



Utica Community Schools

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Early Childhood Programs

INFANT & TODDLER EARLY LEARNING AND CARE PROGRAM



**2024-2025
Parent Handbook**

Welcome

Dear Infant and Toddler Parents,

Welcome to Utica Community Schools' Infant/Toddler Early Learning and Care Program. Our goal is to offer high quality care for children from six weeks to three years of age. These early years are critical for young children as their brains are rapidly developing. While children are in our care, we provide for their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs in a gentle, caring way. During these early years, giving care and caring are intertwined.

Infant/Toddler Early Learning and Care Program is offered at the Community Education Center. If you have billing questions or concerns, please contact the Child Care Accounting Office at 586.797.6985.

Community Education Center – CEC (Dodge Park & 17 Mile)

Kathleen Kaiser, Director – Phone 586.797.6979

We welcome your feedback. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any suggestions, questions, or concerns. I can be reached at:

Phone: 586.797.4665

Email: cassie.edwards@uticak12.org

Sincerely,

Cassie Edwards
Child Care Coordinator

CJ Wajeeh
Director of Community Education

Table of Contents

Programs	4
Philosophy	4
MDHHS Licensing Notebook	4
Objectives for Development and Learning	5
Enrollment.....	7
Schedule	8
Fees.....	9
Withdrawal Policy.....	10
Communication	10
Family App.....	10
Parking	12
Rest Time	13
Sleeping Guidelines	13
Primary Caregivers	15
Lead Caregivers	16
Confidentiality Policy.....	16
Health Policy.....	16
Allergies and Health Considerations.....	17
Immunizations	17
Medication.....	18
Weather, Fire and Safety Drills	19
School Closing	19
Outdoor Playtime	21
Personal Items	21
Moving on to Full-Day Preschool.....	22
Addressing Parent Concerns	22
Early Childhood Resources	23
Board of Education	24
Administration	24

Programs

Utica Community Schools provides a variety of programs for young children and their families. We offer traditional Preschool, Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), three-four-five-year-old Montessori preschool (located at Messmore Elementary), Full day Preschool with Child Care, and an infants/toddlers Child Care. Additional information regarding our Early Childhood programs is available on our website http://ucsccommunityeducation.org/early_childhood.

Philosophy

Our early childhood philosophy revolves around the belief that young children learn best through play, exploration, and hands-on experiences in a supportive and stimulating environment. We recognize the importance of respecting each child as a unique individual with their own interests, abilities, and learning styles.

Through our philosophy, we aim to lay a strong foundation for children's future academic success and lifelong love of learning, while fostering their curiosity, creativity, and resilience.

Our teachers use their expertise to choose materials that optimize learning opportunities and foster both short-term mastery and long-term growth in the learners. The daily schedule of activities maximizes children's active participation, exploration, and learning through a balance of structured activities and child-directed play. This approach not only supports their developmental needs but also nurtures their natural curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

High-quality early childhood education and positive relationships with caregivers and educators play a crucial role in fostering children's development and preparing them for future success in school and beyond. Together, we will build a supportive and collaborative relationship that ensures the well-being and educational success of our young learners as they embark on their early learning journey.

MDHHS Licensing Notebook

1. The center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
2. The notebook is available to parents for review during regular business hours. An electronic licensing notebook is available online.
3. Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Objectives for Development and Learning

Every Early Childhood program is expected to follow and incorporate the following into their lesson plans:

- Creative Curriculum
- MI Early Childhood Standards of Quality
- UCS Standards

Lesson plans must include what goals and objectives are being reached through each activity. Please note that television and movies will not be watched on a regular basis. If they are utilized in the classroom, they will tie in with learning and objectives. These goals and objectives are listed as follows:

Social-Emotional

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
 - a. Manages feelings
 - b. Follows limits and expectations
 - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
 - a. Forms relationships with adults
 - b. Responds to emotional cues
 - c. Interacts with peers
 - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
 - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
 - b. Solves social problems

Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
 - a. Uses fingers and hands
 - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

Language

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

- a. Comprehends language
- b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
 - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
 - b. Speaks clearly
 - c. Uses conventional grammar
 - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
 - a. Engages in conversations
 - b. Uses social rules of language

Cognitive

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
 - a. Attends and engages
 - b. Persists
 - c. Solves problems
 - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
 - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
 - a. Recognizes and recalls
 - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
 - a. Thinks symbolically

- b. Engages in sociodramatic play

Literacy

- 15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
 - a. Notices and discriminates rhyme
 - b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
 - c. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound
- 16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
 - a. Identifies and names letters
 - b. Uses letter-sound knowledge
- 17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
 - a. Uses and appreciates books
 - b. Uses print concepts
- 18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
 - a. Interacts during read-aloud and book conversations
 - b. Uses emergent reading skills
 - c. Retells stories
- 19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
 - a. Writes name
 - b. Writes to convey meaning

Mathematics

- 20. Uses number concepts and operations
 - a. Counts
 - b. Quantifies
 - c. Connects numerals with their quantities
- 21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
 - a. Understands spatial relationships
 - b. Understands shapes

The following activities will be included daily:

- Fine/small and large motor
- Language and Literacy
- Social and Emotional
- Math

- 22. Compares and measures
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Science and Technology

- 24. Uses scientific inquiry skills
- 25. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
- 26. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
- 27. Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
- 28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

Social Studies

- 29. Demonstrates knowledge about self
- 30. Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
- 31. Explores change related to familiar people or places
- 32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

The Arts

- 33. Explores the visual arts
- 34. Explores musical concepts and expression
- 35. Explores dance and movement concepts
- 36. Explores drama through actions and language

English Language Acquisition

- 37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
- 38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

- Science/Discovery
- Sensory/Art (not product art, PROCESS art)
- Technology (whenever appropriate)

Enrollment

The Infant & Toddler Early Learning and Care Program enrollment takes place in the winter and is ongoing throughout the year when space is available. At registration, priority is given to currently enrolled children, their siblings, and children enrolled in our Infant/Toddler Early Learning and Care programs.

Required forms must be completed and turned in before your child can begin classes. In addition to the completed online registration contract, children must have on file:

- **Updated Child Information Record** - *Please notify the director/lead teacher/assistant if you have a new phone number (cell, home, or work). We need to be able to always contact one parent or emergency contact.*
- **Health Appraisal** - *Form must be renewed annually and signed by a physician with up-to-date immunizations and physical. Form is due within 30 days of the start of school. Failure to supply UCS Early Childhood with the completed health appraisal form will result in exclusion from the classroom for your child until the required documentation has been supplied.*
- If your child has an IEP, the parents must provide the most current IEP to the Early Childhood teacher in order to address the recommendations.
- **Lunch and Beverage / Special Dietary Form**
- **External Topical Ointments Form**

Questions regarding enrollment, eligibility, fees, or classroom issues should be shared with the Director and forwarded to the Early Childhood Coordinator if necessary. Decisions will be made within the guidelines of Utica Community Schools' policies and procedures, Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Early Childhood Professional organizations, and the discretion of the Early Childhood Coordinator.

Schedule

Our program closely follows the UCS school year calendar. Limited summer care is available at the Community Education Center. Children may be scheduled for a minimum of two full days or three half days and up to five full days a week. Parents complete their registration request online at ucsccommunityeducation.ce.eleyo.com.

Your child has flex days that can be used each school year equal to the number of days they are scheduled each week. (Example: If your child's weekly schedule is three days per week, they will have three vacation days to use per school year.) To request use of your child's flex days you must email your director for approval.

The Full Day Infant and Toddler Program is open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The program operates the school year with scheduled breaks for holidays. Monthly newsletters are available from your teacher.

Tuition is billed according to the schedule every Monday for that current week. If tuition is not paid, your child may not attend the program. All schedule changes must be made in writing and approved by the director. Fees for additional days must be paid in advance. If your child is sent home for any reason; behavior, illness, etc., you are still responsible to pay the tuition for a full day five hours or more or half day five hours or less.

