

Family Handbook



U of U Early Childhood Program | 290 S. 1500 E. Bldg 44. | 801.585.0528 | <https://biokids.utah.edu>

Table of Contents

CONTENTS	PAGE NUMBER
BioKids Philosophy.....	3
Program Overview and Curriculum.....	3
Curriculum Goals and Objectives.....	4
Assessment of Children.....	5
General Program Information.....	5
Governing Structure.....	5
Program Standards, Improvement and Evaluation.....	5
Co-op Program and Requirements.....	6
Admissions and Withdrawal.....	6
Tuition and Billing.....	6
Diversity.....	7
Societal Values.....	7
Positive Guidance and Discipline.....	7
Guidelines for Children, Families and Staff.....	8
Staff Qualifications and Professional Development.....	9
Policies and Procedures (in alphabetical order):	9
Accident/Incident Reports.....	9
Air Quality, Ozone and Weather Conditions.....	9
Birthdays and Classroom Treats.....	10
Building Security and Access.....	10
Clothing.....	10
Community Relationships.....	10
Computers in the Classroom.....	10
Daily Schedules.....	10
Emergency Preparedness.....	11
Field Trips.....	11
Food, Formula and Breast Milk.....	11
Hand Washing.....	12
Hours/Closures.....	12
Illness.....	12
Immunizations.....	13
Late Pick-Up.....	13
Lending Library.....	13
Medications and Special Medical Accommodations.....	13
Nap/Rest Time and Infant Sleep.....	14
New Student Orientation.....	15
Non-Verbal Behaviors: Biting, Scratching, Pushing.....	15
Open Door Policy.....	15
Parent Teacher Conferences.....	15
Parking.....	15
Permission to Release a Child.....	16
Separation Anxiety.....	16
Shoes.....	16
Signing Your Child In/Out.....	16
Smoke Free Environment.....	17
Special Services.....	17
Sunscreen.....	17
Toileting.....	17
Television and Media.....	17
Transitions Between Classrooms.....	18
Family Grievance, Behavioral Concerns and Withdrawal.....	18
Community Classroom Environment.....	18
Biting.....	18
Difficult Behaviors and Expulsion.....	19
BioKids Confidentiality Agreement.....	20

BioKids Philosophy

BioKids provides a nurturing, play-based environment where each child's individuality is honored. Children are encouraged to explore, experience and discover, thus making meaningful connections about the world around them. Our classrooms provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum in an environment where each child can feel safe, challenged and valued as they learn and grow physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. We expect and encourage children to respect each other and the world in which we live. Parent participation is encouraged; BioKids is a cooperative program enabling families to become active members of the BioKids community.

Program Overview and Curriculum

BioKids has three classrooms: the Infant Program (3 mos – 18 mos), Toddler Program (18 mos – 33 mos) and Preschool Program (30 mos – 5 years). Families experience an unusual continuity of care at BioKids; children are in one classroom, with the same peers and teaching staff, for a relatively long period of time. Transitions from one class to another are sensitive to the needs of the child, their family and their peers; it is done gradually, with great care and an understanding of both the individual child and the class as a whole.

Our three age groupings are a hybrid model based on recommendations given by NAEYC and the Utah Child Care Licensing Program. Their recommendations are based on how young children grow and develop. These age groupings afford children a daily opportunity to interact with and learn from peers of different ages and abilities. The overarching focus of our program is that it is developmentally appropriate. Our activities and expectations are appropriate for each age grouping as well as each individual child. BioKids follows a play-based curriculum that incorporates child-initiated learning (play) with teacher-directed learning opportunities.

All classrooms are set up with learning centers: art, library, dramatic play (pretend), blocks, texture/sensory table, table toys/puzzles, and, for the older group, writing and science centers. We believe children learn through play, active exploration, and social interaction. During open play (also known as free play), children are able to choose activities that interest and appeal to them as they participate in hands-on activities that promote discovery, creativity, and learning. Believing that mastery encourages competence and confidence, we provide repeated exposure in a variety of different types of activities. We understand that children are most attentive to the activities they choose and are interested in, and often remember best what they have discovered themselves. In addition, we assure an environment that is very nurturing and supportive of their ability to make decisions for themselves.

Children learn through process-oriented activities, not product-oriented activities. The “process over product” philosophy means that you will see products and creations that are truly unique to each child; you will not see children participating in projects that have one limited outcome with every child's work looking exactly the same. This is a philosophy that lends itself outside of art as well. Children do best when learning is embraced as a process and something that takes time to cultivate. Children reach milestones in their own time and in their own way with no limited outcomes. There are no rights or wrongs; their way is simply their way.

Infant Program: the curriculum revolves around daily care routines for our youngest students such as hellos and goodbyes, feedings and mealtimes, diapering and sleep. Infants eat and sleep on their own schedules as determined by their cues; each day can be different and we follow their lead. Infant staff sing, read, talk, play and engage with infants throughout the day. The most important thing we can help an infant develop is trust for us and knowing they will be safe and loved in the environment we have created. This provides them the safety and confidence to pursue the environment and build connections in their brain. The overarching goal of the Infant Program is to build healthy attachments (responsive caregiving) by meeting their basic needs in a timely manner. This is critical to their development. We provide a secure environment in which infants are free to explore and play and learn hands on (or rather mouth-on!); all materials and toys are developmentally appropriate and within their reach. They will have daily opportunities to learn via scaffolding (building upon previous knowledge) to begin their journey here at BioKids.

Toddler Program: similar to the curriculum for Infants, the Toddlers need a safe, loving and stable environment in order to maintain feelings of safety and security and approach their world with confidence. Building upon previous knowledge (scaffolding), the Toddler staff follow emergent curriculum concepts and base lesson plans on the current needs and interests of the children. These plans cover all developmental areas: social/emotional, social studies, language, early literacy, physical, mathematics, science and technology, creative expression and health and safety. Lesson plans are created and sent home weekly and detail the activities chosen to carry out the curriculum goals and concepts for the week.

Preschool Program: children are offered a variety of familiar activities along with new, unfamiliar activities. Written curriculum plans are emergent, meaning they are written no more than one week in advance and sent home for families to view. These plans cover all developmental areas: social/emotional, social studies, language, early literacy, physical, mathematics, science and technology, creative expression and health and safety. The teachers are skilled in using the classroom materials, child assessments and daily observations in a way that allows them to engage each child where they are. The teachers individualize activities to meet the particular needs of each child and age group relative to their developmental needs and abilities.

Toys and materials in all rooms are selected with great care. They are developmentally appropriate, safe, and have learning/educational value relative to cognitive, physical, social/emotional domains of Early Childhood Education. The materials help us meet the curriculum goals and objectives stated below.

Curriculum Goals and Objectives

Our goal is to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children in the areas of cognitive, physical, social, emotional and moral development. We consider the “whole child” as we approach teaching young children, as each one of these domains are all equally important and valuable to a child’s overall well-being. Our daily activities are designed to meet the following objectives:

Cognitive Development

Acquiring early language and literacy skills, including pre-reading and early writing skills for older children, and fine tuning these skills in school age children.

Learning numeracy (pre-math) and science concepts.

Increasing curiosity about the world through observation, exploration, and experimentation.

Enhancing language skills and self-expression through music, movement, and interactive dialogue between peers and adults.

Promoting experimentation, inquiry, observation, and exploration through play.

Physical Development

Developing large and small muscle skills.

