

Welcome Letter

We are very excited that you have chosen the Drop-In Learning Center (DILC) to be a vital role in your child's early years of exploration and development. Starting in a new childcare setting can be a big change. It takes time to adjust to a new provider. It is especially hard if this is the first time you are leaving your child in someone else's care.

We believe strongly in the importance of creating an atmosphere to aide in the cognitive, language, physical, and creative skills that young children are developing each day. Our commitment to you and your child is to provide a safe, loving, and nurturing environment, one that you feel comfortable leaving your child in.

All children are unique and require individual emotional and physical needs that we seek to meet. We have created an atmosphere in our classrooms in which all children know they are respected, and are valued for who they are. We promote the enrollment of a diverse population and we believe developing empathy and becoming sensitive to how others feel is essential for every child's ability to engage in positive interactions with children who's racial, ethnic, cultural, language, religious, economic, or even physical abilities may be different from theirs. Our center provides many opportunities and experiences to expand children's knowledge by engaging them in various opportunities and materials that build their understanding of diversity in culture, family structure, life experiences, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways.

At DILC we believe the years of a child's life are meant to be gratifying and filled with feelings of accomplishment. We incorporate visits from community members into our program of activities to assist us with our efforts to expand children's knowledge and appreciation of differences. If you know of someone whose presence would enrich our program, please let us know. Your involvement with your child and our program of activities are always welcome.

We thank you for allowing us to be a part of your family, and we welcome you to the DILC.

Welcome to the



Organization Background Information

The Center: A Drop-In Community Learning and Resource Center, Inc., known in New London as the Drop-In Learning Center (DILC) was established in 1970 as an informal meeting place for inner-city youngsters in search of a meaningful learning experience after school. A nine-member volunteer Board of Directors governs the Drop-In Learning Center. The Drop-In Learning Center is the vision of Anne Scheibner who reached out to members of Second Congregational Church of New London, CT. Second Church provided a site for this mission. The site was located at 116 Federal Street until 2002. The center was closed November 2002 because of a fire. This caused the center to move to the Jennings school December 2002 - April 2004. The Center was then moved in April of 2004 to 45 Broad Street, Annex. The building is attached to the former Second Congregational Church. The Enrichment Program was licensed by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health Child Daycare since 2004. In December of 2011, the center opened its Early Childhood Education section, serving children five years and under. On July 1, 2014 the center moved to 701 Montauk Avenue, New London, CT, located on the Mitchell College Campus. We are licensed by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood to serve children ages 18months - 12 Years old. In addition, we hold a Camp Licensed serving children 5 -14 years old.

Mission Statement

The Drop-In Learning Center of New London fosters the academic and social development of children and promotes family engagement in the learning process.

Philosophy Statement

If we educate our children in a way that naturally peaks curiosity and taps into their multiple intelligence, all children will become lifelong learners and feel successful and capable. "Teach them well and let them lead the way".

Vision Statement

Children and their families will be lifelong learners who believe in unlimited possibilities and work to fulfill their dreams.

Guiding Principles

We believe:

- All children have the capacity to learn and the right to experience enriching learning opportunities.
- The journey of growth and learning can be enjoyable and exciting.
- Family engagement is important for the positive growth and development of children.
- All families have the right to participate in their children's learning process.
- Respecting diversity is central to building a strong community.
- Success does not look the same for everyone, but everyone can achieve success within their own lives.
- Our community is part of us and we are part of our community.
- Positive change is possible.

Site Information

Location: St. James Church
76 Federal Street
New London, CT 06320

Telephone: 860.442.4466
Fax: 860.443.0095

Program Description and Hours of Operation

The School Readiness Preschool Programs (3yrs-5yrs): The children in the Preschool classrooms are provided opportunities to learn persistence when working at tasks, direction following, and good listening skills. Developmentally appropriate activities designed with a focus on language and literacy skills, as well as

interactive book reading are offered daily. Teachers encourage children to expand their knowledge and increase their vocabulary. The children develop scientific thinking skills as well as information about the everyday environment, the world, and how things work. Through a variety of activities and projects, children learn to problem solve, engage in music, art, dramatic play and to learn beginning skills involving numbers and the alphabet. The preschool classroom is a full school day, program. This program is open from 8am-3pm, Monday-Friday, Jan.-Dec. which follows the New London Public School system's schedule).