Tuition

Summer Registration Fee: \$40 Child / \$60 Family
School Year Registration Fee: \$65 Child / \$90 Family
Registration fee is non-refundable.

Weekly Rate		Weekly Rate	
Full Day (more than 5 hours)		Half Day (5 hours or less)	
1 Day	\$120	1 Half Day	\$110
2 Days	\$175	2 Half Days	\$150
3 Days	\$220	3 Half Days	\$185
4 Days	\$260	4 Half Days	\$215
5 Days	\$290	5 Half Days	\$240

Absences will be charged at the regular rate for sessions a child is scheduled to attend. If the Infant & Toddler programs are not available due to Utica Community School closings, fees will be adjusted.

Tuition is prepaid and billed weekly. The following payment options are available:

- **Auto Pay** weekly deduction from your credit card in Eleyo. The Community Education Center Early Childhood Accounting Office will automatically charge your credit card weekly payments for the school year or until account is paid in full.
- 1. **Visa/MasterCard/Discover** payments can be made on Eleyo or by contacting Community Education Center Accounting Office at 586.797.6985 or the Early Childhood Office 586.797.4660.
- Payments may be made by **check** (*make check payable to Utica_Community Schools*) and mailed to:
 - UCS Community Education Center
 - Early Childhood Accounting Office
 - 38901 Dodge Park
 - Sterling Heights, MI 48312

If you qualify for DHHS assistance, you will be asked to pay a weekly co-pay amount. This is based on each individual's percentage and allowed hours. Please see your Director for more information.

Fees

- Late Pick Up - \$15 will be charged every 15 minutes beginning at 6:01 pm
- Late Payment - \$25
If payment is not received by Thursday night at 11:59 pm, a late payment fee will be added to account balance.
- Re-Enrollment - \$25 child
- Credit Card Decline - \$5
- Non-Sufficient Fund (NSF) checks - \$25
NSF (Non-Sufficient Funds) payments must be made with a money order, cashier's check or cash. A personal check or credit card WILL NOT be accepted. Accounts that are more than two weeks in arrears are subject to exclusion.

Withdrawal Policy

If you need to withdraw for any reason, please provide a two-week written notice to the Community Education Center, Early Childhood Accounting Office. Tuition and registration fees are non-refundable. If your child is excluded, you are still responsible for the unpaid tuition balance. All tuition must be paid in full to register for any other Community Education program in the district. Furthermore:

- Families will be withdrawn from the program if fees are not paid up to date.
- There is a \$25 re-enrollment fee to re-enroll your child back into the program within same school year.
- Teachers work closely with parents to create a smooth transition from home to school. There may be situations where a child does not adjust to the group setting. The staff will meet with the parent and discuss concerns regarding the child. Parents may need to withdraw their child from the program if the child is unable to adjust to the setting.
- Children whose behavior presents a safety risk to themselves, or others may be asked to withdraw from the program.

Communication

Our curriculum provides a secure format for communication between families and the classroom teacher. TS Gold Family App can be downloaded to a cell phone, tablet, iPad, or accessed through a computer. Classroom teachers will send an invitation to join TS Gold Family to your email address. Multiple family members may join. Student information is shared with all members connected to the child.

Multi-lingual families can set their language preferences in the TS Gold Family App. We encourage families who speak different languages to continue sharing their heritage and embrace their home language. We will support families by sharing information in a variety of ways and open communication.

Family App

Families can now download the family app for parent communication. Download the free **Teaching Strategies Family App** from the Apple and Google Play app stores on your smart phone or tablet devices.