Improving eye-hand coordination and perceptual skills.

Increasing body awareness and self-help skills.

Exploring and participating in rhythm and movement activities.

Social/Emotional Development

Getting along in groups.

Learning responsible behavior (e.g. sharing, cooperation, turn-taking).

Respecting ethnic, cultural, ability and age differences.

Expressing feelings appropriately.

Gaining positive self-image.

Developing independence, self-regulation, initiative, and trust.

Moral Development (Universal)

Following classroom rules.

Verbal expression vs. physical aggression during things, like: disagreements, confrontation, hurtful

behaviors with peers.
Cooperative decision-making and problem-solving.
Taking turns and/or sharing with others.
Helping their teachers and peers when asked.
Practicing encouraged behaviors, like: cleaning up after themselves, helping a hurt friend, caring for toys and books, etc.

Assessment of Children

Our goal is to provide a nurturing, play-based environment where each child's individuality is honored. To that end, children are assessed in a way that is natural and fits seamlessly into the classroom. They are observed in areas of cognitive, physical, social/emotional and communicative development. Teachers perform both formal and informal, on-going assessment of each child through observation, work samplings and developmental scales. Assessment practices help identify children's interests (i.e., farm animals, camping), progress and developmental and cognitive needs (i.e., small motor skills, shape recognition). Assessments are used in program planning to assure optimum developmental growth of each child.

Assessments are done for each child in-house by the Teaching Staff or Administration of BioKids. These assessments are shared with families privately, at Parent-Teacher Conferences or other times that may arise during the year. Information in your child's assessment file will not be released to anyone outside of BioKids staff without your written permission. Assessments conducted by outside agencies are not permitted without a parent's written consent and only for the purpose of early intervention and/or developmental screenings.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are offered each Fall and Spring. Families are encouraged to continue the children's learning activities at home with stories, outings, songs, and helping around the house to teach important skills. Teachers are available at any time to meet with families to discuss any issue related to their child's development. Scheduled meetings are preferred so a substitute teacher can be available to maintain teacher:child ratios in the classroom. The Director is also available to meet with families should a parent have any concerns regarding their child's development. If a more formal developmental screening and/or assessment is appropriate, we will assist you in finding those services.

General Program Information

GOVERNING STRUCTURE

BioKids is managed by the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) Director(s). The SBS Director(s) will meet with the BioKids Director to discuss, and where relevant, make decisions regarding the following items:

- BioKids budget
- BioKids philosophy, long range planning, and general direction
- Tuition rates
- Wait list status and admissions
- Staff salaries (range provided by the University of Utah Human Resources Department)
- Fundraising activities
- Co-op Program
- Maintenance of the BioKids infrastructure

PROGRAM STANDARDS, IMPROVEMENT AND EVALUATION

BioKids provides a developmentally appropriate, positive learning environment to maximize each child's natural qualities of curiosity and creativity. In addition to being licensed by the Utah Department of Health, BioKids has been structured according to the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Our quality standards include, but are not limited to:

- Low child : teacher ratios
- Trained professionals as teachers and Director
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice in curriculum and teacher-child interactions
- Positive Guidance - Discipline that gently guides children toward self-governing behavior, rather than punishment. Children are taught positive negotiating skills.
- Attention to individual development in all areas: self-esteem, cognition, socialization, creativity, responsibility, independence, and fine and gross motor development.
- Multiple opportunities for parent involvement and participation.

We are constantly assessing, evaluating and working to improve the BioKids program. Staff members routinely attend workshops and seminars and bring new ideas back to BioKids for discussion and implementation. Families are asked to evaluate the program annually. In addition, the Director is engaged in evaluation of program policies and practices as the field of study changes and new insights into child development are learned.

CO-OP PROGRAM AND REQUIREMENTS

Historically, parents and staff have worked together to support the overall success, efficiency and self-sustaining design of the program. Currently, the co-op requirements are suspended. If the pandemic concerns and demands on families change, reinstatement of the co-op will be considered.

ADMISSIONS AND WITHDRAWAL

BioKids admits students of any race, color, religion, or ethnic origin. We serve children from birth through five years in three classrooms: the Infant Program, Toddler Program, and the Preschool Program. Spaces are limited; we enroll families based on established level of priority and as spaces come available.

BioKids is open to all families, although priority will be given to siblings of currently enrolled children, followed by faculty members, staff, and students in the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) and then the College of Science (CoS). Should spots remain unfilled after these communities have been served, BioKids will admit children of other University of Utah affiliated individuals.

Finally, if spots still remain unfilled, children from the broader community will be considered for admission to BioKids. However, in some instances, slots might be held open to accommodate the children of faculty newly hired in CoS departments but who have not yet arrived.

Admissions Steps are as follows:

- 1) The family takes a tour of the program with the Director of BioKids.
- 2) A Waiting List Form is submitted and the family joins the Waiting List.
- 3) A space is offered in the program and the terms are accepted, including: the start date, classroom enrollment, current tuition and fees, and policies and procedures for the program (found in the Parents Handbook).
- 4) The first month's tuition and the registration fee are due with the Program Application and by the date given by the Director. *Until this step is completed, a space will not be reserved for your child and there is no commitment by us to provide enrollment.*
- 5) Paperwork must be 100% complete and turned into the Director by the .
Delays in paperwork will not delay your financial obligation or arrangement with the program.

Withdrawal

BioKids requires a 30-day written notice for any child's withdrawal from the program. We are a campus recharge center and maintaining financial solvency is critical to our continued operations and future service. Any remaining balance and withdrawal period will be billed and payment will be required.

TUITION AND BILLING

Tuition rates are determined by SBS Director(s), and this decision will be informed by an analysis of tuition in similar centers in Salt Lake City, the financial health of BioKids, and projected needs of the center. Tuition rates will be reviewed at least once a year. Data on childcare tuition rates of nearby centers will be collected by

the BioKids director, and financial status will be monitored by both the BioKids Director and the SBS Director(s). Any anticipated rate increase will be communicated to the BioKids families at least one month prior to going into effect.

Billing is done once a month, and payments will be made online through our [UMarket Account](#). A statement of your account balance or a receipt will be sent to the email address(es) provided in your paperwork during the admissions process. Tuition is due on the 7th of each month, in full. Any payments not received by the 7th will be subject to a late fee of \$25.00.

Tuition is based on child to teacher ratios for the classroom your child is enrolled in. At BioKids, there are three different ratios/classrooms: Infants (1:3), Toddlers (1:6), and Preschool (1:10). Upon move up and progression to the next group, the Director will change your rate upon the first full billing cycle following your child's official move-up date, not upon their transition to the next class as they're still considered in the enrollment. If you're unsure of this date, please check with your child's teacher or ask the Director of BioKids.

DIVERSITY

We welcome every opportunity to expand the children's view of our world as a place rich in many cultures, races, religions, and customs. BioKids is open to all staff and families, regardless of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and University of Utah affiliation. We work to provide an inclusive early childhood environment for all people. Diversity extends to family structure as well; not all families are nuclear families in their composition. We are committed to the philosophy of treating all situations equally and without bias. BioKids is a secular environment; therefore, religious holidays are covered as broadly as possible. We encourage you to share your family's beliefs with our staff. We make every attempt to be aware of and respectful towards all individuals.

