is any Children’s Learning Center staff allowed to transport children enrolled in the CLC in a personal vehicle.

FREQUENTLY USED PHONE NUMBERS

Front Desk (voice mail available)	443-518-1360
Director's Office (voice mail available) <i>Kim Pins</i>	443-518-4150
Curriculum Specialist (voice mail available) <i>Amy Haflett</i>	443-518-4152
Administrative Office Associate (voice mail available) <i>Karen Gregoire</i>	443-518-4526
Room 2 - Grasshopper Room <i>Lori Crocken</i> <i>Martha Zilvetty</i>	443-518-2030
Room 3 - Beetle Room <i>Beth Kolbe</i> <i>Nona Nourbakhsh</i>	443-518-2031
Room 4 - Butterfly Room <i>Melissa Prinz</i> <i>Melanie Martin</i>	443-518-2032
Room 5 - Dragonfly Room <i>Angela Bailey</i> <i>Michelle Kreiner</i>	443-518-2033
Room 8 - Bumblebee Room <i>Julie Newton</i> <i>Latishia Johnson</i>	443-518-2036
Room 9 - Ladybug Room <i>Polina Lotkina</i> <i>Meltem Meral</i>	443-518-2037
Room 10 - Firefly Room <i>Robin Shipman</i> <i>Rocio Toledo</i>	443-518-2038

**Thank you for choosing the Howard Community College
Children's Learning Center!**