Daily Routine

Children need a daily schedule that meets their physical, social, emotional and cognitive needs. The beginning of the day should not be rushed if at all possible. Allow time to talk to the caregiver and settle your child. The infant/toddler day revolves around many caregiving events, such as eating, diapering/toileting and sleeping. These are times when the caregivers need to understand how routines at home are handled. In our center, it is an opportunity for small groups and individual children to interact with caregivers. As children progress from infancy to the toddler years, they develop the ability to anticipate and regulate their needs. It takes time for the caregivers and children to get "in sync", so parental suggestions are appreciated. Age appropriate mastery of self help skills are key components of our program.

The youngest children eat and sleep during the day as needed. As children get older their patterns become more similar. Older infants and toddlers develop routines and often eat and sleep at the same time.

Play times include music, singing to infants, and teaching toddlers simple songs and rhymes. Looking at pictures and books is the very beginning of the reading. Caregivers follow the lead of the children so that activities are developmentally appropriate.

Our goal is to interact with the children at their level while challenging them to grow. When toddlers paint, color and put chunky pegs in pegboards, their fingers are developing strength for writing. Children enjoy pretending in the play house area re-enacting familiar experiences, such as eating, cooking and shopping.

Very young children learn how to interact with each other socially. It is very common at this age for children to play next to each other and, as their language increases, for cooperative play to develop. Many of the play activities encourage two or three children to play together. Adults foster cooperative skills, such as taking turns.

Arrival and Dismissal

Families will receive registration confirmation, through email, prior to the beginning of school. A parent/child welcome session will be offered prior to the first day of school.

Each day when you arrive and depart, please sign your child in and out and please allow time to communicate with the staff members. We can best meet your child's needs if we know how your child slept and when they last ate. We will update you at the end of the day so that you may anticipate your child's needs after you leave.

Routine is important to very young children. Please let us know any unique circumstance that might help us understand your child's needs during the day. Anything that is out of the ordinary (i.e. a parent traveling out-of-town or a hospitalized grandparent) impacts the family and, therefore, the child's ability to predict routine.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you need to vary your established schedule. We will accommodate additional times and days if possible. Please call in unscheduled absences as soon as possible. Leave a voice-mail message any time at 586.797.6979.

Children will only be released to adults listed on the Child Information Record. Any other arrangements must be authorized in writing by the child's parent/guardian. All adults must be prepared to show photo proof of identity when picking up a child. In order to deny release of a child to a non-custodial, biological parent, notarized court documents must be on file. Please see your child's teacher with any questions.

If an adult arrives to pick up a child and it appears to our staff that she/he may not be able to safely transport the child, our staff will:

1. Offer to keep the child in our care for an extended period of time.
2. Ask the adult if they would like to contact a friend or family member to pick them up.
3. Offer to arrange for a taxi, Uber, or Lyft.
4. Advise the adult that it is not safe for the child to ride with him/her at this time and we will notify the police that they are leaving our facility and transporting the child.

Parking

We are fortunate to have Early Childhood programs in schools throughout the district. Some buildings have limited parking at times when parents with young children arrive and depart. PLEASE follow the guidelines set forth by the school you attend. Building administrators develop policies based on the safety of ALL students. Please do not leave an unattended car running or any child unattended in a car. If you need assistance, please contact your child's teacher.

Parking at the Community Education Center:

Park in the main parking lot, in a designated parking spot. Do not pull up to the curb – this is a fire lane.

Rest Time

According to the State of Michigan guidelines, rest time must be provided for children. Children under three years of age shall be provided with opportunities to rest regardless of the number of hours in care. The center shall permit children under 18 months of age to sleep on demand. Time must be provided for children enrolled in childcare for five hours or more per day. This is a time, approximately one and a half to two hours, for children to relax and slow the pace of their day. A clean crib/cot are provided to each child daily. Children are more comfortable when they bring a small blanket, pillow, soft item, and fitted crib sheet from home. Nap items left at Full Day Care will be returned weekly to be laundered at home.