SOCIETAL VALUES

The theme of non-violence, gender equality, and respect for our earth are continuous and permanent philosophies of our school. These themes are practiced in the following way:

- We do not allow toy guns or weapon play of any kind at our school. We have a firm "No shooting at BioKids" rule.
- We present professions such as: Nurses, Doctors, Police Officers, Firefighters and Scientists without gender bias or assignment.
- We have many earth awareness activities, such as gardening and recycling projects.
- All references in this handbook and all BioKids written material that refers to "parent" is intended for any parent or legal guardian or person legally responsible for the care and well-being of the child.

POSITIVE GUIDANCE / DISCIPLINE

Positive Guidance is a philosophy that guides children towards self-governing behavior; we feel it is an effective method for classroom management and behavioral approach strategies. Positive guidance demonstrates respect for children, helping them understand and grow and is directed towards helping children develop self-control and the ability to make socially acceptable decisions. We maintain a policy of treating each child with respect thus facilitating the development of self-esteem. We accomplish this by accepting and comforting children, speaking in non-threatening tones, responding quickly, communicating at eye level and paying attention to individual needs. Teachers use positive guidance such as:

- A. Guiding children by setting clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior; or, in the case of older children, helping them to set their own limits.
- B. Valuing mistakes as learning opportunities.
- C. Redirecting children to a more acceptable behavior or activity.
- D. Listening when children talk about feelings and frustrations.
- E. Patiently reminding children of the rules and their rationale as needed.
- F. Guiding children to resolve conflicts and modeling skills that help children to solve their own problems. Children are taught positive negotiating skills through modeling and demonstration, rather than simply directing them to "use their words."

BioKids does not allow any measures or circumstances which could be perceived as physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when guiding and/or disciplining children. The appropriate use of restraint for safety reasons is permissible (running into the parking lot, harming another child or staff member, harming themselves, etc).

Although a difficult topic to discuss, we would like to make you aware of our staff policies and procedures regarding child abuse which align with Utah Law:

Each staff member has a responsibility to report immediately any misconduct they observe on the part of anyone who comes in contact with the child(ren). This includes: other staff members, administrators, auxiliary personnel (janitors, landscapers, extracurricular instructors, etc.), family members, friends and/or guardians.

- Any employee who fails to do so could be held equally accountable for any incident arising from unreported prior knowledge.
- Staff are required to read and follow the Utah Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting rules.
- Staff are required to report any suspected abuse to Child Protective Services.
- It is strongly recommended that staff alert the Director before reporting, but the responsibility to report suspected child abuse falls on each individual staff member.
- Staff who report suspected abuse or neglect occurring at BioKids are immune from discharge, retaliation or disciplinary action for the act of reporting alone; an exception would be if the report was proven to be malicious in nature and not factual.
- Any suspicions of child abuse are to be kept strictly confidential by all parties involved. It is not to be discussed with anyone outside of the authorities to which you are required by law to report or discuss the suspicion with. This is to protect the privacy of the child, family and the staff member(s). However, any person who is under investigation for any type of child abuse will be immediately refused access to the classrooms and children until the situation is adequately investigated and resolved.

GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND TEACHERS

General:

1. The safety of the children is our first concern. This includes both physical and emotional safety.
2. Children learn most from adult conduct. Be a good role model; children are always watching and listening, even when you don't think they are.
3. It is important to be consistent when enforcing limits and to follow through with consequences.
4. Remind children of limits before beginning an activity. They need to know what is expected.
5. When enforcing limits and consequences, be careful to **disapprove of the action, not the child**.
6. Please leave toys at home. We cannot assume responsibility for their safekeeping, and they often become the objects of discontent in the classroom. The exception would be when a child first enters the program and may need a transitional object to ease separation.

Outside:

1. Climbing should be done on the climbing equipment and not the fence.
2. Sticks and other pointed objects found are not to be used in active play.
3. Children are not to crash trucks into other objects or people as they could break, presenting safety hazards.
4. Slides are not for climbing up. Children should go down the slide feet first, never head first.
5. Toys should not be carried up the climbing equipment, but left on the ground.
6. If you pick your child up from the playground, be sure to sign the child out and close the gate. Please do not encourage a child to come to you outside of the fence line. They need to be physically signed out and escorted safely.

Inside:

1. Teachers, families, and children should sit on the chairs or the floor rather than on tables or shelves.
2. Always remember to walk when inside. Running, chasing, or roughhousing should be directed outside.
3. Use a reasonably quiet voice when inside so we do not startle young children.

- Children are responsible for picking up and putting away the toys they have been using. We expect children to do this during the course of the day, with coaching, and prior to going home as well. We provide labeled containers and designated space on shelves to make clean-up routines more obtainable for children. Please help your child put their toys away at pick-up time.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Head Teachers have been trained in early childhood education/child development and demonstrate the appropriate personal characteristics for working with young children. Assistant teachers have various amounts of experience and education related to working with young children. All staff must demonstrate a high level of comfort with children and must be at least 18 years of age. Each staff member is observed and evaluated frequently.

Staff members are required to participate in an annual minimum of 20 hours of continuing education by attending conferences, seminars, workshops, and staff meetings as well as through various forms of media. The training involves many aspects of early childhood education and child development. Additionally, all staff members receive CPR, First Aid, and Food Handler’s certification.

Policies and Procedures *(in alphabetical order)*

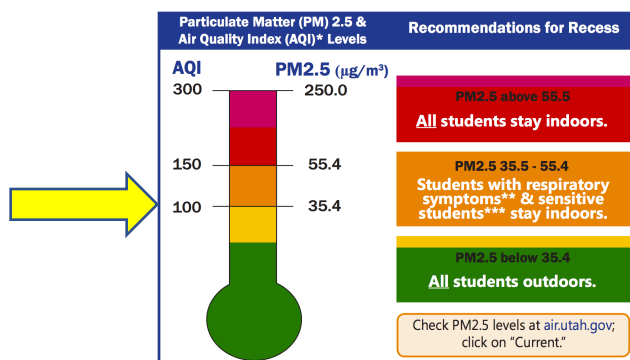
ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS

When a child is injured at school, or a behavior takes place which should be documented, staff are required to complete an incident report. The report includes a description of what happened and what action was taken in response. We ask that a guardian sign the report just as an acknowledgement they were informed of the accident/incident and return it to the teacher. It is then added to the child’s file as required by NAEYC and Child Care Licensing. If a parent would like a copy of the report for their own records, we would be happy to provide one.

AIR QUALITY, OZONE AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

We consider outdoor play to be an important part of childhood, however we will exercise caution, and only take the children outside if air quality permits. We monitor actual air quality at the U’s zipcode throughout the day (www.airnow.gov). If the AQI is at 100 or above, we do not take the children outside, but we don’t hesitate to take them out if the AQI is below 100.

We go outside twice a day, before lunch and after afternoon snack even when it is cold, hot, or raining (rain happens to be one of the children’s’ favorite weather patterns!). Be sure to send clothing appropriate for the weather. Winter/wet weather gear (waterproof boots and jackets, snow pants, hats and gloves) and summer clothing (sun hat, loose/light clothing) should all be labeled and placed in your child’s cubby. We apply sunscreen in the afternoon; please apply sunscreen to your child in the morning prior to coming to school during late spring – summer months.