Program Objectives and Purpose

Our program objectives are to ensure that high quality child care is accessible to all children. We provide activities to give your child an essential start. We help promote motor, language, cognitive, social and emotional skills. Regardless of the classroom your child is enrolled in, we provide this foundation by preparing your child for the next stage of development. The Purpose of the DILC is to support parents in their need for safe, nurturing care of their children, and in doing so, to provide a program that fosters each child's development to his/her fullest potential.

Program Activities and Curriculum

Curriculum is what happens in an educational environment. Everything that happens during our day with the children can be a teachable moment. We use an Emergent Curriculum which responds to children's needs and interest and focuses on the process of learning. We set up the environment with opportunities for children to explore. We use The Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) as a guide in the development of curriculum activities. It provides a framework for early learning experiences and is used as the foundation for planning learning experiences, observing and documenting children's progress, and implementing teaching strategies in eight major domains;

- Cognition
- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development and Health
- Language and Literacy
- Creative Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

The ELDS were developed through the work of the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet and its Learning Standards Workgroup. This document was designed for use with children from birth through Five. The learning progressions within the ELDS promote:

- Equity for all children, through the setting of high, but appropriate, expectations.
- High-quality early learning experiences, by providing clear goals and trajectories of learning.
- Provision of individual support, based on each child's growth and development.
- The Families' understanding of what their children is learning and how they can support them.
- The Teachers' understanding of age-appropriate content and approaches to children's learning.

Teachers observe children as they interact within the classroom and outdoor environment, paying close attention to recurring themes, children's understandings and misunderstandings, developmental needs, and underlying questions. Our observations guide our curriculum planning, as we create opportunities for children to deepen their thinking, represent their understandings, and encounter new perspectives.

Our curriculum is aligned with (ELDS) in the following ways:

- Planned activities and teaching strategies are based on the needs, developmental levels and interest of the children.
- Allows the freedom and flexibility for implementation of child specific activities.
- Learning goals encompasses the major areas of development:

The DILC staff monitors the progress of the children daily through individual observations. These observations are based on a focused goal or outcome. They are noted throughout the course of the week and recorded on an observation form. This information is then used for planning, curriculum changes and teaching strategies for individual children.

The following is also used to monitor and record children's progress:

- Initial Observation Form (used for each child upon entering the program).

- Book and Print Awareness Checklist.
- Kindergarten Entrance Skills Checklist (for those children exiting our program and going on to Kindergarten).

The Learning Experience Plan is developed around a unit of the children's interest and involves children in the following activities: art, music, science, block play, sensory activities (sand, water, etc.), dramatic play, language and literature experiences, physical play, social studies, self-help tasks, computer skills, cooking, and play with manipulative materials (puzzles, Legos, etc.).

Staff is required to attend trainings that offers opportunities to explore ways to implement curriculum, set up the environment, equipping and using various learning centers in the classroom. These trainings assist in the effective planning of activities and experiences based on children's individual needs, knowledge, and interest.

Activities are thoughtfully planned with intentional teaching in mind. However, the teachers remain flexible in altering activities as children's needs and moods vary and as unexpected opportunities arise.

Open Admission Policy

We have an open door policy at the DILC and all parents are welcome to visit the classrooms at any time (preferably not during nap time). If there is custody issue please provide the center with a copy of the court ordered child custody agreement. Parents are encouraged, when possible, to spend time with their children here at the beginning and/or ending of the day. All visitors must first report to the office, sign the visitors log book, wear a visitor's badge and must be listed on the enrollment form.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The DILC does not discriminate based on gender, religion, income, ability, ethnicity or national origin in the recruitment, enrollment or placement of children in the program. We **comply** with the Americans with Disabilities Act (**ADA**), which

prohibits discrimination in the provision of programs, services or activities to individuals with disabilities.

Enrollment Policy

We recommend that parents visit the center prior to enrolling their child. Schedule an interview so we can review the information about our program. Allow approximately 30 minutes so we have adequate time to discuss your needs, tour the center and start the enrollment process. Parents are encouraged to apply for Care4Kids. If a child is not eligible for a School Readiness slot, parents must fill out Care4Kids paperwork or pay full cost of the program.