Sleeping Guidelines

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing:

- All bedding from home shall be appropriate for the child; clean, comfortable, and safe, and in good repair.
- A sheet and blanket of appropriate size shall be provided for all toddlers. *(Sheet only for infants.)*
- Car seats, infant seats, swings, bassinets and playpens are not approved sleeping equipment.
- A crib or port-a-crib shall have a firm, tight-fitting waterproof mattress.
- A tightly fitted bottom sheet shall cover the crib or porta-crib mattress with no additional padding place between the sheet and mattress.
- Soft objects, bumper pads, stuffed toys, blankets, quilts, comforters and other objects that could smother a child shall not be placed in a crib or port-a-crib with a resting or sleeping infant.
- All sleeping equipment and bedding shall be washed, rinsed and sanitized when soiled, between uses by different children, and at least once a week regardless of use by different children.

Discipline Policy

Young children gradually develop the ability to control their behavior. Teachers apply their knowledge of child development as they guide children in this process. Our goal is for children to grow in the ability to verbally state their needs, avoid the use of physical force and develop a variety of ways to solve problems.

When children experience a difficulty, teachers first help by asking them to show or tell what happened. Children are reassured that school is a safe place. They are encouraged to verbalize their feelings, think of simple solutions, and ask adults for help. When the difficulty involves the use of physical force (hitting, destruction of property), teachers work closely to help the child identify feelings and work on ways to act out the feelings appropriately. As children learn to manage their feelings and problem solve, teachers will provide support and guidance about handling big feelings, teach appropriate interactions involving conflict, and resolving problems. Learning is an ongoing process and takes time. While learning to manage emotions and interact in a classroom environment is happening, parents can support their child at home by talking about and teaching skills to help them make the best choice when faced with a difficult situation or feeling. Our goal is for all students to learn to be confident and empowered in all situations, whether they are the one who is upset, or they are interacting with another person who is acting out.

If a child's behavior presents a risk to others or regularly requires one-to-one supervision, the director/coordinator of the program will be contacted. A plan will be developed to monitor the frequency, intensity, motivation, and risk of the behavior. The plan will be discussed with the child's parents. If the behavior continues to be outside the range of normalcy, a recommendation will be made and may include the child's dismissal from the program.

State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing R400.8140 prohibits:

- Corporal punishment
- Mental or emotional punishment
- Restriction by tying or binding, deprivation of rest, meals, or toilet use
- Exclusion from outdoor play or gross motor activities, daily learning activities
- Confining a child in an enclosed area

Staff Qualifications and Screening

We are proud to have a stable, committed Director and Caregivers in our program. The Director has formal education in the care of infants and toddlers. At least one staff member with current certification in infant, child and adult CPR and first aid shall be on duty in the center at all times. All caregivers meet licensing requirements for required trainings, receiving at least 16 hours of ongoing in-service professional development training related to child development.

Staff have complied with the Michigan Department of State Police criminal history record check, the criminal record check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a Department of Human Services check for a history of substantiated abuse and neglect.

Volunteers will not have unsupervised contact with children in care. All volunteers shall provide documentation from the Department of Health and Human Services that he or she has not been named in a Central Registry case as the perpetrator of child abuse or child neglect.

Primary Caregivers

When you enroll your child, you will be assigned at least one primary caregiver, possibly two if you enroll for full days. The primary caregiver will be the adult who becomes most knowledgeable about your child, their likes and dislikes and methods of communication. Since young children cannot yet communicate with words, the primary caregiver will communicate with you routinely to have the most up-to-date information about your child. Children become settled in more quickly when daily routines, such as feeding and changing, are handled by consistent adults.

The State regulation for adult child ratio is one adult for every four children under two and a half and one adult for every eight children two and a half to three years of age. We meet or exceed these ratios at all times.

Our staff is knowledgeable about typical child growth and development. They consider individual differences in personality, temperament, and ability. When staff have a potential concern, they will mention it to the Director. If appropriate, the teacher will meet with the parent and discuss the observations. There are many resources in our community to help parents determine if a child needs additional observation or services.