BIRTHDAYS AND CLASSROOM TREATS

A child's birthday is a special day and a cause for celebration! You are welcome to provide UNCUT FRUIT or a STORE-BOUGHT item in its original packaging for your child to share at snack time (there are regulations we must follow regarding this). *Children enrolled in the Infant Class (3 mos-18 mos) are not allowed to eat anything not provided by their parent/guardian.* Please do not bring in sugary treats, however. The following are appropriate birthday snacks: fresh berries, raisin boxes, yogurt tubes, cheeses, 100% juice popsicles, summer fruit from the Farmer's Market or your backyard tree. You may also want to consider a non-food item like stickers or large glow sticks (no connector pieces) to share with the class as a way of celebrating your child's birthday without food. If you are in a quandary as to what to do, the teachers can make a suggestion. Just ask!

BUILDING SECURITY AND ACCESS

BioKids is housed in building 44, a public building on campus. Level 2 of this building is occupied by faculty and staff of other departments. Both main level entrances to building 44 (which are used to access level 2) must be kept open to the public. For this reason, each BioKids classroom has a secured locked handset which requires a code for entry, and remain locked 24 hrs/day. This prevents unauthorized individuals from accessing classroom spaces. Upon enrollment, the Director will give you the numerical code for entry into the classrooms.

CLOTHING

1. Please label all items of clothing with a child's first name and last initial.
2. Send children to school with clothes you won't mind getting dirty (play clothes). A sign of a quality child-centered program is messy play!
3. Children must wear closed toe and secured sandals and shoes – please, no flip-flops. They are often the cause of injury.
4. Children go outdoors if the temperature is between 25-95 degrees. Please assure the comfort of your child by providing proper clothing during all seasons (coat, hat, mittens, snow pants, rain boots, shorts and tank tops, sun hats, etc., – all labeled).

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

BioKids has established relationships with several organizations in the community to help us meet the needs of the families in our program. These include The Children's Center, Utah Association for the Education of Young Children, U of U Child Care Coordinating Office, Child Care Resource & Referral, the Utah Department of Workforce Services, as well as several other elementary programs in the vicinity of BioKids. Please chat with us if you have any questions about community organizations or resources for your child.

COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

BioKids does not have computers for a child's use in the classrooms. Occasionally, a staff lap-top or phone may be used for educational purposes only, such as: listening to owl sounds or observing certain animals in the wild, only when the objective of viewing such things serves the curriculum concepts for the week. Please see "Television Use in the Classroom" for policies concerning television.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Infants eat and sleep on their own schedules, which can vary from day to day. We follow the cues given by infants to tell us what their needs are and when they are ready (diapering is every two hours at max, however). The Toddler Program and Preschool Program have a more recognizable schedule which is followed consistently unless the needs of the children dictate a change to the schedule. For example: preschool children may be engaged in a group project and not quite ready to put it away or wrap it up. The teacher may allow an extra 10-15 minutes for them to engage in the project instead of participating in a scheduled story time. Or, allowing a child to rest longer than the scheduled naptime is also permissible. It is important to listen to and respect children and their needs.

The schedule has seasonal variations. In the summer, the afternoon playtime might be shortened due to ozone/heat, but the morning playtime might be lengthened. Likewise, in the winter, sometimes it is just too cold to stay outside for 45 minutes even with the best gear on. Each classroom posts their daily schedule for view and update the schedule as needed. If you are not sure where this schedule is posted, please check with your child's teachers.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Fire drills are conducted every month. Disaster (earthquake / tornado) drills are conducted twice a year. Staff members are trained in emergency preparedness, and are updated as often as needed. Emergency contact numbers for each child are kept in our Emergency Notebook; the notebook is taken on every emergency drill, along with the sign-in sheet so we know who is in attendance. In case of a true emergency evacuation away from our location, the emergency information will be taken along, and parents will be notified immediately via the campus alert system (cell phone, text message, email). *In the event of an emergency we will relocate to east side of the Marriott Dance Center, just south of our playground. You can meet our group there. Our EAP (Emergency Assembly Point) is in Visitor Parking Lot #6, on the east side of the Marriott Center for Dance. We will only leave that area if instructed to do so by University Emergency personnel.*

If your child has a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention they will be transported via ambulance to Primary Children's Hospital. We follow all instructions and/or commands given by emergency personnel from first contact on.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally we take the children on field trips to the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, the Marriott Library, or on a walk around campus to see the gardens, fountains, etc. We do not use public or private transportation for field trips; we visit locations that are on university property and within walking distance of BioKids. We always let families know about these trips ahead of time via email and/or monthly newsletters. We will ask families to give written permission prior to each specified trip. When we do go away from BioKids, we take a cell phone, emergency phone numbers, a first aid kit and children wear BioKids identifiers with program contact information (not child info, just program info). Parents are always welcome to join us and the help would be gladly welcomed.

FOOD, FORMULA AND BREAST MILK

All children enrolled in the Infant Program will need to be provided food for their day. We encourage parents to breast feed as long as able and maintain supervision of their infants' diet. Children under 18 months have sensitive developing bodies and digestive systems, sensitive palettes and are sensitive to textures (some infants have teeth, some do not, for example). We are cautious and understanding to all those individualisms and prefer parents have complete autonomy over their infant's diet, therefore we do not provide any food for infants. When packing food from home (including pre-filled bottles), please make sure your child's full name, date and time it's arriving at the facility is on the package. Each day we will document for you the quantity of food your infant eats (milk = ounces, food = very well or not well) and send you home with a copy of that report.

If you are packaging your own food for your infant (not store bought), it must follow similar requirements as bottles: on each individual container, it must be labeled with Child's Full Name and Date. To make this easier, please pack all food items in one lunch box. Infant staff can show you an example. Note: all infant food must be cut to ¼ inch pieces or smaller to avoid choke hazards.

Bottles: Please provide a clean bottle for each use (formula fed babies). Pre-filled breast milk bottles must be individually labeled **for Licensing/NAEYC requirements:**

- On each individual bottle, it must have Child's Full Name, Date and Time the bottle will enter the facility. *You'll take and wash all bottles each night.* We can store a backup supply of frozen breast milk (bagged) for up to two weeks.
- We must discard any leftover milk (both breast and formula) one hour after preparation; only fill the bottle with enough for one sitting.
- Unopened pre-packaged food (store bought) and formula bottles that we prepare will be labeled by us when we open/prepare it.

When children move up to the Toddler Classroom, lunch will be provided by the program. Given the nutritious food and dietician approved menu at BioKids, we highly discourage families from packing lunch for their children after their move-up to the Toddler Program, unless out of medical necessity. Children love to share food, or they unknowingly drop food, and without knowing what a child may have ingested it is difficult to

mitigate a possible risk or prevent an allergic reaction to another child. It is also increasingly difficult to accommodate different foods in larger classrooms sizes. If your child has a medical condition which prevents them from eating the program food, you will need to pack an alternative each day (with child's full name and date) and we will be as vigilant as possible. Please visit the following website to ensure that foods brought from home meet the US Department of Agriculture's CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) guidelines: http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/HTMLVersion/Chapter_4.html. In particular, please refrain from packing any sugary items outside of natural sugars found in items such as fruit.

Lunch consists of a protein or main course, frozen vegetables and fresh fruit. Snacks generally consist of a cracker, fruit or vegetable, and side items, like: yogurt or cottage cheese. A copy of the menu is always available and posted for parents to view. A nutritionist has reviewed and approved of our menu and anytime a change is made. We make every effort to include whole grains and unprocessed foods when planning meals. We serve Kirkland milk with lunch and water with snacks. We provide whole milk for the Toddlers and 2% milk (reduced fat) for the Preschoolers. We do not serve juice of any kind at BioKids.