Once the parents have completed the enrollment process (submitting all necessary forms) and we receive confirmation of your child's eligibility, you will be notified. In order to make sure each child's file is complete and accurate; no child can be accepted for care without the proper forms on file and the payment of the first week's tuition has been received. Each child will be given a two-week trial. This is to ensure that your child can function within our program and at the end of the two-week trial, the parents will be given an assessment of their child's progress during his/her transition into the program. Since we are not able to guarantee the most appropriate placement for every child, we reserve the right to withdraw any child whose needs are not being sufficiently met through our program's design. The staff will work with these families to identify other resources that may better serve the child's needs. Every effort will be made to ensure a successful experience for the child. Further recommendation will be made concerning the child's placement.

In the School Readiness classroom, priority for enrollment is for children whose family income is equal to or below the federal poverty index as determined by family income and size of family (See State Income Guide Lines). Income documents (i.e. paycheck stubs, W-2 forms) must be presented.

In addition; in the School Readiness program, priority for enrollment is given to children who will be eligible for kindergarten in the upcoming school year. Children must be 5 years old by January 1st to meet this eligibility. Child's age must be verified by birth certificate or other such document. Three-year olds are eligible for enrollment after all eligible four-year olds are served. In all other programs there is no priority enrollment.

Children who have been enrolled at The DILC, and are not kindergarten eligible, are automatically eligible for continuing enrollment upon meeting the following conditions: (1) Child remained enrolled throughout the previous school year. (2) Child is up to date on immunizations and other health requirements. (3) Child remains age eligible. (4) Family met program expectations during past enrollment year.

Confidentiality Policy

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents/caregivers. We aim to ensure that and parents/caregivers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. To ensure that all those attending and working in the center can do so with confidence, we respect confidentiality in the following ways.

- Parents have ready access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs.
- New staff orientation includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality.
- Any concerns/evidence relating to a child's development and personal safety are kept in secure, confidential files and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need-to-know" basis.
- Personal information about children, families and staff is kept in a locked file cabinet, yet remaining as accessible to those that need such information.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Interns/Volunteers, when observing in the center are advised of our confidentiality policy and are required to respect it.

All the items above are a vital part of the high quality of service that DILC offers its families. All information in children's files is kept strictly confidential, and will only be released to someone other than the parent/guardian if requested in writing by the parent/guardian. This request will be kept on file.

Termination of Services Policy

When notice of termination is given, any outstanding balance must be paid in full, regardless of which party terminates child care services. DILC may terminate a child's enrollment at will, effective immediately, for any reason deemed necessary. Reasons for termination may include, but not limited to:

- Failure to pay tuition and/or fees on time.
- Lack of parental cooperation.
- Inability to meet the needs of a child.
- Repeated late pick-ups.
- Failure to complete and return required forms.
- Verbal or physical abuse or threat by a parent or person transporting a child.
- A child's behavior which threatens the well-being of anyone at the center.
- Possession or use of weapons on the premises.
- Any other reason deemed necessary.

Attendance Policy

Children are expected to attend the program on a regular basis in accordance with the days and times scheduled with the Executive Director. Please notify the staff if your child will be absent for any reason. Tuition fees are not attendance based and must be paid regardless of attendance unless, administratively approved by the Executive Director. Tuition is due whether a child is present or absent from the program, regardless of holidays, snow days, vacations, or illness.

Tuition payment in the absence of your child is your place holder. Failure in keeping your tuition current can result in losing your slot. Your child will be withdrawn from the program and a new application must be submitted if you want to return and the slot is still available.

In the case of prolonged, severe illness, an exception may be made regarding the child's ability to attend is at the discretion of the Executive Director. Written requests must be accompanied by a physician's statement.

Arrival and Departure Policies

- A. Arrival: Each child must be accompanied into the center and signed in on the time clock located outside of the Administration Office. Each parent/guardian must assist their child in putting away his/her belongings (coats, jackets should be placed in assigned cubbies), alert staff of their arrival and communicate any information that needs to be shared. Each parent must see that their child washes their hands upon entering the classroom.

Children should not arrive before their scheduled time. All children must be in class by 9:00 a.m. If parents are unable to have their child in the center by 9:00 a.m., please call to inform the staff of arrival time (no later than 9:30 a.m.). All other exceptional tardiness will be left up to the discretion of the Head Teacher (i.e., doctor's appointment, etc.).