Lead Caregivers

Each group of children has a Lead Caregiver. This staff member is responsible for planning, implementing, evaluating, and assessing all aspects of the program. The Lead Caregiver works cooperatively with the program Director and other caregivers to plan and implement an appropriate infant and toddler program. The needs of individual children are addressed in the group setting throughout the day.

Confidentiality Policy

It is important that the privacy of our children, families and staff is maintained. The staff are required to keep information about children, families, and co-workers confidential. Staff and parents are asked to refrain from commenting about children or families in the presence of other adults or children. This includes personal contact that parents and staff may have outside of school hours.

There are times when information regarding a home situation would help our staff take better care of your child. Please know that all information shared will be confidential.

Health Policy

When children are in a group setting, it is a challenge to keep everyone healthy. There are several guidelines in place to prevent the spread of disease and infection. These guidelines apply to children, adults, and volunteers in our program. Children need to learn to wash their hands properly before they eat, after they use the bathroom or wipe their nose and when their hands are dirty. Parents need to keep children home if they have the following symptoms or communicable disease:

Chicken Pox

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Strep Throat

Diarrhea

Infectious Mononucleosis

Temperature of 100.2 degrees or more (axillary)

Measles

Pin Worm

Impetigo

Vomiting

Scabies

Ring Worm

Lice

Unidentified Rash

Children with a temperature of 100.2F or more must be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Children must be on an antibiotic treatment for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school. Many times, children are contagious before these symptoms are observed. Parents may be requested to pick up their child if symptoms are contagious or children are uncomfortable in the group setting; (*examples: continuous green running nose, coughing, rashes.*)

Please call your child's teacher and report any of the above symptoms or diseases. We will let you know if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and our school nurse assists our teachers in matters regarding the health of our children.

In compliance with state law, we are required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

Allergies and Health Considerations

Please inform your child's teacher of any allergies. Our school district has policies and procedures in place that safeguard the health of children while they are in our care. A Health Care Plan form and an Authorizaton For Medication form are required for use of prescription medication for your child to attend school. Health Care Plan forms are available from your Director/Teacher.

Children diagnosed with a medical or health condition must have a completed Health Care Plan, signed by a doctor, on file. A meeting with the teacher and a school nurse is required prior to attending class. Conditions include, but are not limited to, Diabetes, Seizures, Asthma, food or environmental allergies, or other medical concerns.

Immunizations

At the time of your child's initial attendance, a record of all immunizations must be on file within 30 days for your child to attend class. All children who attend an early childhood program in Michigan are required by law to be fully vaccinated. If your child is not in compliance with health department standards, they could be excluded from the program. Questions regarding these requirements should be directed to the Macomb County Health Department School Immunization program at 586.466.6840.

Medication

If a child must receive medication while at school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Parent must accurately complete the medication form. (Physician signature may be required.)
2. Medication must be in the original container with label intact and child's name and dosage clearly marked.
3. Parent must provide appropriate medical spoon or cup if required.
4. Medications will be kept in a designated area.
5. Staff will note the date, time, and initial the medication log after each dosage.
6. In order to apply over the counter lotions, creams, sunblock, etc., a parent's written permission is required.

Procedures for an Injured Child

Staff will verbally notify parents at pick up time of typical, minor injuries. These injuries will be treated with first aid, such as rinsing a cut or applying a cold compress to a bump. All programs have staff trained in CPR and first aid.

If a child has a symptom or injury that might result in the child needing to be picked up, the teacher will call or email the parent when the concern is observed, such as the child looking pale, seeming lethargic or pulling on their ear.

In the case of a serious injury or accident, the teacher will immediately begin first aid, and direct other staff to contact the supervisor immediately, and/or call 911 if necessary. Parents will be contacted immediately.

Weather, Fire and Safety Drills

To be best prepared for emergencies, it is necessary to practice safety drills in all our programs on a regular basis. Whether at home or in school, children need to be able to follow the directions of an adult in an emergency situation. Our practice drills provide the opportunity for children and adults to become familiar with the guidelines necessary in each situation. Our staff reassures children that adults are with them to keep them safe. Each building and program have routines and guidelines particular to their setting. We encourage parents to support our efforts and follow through by planning safety procedures in the home.