Children of any age with special feeding needs, and all infants, will be provided a written report each day that documents the type and quantity of the food the child consumes (even food provided from home).

HAND WASHING

All staff and children are required to wash their hands upon entering the classrooms. When you and your child arrive at school, please assist your child with toileting and hand washing. We require children and staff to wash hands throughout the day after wiping noses, visiting or helping with the restroom, before and after snack and lunch, upon coming into a classroom from outside, and before/after using sensory tables.

HOURS / CLOSURES

BioKids is open from 8:00AM - 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday. You are welcome to enter a classroom a few minutes prior to 8:00, but children cannot be left in the care of their teachers until 8:00AM when the program opens for liability purposes.

No drop offs are not allowed between the hours of 12:00pm-3:00pm. Pickup any hours is acceptable.

BioKids is a year-round program; we do not observe semester breaks. We are closed for all University of Utah campus closures, including holidays and University Closure Days. We are closed the week between Christmas and New Year's each year. In addition, we are closed for 2 days per year for classroom prep and deep cleaning which coincides with parent teacher conferences during academic spring and fall breaks. You can find our annual calendar here: <https://biokids.utah.edu/programcalendarclosures.php> and the University's Calendar here: <https://www.hr.utah.edu/benefits/holiday.php>.

In the event of unforeseen building closures (including loss of water or electricity) or any road or weather conditions which are deemed unsafe for children/staff, the Director of BioKids will close the program and families will be notified as soon as possible. The Director of BioKids maintains final say in all closures.

ILLNESS

BioKids is not licensed for sick care and does not meet accreditation standards to care for sick children. Any children displaying symptoms of an illness cannot attend.

For any illnesses listed below where a Doctor's Note is required, the child's listed pediatrician or a provider within their listed pediatrician's office or an urgent care setting must provide the written authorization for them to return to (a child's parent cannot serve as their doctor as it is a conflict of interest).

Exclusion protocol for common illnesses:

- **Any condition that does not allow them to participate in classroom activities as normal** or requires 1:1 attention or care. Children can return when they are well enough to participate in normal classroom activities and routines (eating, playing, sleeping, outdoor time, etc).
- **Fever** above 101: Children may return to school 24 hours after the fever has dissipated
- **Vomiting:** Children may return to school 24 hours after last episode
- **Diarrhea:** Children may return to school 24 hours after last episode
- **Unexplained Rash:** provide a doctor’s note indicating condition is not contagious
- **Conjunctivitis** (pink eye): Drops need to be administered for 24 hours before returning
- **Flu or onset-of-Cold Symptoms:** return when symptoms dissipate and they can participate as normal.
- **Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease:** need a doctor’s note to rule out suspected HFM. If confirmed, they cannot return until 48 hours after fever dissipates and sores are crusted over and healing. Siblings of children with active HFM will need to be excluded for 72 hours for observation before returning.
- **Respiratory Syncytial Virus:** provide a doctor’s note indicating they are no longer contagious and they are well enough to participate as normal.

Staff members are required to turn away children brought to school with any of the above conditions. Families are required to notify us if a child has strep throat, flu, HFM, lice, conjunctivitis, RSV, or COVID-19. By law, we must post a notice for all families and some must be reported to the local health department.

If a child becomes sick at school, the child will be removed or separated from the group and families or a designated adult will be contacted to pick them up within 30 minutes. The child may be isolated in the Director’s office; if that is not possible, they will be separated from the larger group of children within the classroom.

In consideration of other families and the BioKids staff, please do not administer medication to alleviate fever, diarrhea, flu, or onset-of-cold symptoms. OTC medications used to help alleviate pain due to teething, injuries, non-communicable illnesses, etc., are welcomed and encouraged.

COVID-19 precautions: Currently we are practicing a test to return policy. Children and staff must have two negative antigen tests, 48 hours apart, to return.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations are required to participate in the program at BioKids. We work with infants who are highly susceptible to illness and cannot be vaccinated for certain diseases until their first or second birthday. In order to comply with requirements and ensure a healthy environment for all the children, kids must be fully immunized for their age as recommended by the State of Utah. To this end, we are required to review immunizations and submit a report to the Utah State Health Department every November. If the director accesses the USIIS (Utah Statewide Immunization Information System) on-line immunization record and finds that your child is not properly immunized, you will be required to provide evidence (doctors note) of a scheduled appointment to obtain the missing vaccine(s). You cannot enroll initially without being properly vaccinated. There are several clinics available in SLC which administer vaccinations on short notice as well. Please ask your pediatricians office for information. Failure to properly immunize your child will result in immediate suspension from the program until the proper vaccinations are obtained. Tuition will still be due and all withdrawal policies will still apply.

LATE PICK UP

It’s critically important that parents are in the classroom and physically taking custody of their children **by** 6PM. If the child is not in your physical care by 6PM, we run into liabilities for the program and University. It is against the law to have only one staff member on site with a child for several reasons. Given the seriousness of being late, the following fees apply as you are considered to be subcontracting the care directly with the teacher.

Our Late Fees are Mandatory and paid directly to the teacher, not BioKids:

- \$25.00 fee for up to ten minutes.
- \$50.00 fee for up to 20 minutes.

.....\$75.00 fee for up to 30 minutes. *At this point, Campus Emergency Personnel and/or the Director of BioKids will be called to take custody of the child if contact cannot be made with parents or contacts listed on paperwork.

The policy will go into effect as soon as your child is enrolled in our program. We know emergencies happen; this policy is meant to dissuade chronic lateness, not punish anyone for an emergency. However, given the serious implications for all involved, it cannot be a persistent problem. Continued and persistent late pick ups will result in expulsion from the program as we cannot meet your scheduling needs nor compromise care for all the families we serve.

LENDING LIBRARY

The BioKids Director maintains a lending library for families and staff. A wide range of topics are included in the selections: pregnancy, parenting, nutrition and feeding, sleeping, age-appropriate activities for children, behavioral issues, brain development and much, much more. Please visit our workroom and browse and borrow anything, anytime.

MEDICATIONS AND SPECIAL MEDICAL ACCOMMODATIONS

BioKids does not store or administer medications or administer special medical procedures to children unless it is considered “lifesaving”, such as: an inhaler, epi-pen, insulin shot, CPR, First Aid, etc. All other medications and procedures will need to be administered by the child’s parent or legal guardian.

All staff are trained and certified in pediatric First Aid and CPR. If your child has a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention they will be transported via ambulance to Primary Children’s Hospital. We follow all instructions and/or commands given by emergency personnel at the U from first contact on. We will provide lifesaving care until emergency responders arrive.

If your child has a medical condition which could require a lifesaving drug or special medical accommodation, the parent will need to arrange and provide the following to BioKids staff:

- 1) The parent or legal guardian have given the program written permission to administer the medication or perform the procedure for the child via the *Medical Administration Form*, which you can obtain from the Director of BioKids.
- 2) The child’s record includes written instructions from the licensed health provider who has prescribed or recommended the medication or procedure for the child. The written instructions must be consistent with the *Medical Administration Form*.
- 3) The family arranges for the administrator and teaching staff to receive:
 - a. specific training in administration of the medication or procedure by a health professional
 - b. training updated annually by a health professional, that they are competent in the medication administration and/or procedures and are guided in writing about how to perform the procedure by the child’s prescribing health care provider.
- 4) Medication must be labeled with the child’s first and last name; the date that either the prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child’s licensed health care provider; the name of the licensed health care provider; the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication; the manufacturer’s instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication; and instructions on how to administer and store it properly. This information must be consistent with the *Medical Administration Form* and written instructions provided in steps 1 & 2.