- B. Departure: Each child must be accompanied out of the classroom by a parent/guardian or authorized person and signed out on the time clock. Parent/guardians must alert staff of their departure. We also encourage parents to make contact with staff for information regarding their child's day. Each child's communication folder should be checked daily for notices that need to be taken home.

Children are to be picked up according to their scheduled time. In the event of an emergency, when a parent/guardian is unable to pick up their child, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the staff, and to make other arrangements for their child's pick up. Late fees will apply when a child is left after their scheduled time.

If the parent/guardian and emergency contacts cannot be reached within thirty (30) minutes after closing/ending time we will notify the local police department and the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

- C. Special Conditions: If the staff determines that a parent/guardian or authorized person is not mentally or physically capable of taking custody of a child, we will contact the following persons in this sequence:
1. Child's other parent/guardian
 2. Emergency person listed on child's Authorization to Release Form
 3. New London Police Department
 4. Department of Children and Families Services.

Authorization to Pick-Up Policy

Parents must designate at least two (2) individuals who are authorized to pick up their child in emergency situations. These two must be other than the parents. Only those persons authorized by the parent on the Authorization to Pick-Up form may sign-out, pick up, or visit a child. Parents must notify the center when persons other than themselves will be picking up and visiting children so we are prepared. Because of our concern for children's safety, we require photo identification from those person(s) we have not met to compare with the names provided on these forms. A copy of the ID is made for child's file on the 1st initial pick-up. In emergency cases, The DILC staff must receive a phone call that includes the name and description of the person to whom the parent is giving permission for staff to release the child and a signed note indicating who is picking up the child.

Discipline Policy (Behavior Management Techniques)

Discipline is carried out on the belief that children are individuals with unique backgrounds and need the required support, compassion, and firmness. Children do not always have great days. Sometimes problem behavior results from being tired or bored or something more complex.

The staff will ensure that every effort is made to structure the environment to help prevent potential behavior problems. All staff shall use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-reliance, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.

The role of the staff is to model appropriate behavior among themselves, as well as in their interaction with the children. Developing respect for self and others is the focal point of discipline. Our goal of behavior management techniques is to help children explore their own behavior and find the most positive way to handle difficulties.

The following are implemented to ensure stability:

- Reinforcing positive behavior by complimenting or bringing attention to him/her encourages the child to continue with their good behavior.
- Duplicates of toys are in the classrooms to prevent the children from fighting. This allows each child to have the chance to play with their desired toy without conflict from another child.
- A monthly toy rotation is implemented to keep the room interesting and new for children. With new toys to explore they will keep their focus on them rather than acting out in boredom.
- We provide classrooms that provide suitable stimuli that are not overwhelming or confusing to the children.
- When there is a conflict between children concerning their behavior, this is when children are taught to resolve conflicts, not redirected to another activity.
- Redirecting the child to help the teacher or to explore another activity.
- We practice predictable routines on a daily basis to ensure the mental and emotional stability of our children. (Children feel secure and know what to expect).
- If a child hurts another person, an accident report will be filled out and be distributed to the parents of all children involved.
- If a child exhibits undesired behavior their classroom teacher will give them a warning. Two warnings are permitted before the parent is called to have a corrective behavior meeting with the Executive Director, the teacher, and the child (if parents desire). In this meeting all parties will formulate a plan to help improve the child's behavior by determining the root of the problem and possible solutions.

The DILC is willing to work with all children and their undesired behavior; however, if they are found to be a continual disruption or danger in the classroom (regardless of the efforts put forth) the center will choose to terminate the enrollment of that child.

Staff is prohibited from using the following as means of punishment:

- Corporal punishment such as spanking with the hand or any implement, slapping, swatting, yanking the arm, or any similar activity.

- Restricting a child's movement by binding or taping him/her.
- Inflicting mentally, emotionally, or verbally abusive punishment that may be humiliating, shaming, or threatening to a child.
- Use food for any reason of rewards and or punishment.
- Will not taking physical activity time away as punishment, unless the child is a danger to themselves or other children.
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.

If the child becomes out of control and/or poses a danger to himself/herself or other children, the center will call Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services 211 for support.

Smoking Policy

DILC does not permit smoking on the grounds or within the facility.

Complaint Procedures Policy

If there is a problem within the program, it should be identified, discussed, and resolved as soon as possible. Discussion of the situation will progress, as applicable, in this order until a resolution is reached.