All parents present during the drill are asked to please follow the instructions given by the teacher. All classrooms have telephones. Staff are instructed how to respond in case of an emergency, including placing 911 calls.

School Closing

Inclement weather or building problems sometimes bring unexpected school closings. There are several ways parents can be informed about these unanticipated days. Television stations airing school closings information are Fox-2 News, WDIV-Channel 4 and WXYZ-Channel 7. Parents can connect to the web page by visiting www.uticak12.org. An email and/or Eleyo text message will be sent out to our families.

Accounting will adjust accounts for weather related or emergency closings.

Food, Snacks, and Meals

Parents of infants provide all their child's formula and food. All items must be labeled with the child's first and last name and date. As with rest time, the youngest children have their needs met on demand. When children develop more consistent patterns, small groups may eat at the same time. The Health Care Services handout details guidelines for food serving and handling.

Recently, young children have developed allergies at a younger age. Since these allergies are more frequent and severe, we **do not allow any foods with obvious peanut products in our programs. No peanut/tree nut/coconut can be brought into the classrooms.** If there is a child with a severe allergy to peanuts, we may have to be more restrictive. Parents must provide food that is nutritious.

You must provide your child's snacks and lunch daily. Your child's snacks and meals must be a healthy choice and in compliance with classroom guidelines accommodating allergies.

Toilet Training

Typically, interest, ability and mastery of the toilet occur between 18 and 36 months. Parents and caregivers can both observe the following signs of readiness:

1. Predictable bowel movements
2. Extended periods of dryness
3. Interest in sitting on the potty

Toddlers begin to associate certain physical feelings with the need to urinate or have a bowel movement. The first step adults can take is to comment, generally, on the appearance of these behaviors and the positive outcome of going to the bathroom or a diaper change. Children need to learn the connection between toileting, changing, and feeling clean and dry again. Adults can suggest or follow a child's lead to "try the potty." A relaxed tone and pace are important.

Parents should plan on purchasing thick underpants for the first efforts. Additional rubber pants can protect clothing and furniture. Underwear (not pull ups) allows the child to feel slightly uncomfortable when they are wet or soiled and reinforces the comfortable clean and dry feeling after a change.

Children should assist with getting their dry clothes and the process of changing. This should be done in a very matter of fact way, expressing to the child an optimistic message like, "we will try again next time." Toileting mishaps should never result in a child feeling ashamed or guilty.

Encouragement and support from adults are critical. Each visit to the bathroom for changing or toileting is followed by the child and caregiver washing hands.

The ability to anticipate the need to urinate or have a bowel movement and get to the bathroom in time takes practice. Soiling may happen when children are preoccupied with play. Success is most likely after meals, after nap and after extended periods of dryness. Let the child know of the upcoming visit to the bathroom. This allows using the toilet to be part of a routine and not the focus of a power struggle. When children are learning to use the toilet, daily parent caregiver communication is critical. Updates on progress should be reported but not overemphasized, again avoiding potential power struggles. The goal is for the child to feel good about keeping clean and dry, knowing that he or she (not the parent) has mastered the task.

The opportunity for the spread of infection exists when children are toileting or being changed. We follow procedures outlined by the Health Department to prevent the spread of communicable disease. The best prevention is thorough hand washing by caregivers, toddlers, and even mobile infants.

Outdoor Playtime

Healthy children benefit from regular opportunities to play outdoors. Please be sure your child has proper clothing for the weather; (*examples: hat, gloves, scarf, boots, snow pants, and closed toe shoes for safety.*) Classes may go outside when the temperature, inclusive of wind chill, is above twenty degrees Fahrenheit or below ninety degrees Fahrenheit. To maintain proper staff/child ratios, children who are healthy enough to attend class should be prepared to join the group outside. They may go in strollers, walk or play on the playground. We take advantage of mild days and move some of our indoor activities outside. We will apply lotion or sun block, that you provide with your written permission. See your child's caregiver or Director for details.