The Director is happy to help you facilitate a way to meet these requirements, like: helping you schedule a time for the health professional to come visit the program, scheduling substitutes to cover necessary staff, and remind you when it’s time to renew the forms and training.

All lifesaving medications will be stored in the child’s classroom so it is readily available. Nonrefrigerated medications will be stored at least 48” above the floor or shall be locked. Refrigerated medications shall be

stored at least 36” above the floor or shall be locked, and if liquid, stored in a separate leak-proof container (such as a Ziploc bag or Rubbermaid container).

Taking into consideration the safety of your child and inherent liability for the program, it will be up to the parent or guardian to ensure we have been provided the support to meet the requirements above. Until all steps in this policy are fulfilled, we cannot allow a child to participate in the program or be left on site without a parent or guardian present. This is for the safety of your child.

NAP/REST TIME AND INFANT SLEEP

Infants: Infants, of course, sleep on their own schedule (on demand). All infants are required to use a sleep sack while in the crib sleeping, this is a required BioKids policy. Parents are required to provide the sleep sack; if your infant is not yet able to move, we ask that you choose a sleep sack which also swaddles. Once your infant can turn from their back to their belly, we’ll need you to provide a regular sleep sack. NO blankets or soft items are allowed in the cribs or sleep equipment, even for swaddling, and infants are always placed on their backs to sleep (SIDS precaution). Generally, when children reach 12-14 months old, their naps taper off and they have one longer nap in the middle of the day. Switching a child from 2-3 naps to one is a gradual process and one that is determined by the child and their natural transitions. Our staff will follow the child’s lead on this. Once your child reaches 12 months of age, they are allowed to use a nap mat which is placed directly on the floor for them. At this point, they may use a blanket; please send them with a blanket to sleep with. We ask that you leave the blanket at the program during the week and take it home on Fridays for laundering.

NOTE: If an infant is asleep upon arrival at BioKids, or falls asleep in our care in equipment that is not designed for infant sleep (i.e., bouncy seat or stroller), the infant will be moved and placed on their back in their designated crib as soon as possible. In order to follow NAEYC, Licensing and CPSC standards, a doctor’s note will be required if your child is to sleep using a wedge or propping device in their crib. However, children under the age of 1 year will not be allowed to have pillows, quilts, stuffed toys or other soft items in their crib or sleep equipment for any reason.

Toddlers: the Toddler Program has a scheduled nap between 12:00 –2:00 each day. They are spread throughout the room on nap mats; families provide a sheet and a blanket. Children are welcome to bring a blanket and comfort item (like a small stuffed animal) to sleep with. We ask that you leave these items at the program during the week to be sure we have them for nap time and take them home on Fridays for laundering.

Preschool: the Preschool Program has a scheduled nap between 1:00-3:00 each day. They are spread throughout the room on mats; families provide a sheet and a blanket (both are laundered weekly). When children awaken, they are encouraged to do a quiet activity, such as a puzzle or looking at books on their mats. Please leave sleeping items at the program during the week to be sure we have them for nap time and of course, take them home for laundering every Friday.

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

We will do everything possible to make the transition to BioKids a smooth one for your child and family and, in collaboration with you, will individualize a transition schedule. Families are encouraged to visit the classroom prior to their child’s enrollment; we prefer to ease a child into our program rather than requiring them to make an abrupt change in their schedule, caretakers and environment. During the enrollment process, the Director will schedule a time for you to visit the program and visit with your child’s teacher(s). Please see the Orientation Materials provided to you by the Director for more information about transitions at BioKids.

NON-VERBAL BEHAVIORS: BITING, SCRATCHING, PUSHING, ETC.

Young children have a natural tendency to bite, push, scratch and/or hit, especially between the ages of 18 months and three. Often a child is merely trying to initiate a social interaction with another child. Almost every child seems to bite or push before moving on to more appropriate ways for communicating frustration and anger. The chances that your child will either bite or be bitten are high in a group care setting. While we maintain a watchful eye, these and other aggressive behaviors happen in an instant and are developmentally appropriate, even if not desired. If your child is either the biter or the recipient, try to stay calm and understand that biting is a form of communication for a small child. It usually subsides if people don’t overreact (while the

behavior was not originally intended to be an attention-getter, that can quickly become the secondary motivation). We comfort the hurt child and help all children develop more acceptable ways of communicating.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Our classrooms are always open for parent participation and observation. Parental input is very important and is always welcomed. Understanding families' feelings, attitudes, questions, and concerns is vital to the effectiveness of our program. Our goal is to work together to find solutions that are satisfying to all stakeholders, not just in times of stress, but on an ongoing basis. We encourage each parent to share suggestions, comments, inquiries, and concerns with the teachers and/or director. If you have an expertise you would like to share with our classrooms, please know that we are open to suggestions regarding classroom visitors/community helpers, curriculum and professional education. If you have a concern you would like to discuss with a teacher at length, it is best to make an appointment so that the teacher is not distracted from, and taken away from, supervising and interacting with children during your conversation. If you would like to speak with the director, you can either stop by in person, phone or e-mail to discuss a concern, or you may set up a meeting.

PARENT – TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are offered every fall and spring via Zoom. The program closes early at 3pm for two days, twice a year, to accommodate these conferences. These dates are included in our annual calendar and you will be reminded ahead of those closures. You will sign up for conferences via an online scheduler. Please monitor your email for that link.

Conferences include a discussion of your child's strengths and goals, with the input from teacher(s) and families, and a review of individual assessments your child's teacher has completed. Conferences provide opportunities for families and teachers to discuss shared goals and ways of partnering to help the child as they move along their unique developmental continuum. Families are encouraged to continue the learning activities at home with stories, songs, outings, conversations, etc. Feel free to ask your child's teacher to give you a phone call or set up a time to meet any time of the year if you have concerns regarding any aspect of your child's experience at BioKids.

PARKING

There are 5 designated parking stalls for BioKids families located just east of the building. Please use these spaces when dropping off and picking up your child. If you believe your pick up or drop off will take longer than 15 minutes, you will need to pay for visitor parking using one of the pre-pay kiosks. We cannot be held liable for parking tickets received due to failure to comply with parking enforcement rules. We do not have power to have parking tickets waived, unfortunately. Anytime you are staying at the program for an extended time (for meetings or co-op tasks, for example), please always use the visitor parking spaces and pre-pay kiosks.

In an effort to help reduce air pollution, please do not allow your car to idle when dropping off or picking up your child unless absolutely necessary to maintain your interior and/or engine temperatures due to extreme hot or cold temperatures outside. Let's be idle free.

PERMISSION TO RELEASE A CHILD

We understand that occasionally there will be special circumstances and someone else will need to pick up your child. Outside of those listed on your child's Emergency Contact Form, we cannot release your child to anyone unless the following is provided:

- Written authorization: this can be a hand-written letter with a date and signature, or an email sent to the Director or Director Designee (see list hanging in classroom for authorized individuals). The email consent will need to be sent from the email we have on file for you.
- The designated person will need to bring photo identification with them; it must be a valid state issued photo ID.
- In special circumstances, and where you need someone to pick up your child and you cannot access your email or give written consent, you will need to personally speak with one of your child's teachers who can verify your identity. The name of the individual picking up your child will need to be provided to that teacher and the individual must bring a valid state issued photo ID.

