Early Childhood and Family Center Daily Operation

ECFC has three classrooms for children from six months to 4 years old. Morning and afternoon sessions will be offered with choice to enroll for five days, three days, (M-W-F) or two days (T-Th). The center schedule coincides with UNM Gallup’s calendar and observes all holidays and breaks that UNM-Gallup has. Hours of operation will be from 7:45 AM-5:45 PM on days it is opened.

A total of sixty slots are available for enrollment. Thirty children will be enrolled for morning sessions and thirty children will be enrolled for afternoon sessions. The enrollment slots available by age follow for each session:

- Infants (6-12 mos) 4
- Young Toddlers (13-17 mos) 5
- Toddlers (18-35 mos) 7
- Three-year olds 8
- Four-year olds 6

Inclusion

All children and their families are full members of our community. Young children play, develop, and learn together whether at home, in their neighborhood, in an early childhood program, or another community place. McKinley County has a diverse population. Among ethnic diversity are children that have different learning styles and needs. Children with disabilities ranging from hyperactivity, attention deficit disorder, speech and language difficulties, blindness, deafness, mental retardation, and physical impairments are welcome at ECFC.

NAEYC defines early childhood inclusion with the following policy statement:

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with
and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.

Our center recognizes individual learning for each child. ECFC has wheelchair access and an outdoor learning environment that invites all children to explore nature and the outdoors. The outdoor design gives children who might use walkers or wheelchairs appropriate paths for mobility. Further, the outdoor space invites activities where children share and interact as they play.

Based on research of Louise Derman-Sparks, children will develop positive attitudes about their own identity and the differences of others. ECFC’s environment will include:

- The environment includes images, sounds, textures, activities, and foods from diverse cultures.
- Classrooms showcase non-stereotypical images of different cultures, with a focus on current times, nonsexist images of men and women in nontraditional roles, and images of people with disabilities.
- Program staff model and support friendships, nontraditional gender roles, and various family configurations.
- Staff members are prepared to engage in respectful conversations with children about differences, help them develop the language to talk about differences, and intervene in biased behavior or language, without shaming.

Center staff and teachers receive training in preventing and addressing bullying and inappropriate teasing and physical aggression. Staff and teachers receive anti-bias training to guide young children towards inclusion. With our shared family style eating, children will sit by different children at each meal.

ECFC will partner with appropriate community agencies for support when needed. Collaboration among families, specialists, and teachers will be coordinated and integrated into the center.