The teacher of your child's program will be notified in advance, by the school district, of pesticide applications. The District will post information online regarding pesticide application. More information will be available from the School District and the Michigan Department of Agriculture, which can be reached at 1.800.292.3939.

Personal Items

Typically children attend our program for half- or full-day sessions. During their hours with us, they play, eat and sleep. Please follow these guidelines:

1. Dress your child in comfortable play clothes. We appreciate outfits that are convenient for diaper changing and toileting. Please provide a complete change of clothes (top, bottom, underwear, and socks). Children feel much more comfortable in their own clothes, especially after a spill, or toilet accident. It is helpful to have at least one, possibly two additional changes. (*If your child is toilet training, an additional pair of shoes is recommended.*) Please be sure to check that extra clothes still fit your child and are appropriate for the season.
2. Toddling infants need shoes or "gripper" socks so that they do not slip on the tile surface. Shoes are strongly preferred (not sandals) so that feet are protected from pebbles and woodchips during outdoor play.
3. Pacifiers should be marked with your child's name. (*It is recommended that an additional pacifier be left at the center.*)

Please let the teachers know if your toddler has a special item for nap, such as a stuffed animal.

Holidays and Special Events

Holidays are special times when we celebrate with family and friends. Predictable routines that children need are often disrupted with events that make holidays busy and more hectic than typical day-to-day life. We strive to maintain routines and predictability in the classroom. Our celebrations focus primarily on shared learning within our classrooms and connect to our curriculum. Our goal is to celebrate our shared learning with each other and our families in meaningful ways while maintaining our routine and class schedule.

When our classrooms celebrate a holiday, we focus on the essence of the holiday without adding to the chaos. Celebrations touch on the meaning of the holiday: giving to others, family and friends, and the seasons. Our classrooms try to remain calm, safe places while at the same time acknowledging these special times and family traditions.

Moving on to Full-Day Preschool

The Older toddlers, two and a half to three years of age, begin to show an interest in playing cooperatively and participating in brief, small group activities. They are also becoming more competent when it comes to self-feeding, dressing, and toileting. These are age-appropriate tasks and children feel proud of themselves as they develop mastery. As children approach their third birthday, most are ready for more challenges socially, physically, and cognitively. Our Full Day Preschool is a school year program that provides care and preschool education for three and four-year-old children. Ask your Director for additional information.

Addressing Parent Concerns

In order to address your concerns and/or suggestions at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following steps:

1. Daily concerns can be brought to the attention of your Lead Teacher/Director. You can contact them by phone, email, leaving a written message or scheduling a meeting.
2. If parent concerns persist, contact the Child Care Coordinator, who is available for a meeting upon request. Please call 586.797.4665.

Guidelines from the Michigan Department of Education, Utica Community Schools and other regulatory agencies are used to guide policy and procedure decisions.

Early Childhood Resources

Creative Curriculum

www.TeachingStrategies.com

Great Parents Macomb

www.migreatparents.org

Early On Macomb ISD

www.misd.net/earlyon

National Association for the Education of Young Children

www.naeyc.org

Community Assessment Referral and Education

www.careofsem.com

Utica Community Schools/Community Education

www.uticak12.org

www.ucsccommunityeducation.com

Great Start

www.greatstartforkids.org

Zero to Three

www.zerotothree.org

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

www.michigan.gov/mdhhs

Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

www.michigan.gov/lara

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

[Home | Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)

Poison Control Number

1-800-222-1222

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, it is the policy of Utica Community Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in , be denied the benefits of , or be subjected to discrimination during any instructional opportunities, programs, services, job placement assistance, employment or in policies governing student conduct and attendance. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact the Executive Director of Human Resources at Utica Community Schools, 11303 Greendale, Sterling Heights, MI 48312 or call (586-) 797-10



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