- If none of these steps can be satisfied, we cannot release your child as we cannot compromise their safety. To that end, campus police will be contacted for further instruction.

If there are issues related to custody and a child is not permitted by the court to go with a parent, we must have a copy of those instructions in your child's file. Without such documentation, we cannot deny a parents' access to their child as it is unlawful.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

The decision to place your child in preschool or childcare is not an easy one, and we understand that it can be as difficult for parents to separate from children as for children to be separated from their parent. We support you as a family and promise to enrich your child's life with a caring and meaningful environment. There is no single, correct way for a family and child to separate. Rather, it is a process that must be learned by doing. Sometimes it takes trying out different steps and other times the steps come easily and work the first time. Whatever your situation, we will help you find the steps that work for you and your child. It is not unusual for issues related to separation to arise several weeks after the start of school when the "honeymoon" phase has passed. This is completely normal, don't be alarmed. You are always welcome to discuss any concerns you have with your child's teacher or the director, just reach out.

SHOES

Please remove your shoes when you enter the Infant Program. The floor is cleaned/sanitized each morning and we like to keep it as clean as possible throughout the day for infants whom sit, play, crawl, lie, etc. on it. If preferred, you can use the blue shoe covers instead, which are provided for you and located near the classroom door. Or, you can run around in your socks like our infant staff do!

SIGNING YOUR CHILD IN AND OUT

It is critically important that families sign children in upon arrival and sign them out when they are picked up. For general safety precautions and in the case of an emergency, we must have an accurate list of all children in our care at any given time. This practice of using paper form for attendance tracking is safer and more efficient in the event of an emergency. Rather than relying on a computer program to provide us a roll or head count, the clipboard with attendance sheet is always near the entrance/exit for each class and can be quickly grabbed by teaching staff. Not relying on power or technology in an emergency to provide such a critical piece of information is a sound practice. As a parent in the program, please make sure you always sign your child in/out of the program each time they come and go, including for: appointments, lunch dates, office visits, etc.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

The U of U is a tobacco-free campus.

SPECIAL SERVICES

If you feel your child is in need of special services related to health, developmental assessment, mental health or education, please do not hesitate to ask us for assistance in locating programs that may be able to help you. IFSPs and IEPs and other individualized plans for children with special needs will be addressed on an individualized, as needed basis.

SUNSCREEN

Children 18 months and up spend upwards of two hours outside every day during the summer: an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon (infants go outdoors each day at varying times). Since it takes us about 30 minutes to apply sunscreen (akin to getting snow gear on in the winter), toddler and preschooler parents need to apply sunscreen before arriving each morning. In the afternoons, we will apply our sunscreen prior to going outside (we do not apply sunscreen brought from home). Infants under 6 months of age are not allowed to wear sunscreen.

BioKids will provide and apply a mineral based sunscreen as a standard practice between the months of April 1 and September 30 when the UV index is typically higher. In order for us to apply sunscreen to your child, we will need written permission from you before April 1 of each year. Without it, a parent will have to come in and

apply their child's sunscreen each afternoon by 3:30PM or go out unprotected. We do not have the staffing capabilities to keep children indoors if their teachers and peers are outdoors.

TOILETING

All diapered children will be changed every two hours for urine and as needed for bowel movements. We will record these diaper changes for you and send home a daily report for your review.

We begin potty training when children enroll in the Preschool Program (30+ months). This is when it is developmentally appropriate (in most cases) to begin this process and we possess the facilities to do so. We do not have toilets located in the Infant or Toddler Classroom and cannot jeopardize supervision and ratios in order to remove a child (or a potty chair to be emptied/cleaned) to use other toilets in the facility. A critical component to potty training is consistency; without the ability to consistently offer a toilet to a child in their potty-training process, it can quickly become counterproductive and discouraging. Additionally, potty training is supported by modeled behavior. Other children happily coming and going from the bathroom remove much of the fear and intimidation of the toilets and the potty-training process. Without these two components, we do a disservice to a child. Therefore, we do not offer potty training until the preschool classroom and we do not make exceptions to this policy. We understand that some children are ready to potty train sooner than 2 ½ years old, BioKids cannot accommodate it unfortunately.

Preschool staff will work with your family when your child is moving up/enrolling and ready to begin their potty-training journey. The preschool bathroom has child sized toilets and are easily accessed inside the classroom (no heavy door). Staff will encourage and support children in using the potty as often as necessary, but home support will be critical to their success as well. They will be reminded to use the bathroom before and after playing outside, before and after napping, and anytime they are displaying the urge to go. Preschool children are easily distracted and sometimes miss their bodily cues, so we will help remind them, whenever necessary.

TELEVISION and MEDIA

Watching television is not a part of the BioKids curriculum. There is a television in the Preschool Room, but its intended purpose is for staff sponsored PJ Nights that occur during non-school hours. On occasion, children are allowed to watch video/media clips during their school day and only when the purpose of doing so supports the curriculum objectives for the week. This would include things like: nature clips, animals in their natural habitats, science concepts (earth/space), etc. that do not naturally occur or cannot be seen or discovered in the child's environment. Sitting to view this video/media clip is optional for a child and an alternative activity will be provided, although most are pretty excited about it. Please see your child's Head Teacher with any questions or concerns about this practice.

TRANSITIONS BETWEEN CLASSROOMS

Children typically transition from the Infants to Toddlers around 18-months of age and again from the Toddlers to Preschool around 30 months of age. The transition is tailored to meet the needs of the individual child; each child requires varying degrees of support and some prefer shorter transition times, some need longer. In general, each transition from class to class will take 1-2 weeks. We start them gradually, visiting for 30 minutes or so in the mornings to a full day by the end of the 1-2 week period. We follow their cues as much as possible and allow them some control over their transition schedule. If they are hesitant, the staff will attempt to engage them in play with other children. If they are visually upset, a staff member will hold and comfort them, re-attempting play at a later time and/or extending the transition schedule. Move up dates and plans are discussed with families and parents beforehand. Parents are always welcome to visit any classroom, anytime, with their child. Please remember however that younger children cannot be vaccinated for some diseases until their first or second birthday, so visiting should be practiced with caution.

Family Grievance, Behavioral Concerns and Expulsion

BioKids' administrators and staff are committed to maintaining an open door, open-forum approach to problem solving and conflict resolutions.

If a family has a concern regarding the behavior of another student, the concern should be discussed with the classroom head teacher; however, since it is unethical for a teacher to engage in a conversation with a parent about any specific child outside of their own, the concern needs to be focused on the behavior, not the child. You are welcome to make the teacher aware of any children involved, but please be aware we follow NAEYC's ethical code of conduct (brochures found in workroom) in regard to all matters.

If a family has a concern regarding a teacher's behavior, they should schedule a meeting directly with the teacher before involving the Director. If they feel their concerns have not been adequately addressed after that meeting, the concern should be discussed with the Director. The Director will decide how to proceed.

If a family has a concern regarding the behavior of the Director, they should request a meeting with the Director to discuss the concern. If they feel their concerns have not been adequately addressed by the Director, they should present their grievance in writing to the Director of the School of Biological Sciences (SBS). The Director of SBS will respond in writing to the parent and if necessary, schedule a meeting with all parties involved.

NOTE: BioKids has the right to terminate services with a family if it is believed that continuing services is not mutually beneficial. Notice does not need to be given in such circumstances where we feel there is an inherent health and safety risk to the children, staff or families.

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

A community classroom, or group care setting, is unique and very different from individualized child care in your home. When families enroll in socialized learning, they become a part of a larger community that shares an educational philosophy, an educational setting, and an educational approach to meeting the needs of young children. Teaching staff and administration make decisions regarding your child and/or accommodations requested with the community in mind. We consider NAEYC and Licensing Standards for individualized care and also the implications for the group as a whole. In some circumstances, the Director will approach the BioKids Parent Association or the Director of SBS to advise on a particular request.

BITING

Biting is a common problem in childcare settings and it deserves specific attention. The chance that your child will bite another child or be bitten themselves is fairly high. In 1996, NAEYC estimated that 1 out of every 10 children ages 12-36 months engaged in biting behaviors. Biting is, in fact, part of normal development for some children. Children who bite are not more likely to become bullies and children who are bitten are not more likely to become victims. We need to dispel those beliefs and understand that children communicate in ways we may not always like or understand, but are within the realm of normal development.

In children over 12 months of age, biting is often a result of frustration; it is most common in pre-verbal children and typically disappears altogether by age 3. Biting is a form of communication: usually a child is trying to say "play with me" or "NO!" It is very important that *families do not engage in playful or pretend biting* with their child. Very young children are not able to distinguish between pretend play and socially appropriate behavior; often their mode of initiating play with another child is to bite, imitating pretend biting their families have done with them. It is also very important that if a parent is bitten by their child, the parent make it clear to the child that biting is not OK. "Stop that – you hurt me. Biting hurts! No bite!" Do not laugh, smile, or give reinforcement for the behavior. Socialized learning requires that we each do our part with the social environment in mind.

Guardians will be informed on a daily basis if their child has been bitten or has bitten another child. Every effort is made to support children who are bitten as well as families of children who bite. If a child bites once, a guardian will be notified and if there is a recurrence within the school week (M-F), staff and guardians will discuss an action plan. Such plans are developed as needed, and on an individual basis; an 18 month-old child bites for different reasons than a 4 year old. The plan will include an incident log as well as home and school strategies for dealing with the behavior.

DIFFICULT BEHAVIORS

As with biting, it is important that children, especially those with older siblings, do not engage in pushing or hitting at home. This can be difficult to enforce at home; some older children love to rough-house with younger siblings. Problems arise because the younger child cannot differentiate between this sibling-play and what is acceptable in a classroom/social setting.

Children who exhibit difficult behaviors (see below) may remain in our program as long as the safety and environment for the rest of the children is not compromised. However, if a behavior becomes persistent and requires "one on one" supervision in order to safeguard the other children, or a child so disrupts the classroom activities that the teachers are unable to provide an appropriate environment to meet the needs of the other children, an action plan may consist of very specific expectations. If those expectations are not met, it will result in a child's dismissal from BioKids. This is a last resort, not a first option. As with biting, action plans are developed on an individual basis as needed to address the needs of the individual with the difficult behavior.

Persistent, difficult behaviors will be handled in the following way:

1. Documentation/Incident log: The staff will log the child's behavior. The log will be dated and initialed by staff members.
2. The child's primary teacher will schedule a meeting with the guardian(s) to discuss the concerns and create an initial action plan. They will schedule a follow up meeting to gauge progress.
3. Guardian/Teacher/Director meeting: If a problem behavior is continuing despite the action plan, a conference will be held with the child's primary teacher, guardian(s), and the Director of BioKids. At the meeting, guardians and teachers will set guidelines for handling and preventing the problem behavior at school and at home. Teachers will identify elicitors of the behavior and work proactively to prevent them. Guardians will be expected to participate in helping abate the behavior. This may include seeking intervention from the Children's Center or from a child and family therapist.
4. Guardian/Director/SBS Director meeting: If the problem is not resolved, the next step will be to schedule a meeting between the child's guardian(s), the Director of BioKids, and the Director of SBS. Options for addressing the problem will be discussed and a timeline set for the successful resolution or reduction of the behavior.
5. Dismissal from the program: If the behavior persists beyond the agreed upon timeline, or reduction of the behavior does not occur despite our best attempts and efforts, the child will be dismissed from the program. Sometimes this is necessary to safeguard children and staff and allow a parent to seek the 1:1 attention or special services a child needs.

NOTE: BioKids has the right to terminate services with a family if any of the following behaviors occur on a consistent basis, compromise the health or safety of the other children, negatively impact the quality of the environment, or cannot be addressed with the steps outlined above. These behaviors include:

- Biting
- Self-infliction of pain
- Violent temper tantrums
- Deliberate attempts to hurt other children or a teacher
- Inappropriate language
- Destroying property
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Any behavioral disorder that the staff is not capable of handling or requires a 1:1 ratio.

Should the removal of a child from the classroom be necessary, enrollment may be terminated upon a one-week written notice from the Director and any remaining balance will be refunded to the family.

Expulsion

Sometimes a socialized learning environment is not the best fit for every child. In the event we feel suspension or expulsion from the program is necessary, it is for: 1) the safety or well-being of the child, other children or staff, 2) we do not feel BioKids staff can meet the child's needs, or 3) we do not feel continued participation in the program is in the best interest of your child or the group as a whole.

The following steps are taken to ensure we have exhausted every means possible to keep the child/family enrolled and have considered all other alternatives. The goal of this policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary measures. If exclusionary measures must be taken, the Director of BioKids will provide you referrals or recommendations for alternative services.

- Step 1: this policy is communicated to families and staff via the Parent Handbook which is given to you during the admissions process. It is also available on our website: <https://biokids.utah.edu/parenthandbook.php>
- Step 2: when necessary, the Director will schedule a meeting with you to discuss the concerns. Your participation in this meeting will be required.
- Step 3: interventions are put in place by the staff and the family, as necessary, and must be followed. A follow up meeting will be scheduled to revisit progress and/or compliancy. Your participation in this meeting will be required.
- Step 4: BioKids Director will consult with the Director of SBS about the situation for their input. If alternative interventions are presented, the BioKids Director will consult with the family and implement the alternatives(s).
- Step 5: once interventions and/or alternatives are exhausted or do not provide results necessary to continue enrollment, or if at any time the family doesn't engage as needed in the process, the Directors will make a decision on whether suspension or expulsion is the next best step. The Director of BioKids will carry out the decision based on what we feel is best 1) for the child and 2) for the program.

This policy complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

BioKids' Confidentiality Agreement

Because BioKids is a parent co-operative program, parents and staff work together closely and consistently. This makes parents privy to sensitive information that a child may share directly or by administrative information involved with co-op tasks designed to help the program run smoothly.

It is understood that as a parent, you will most likely be spending time with your child at BioKids and in the classroom. It is essential that you honor family and staff privacy. All information about families and staff, including life circumstances that you become aware of, is to be kept confidential. No personally identifying information is to be discussed outside of the program. We work together and succeed together, so please help our community continue to be a safe, caring and inclusive environment for all.

Child files can only be accessed by the Director and are maintained in a locked drawer in the Directors office. Their content will only be shared with persons or agencies with written parental consent. This includes: other administrative personnel, teaching staff, regulatory authorities, or a child's family or legal guardian(s).

Biokids