1. The staff member involved and the Head Teacher.
2. The Executive Director of the DILC
3. The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 302, Hartford, CT 06103

Appropriate Continuous Supervision of Children

The DILC shall maintain adequate staff available to care for the needs of the children and for the number of children in attendance. This is in accordance with section 19a-79-3a(5) (E) of the Connecticut State Regulations.

There shall be at least two (2) staff members eighteen (18) years of age or older on the premises when one (1) or more children are in attendance. The staff shall

maintain proper visual contact with the children and strive to maintain and ensure a safe environment. For Preschool, there shall be at least one (1) staff person for every ten (10) children, or fraction thereof in attendance. For Toddlers there shall be at least one (1) staff person for every four (4) children, or fraction thereof in attendance. Ratios will remain the same whether inside or out.

Staff shall at all times, including naptime, position themselves in different areas of the classroom to obtain maximum visual contact of all children in attendance.

A staff person shall monitor the bathroom area at all times when children are entering and exiting. If a child is in an area external to the classroom (i.e. outdoor playground) and needs to use the bathroom, a staff person shall accompany the child into the classroom to ensure continuous safety and supervision of the child. If children need assistance in the bathroom, the staff person shall be positioned in the open doorway while assisting the child so that the child's privacy and safety is maintained.

Toddler supervision must be by sight and sound at all times, including when children are sleeping.

Preschool staff will allow children to be out of sight and sound momentarily (i.e. putting something in their cubby), as long as the child is back in sight and sound within one minute. It is permissible for staff members to supervise preschool children by sound for up to five minutes only (i.e. going to the bathroom) before regaining both sight and sound.

School Age children may be out of sight and sound for no longer than 5 minutes.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

- A. To collect all personal property of your child's each day.
- B. To make sure that your child leaves all toys, candy, gum, money (coins) and valuables at home. DILC staff is not responsible for any lost, misplaced, or damages items.
- C. To abide by the DILC policies and procedures.
- D. To pick up your child by the end of your scheduled time (See "Arrival & Departure Procedures").
- E. To become actively involved with the staff and programs that is part of your child's curriculum at the preschool. We encourage all parents to attend special parties, events, and field trips whenever possible.
- F. To take your child's nap items home at the end of every week to be laundered and return them on Monday morning, if Opt2 was chosen.
- G. Please put Band-Aids on open cuts before entering the center.
- H. To keep your child at home if he/she appears to be sick in any way.
- I. To be sure that the staff can reach someone who is authorized to pick up your child in case of emergency or illness.
- J. To sign medication authorization forms for sunscreen/sun block and insect repellents containing DEET.

Parent/Guardian Involvement Plan

In order to provide the best possible care for your child, we need parent involvement. We have an open door policy. Parents are invited to visit our program at any time. Involvement should include:

- A. Daily communication with your child's teacher about the day and happenings at home.
- B. Review of curriculum, memos, and menus posted on the Parent Bulletin Board located at the entrance to the classroom.
- C. Participation in parent conferences about your child's progress and needs.
- D. Visiting and observing in the classroom.
- E. Sharing your time and talents with the children.
- F. Attendance at programs and social events planned in an effort to bring parents, guardians, children, and staff together, whenever possible.

- G. Daily communication with your child's teacher about the day and happenings at home.

NOTE: Parents/guardians entering the program are not allowed to reprimand any of the children.

Drop Interest Council (Parent Advisory Council)

Information on our Drop Interest Council (DIC) and an "Interest Survey" is given to each family after their child has been enrolled. The survey is an opportunity for parents to select areas in which they would like to help in the center. The DIC is comprised of representatives from the families that we serve. Their role is to serve as a body to guide, advise and make recommendations concerning the DILC. They have the opportunity to partner with staff, assist in decision making, facilitate fundraising activities, plan family events, and suggest changes to the program that are in line with our guiding principles. We asked members to commit to a minimum of a 1-year in order to build strong working relationships among parents and teachers. Once the survey information is compiled, the individual interest groups are formed. Building an effective council entails connecting people with like interest and the right skills together.

Home and School Partnership Initiatives

The DILC supports home-school community partnerships in many ways. Parents are encouraged to attend parent-teacher meetings, school events, trainings and workshops. They are invited to go on field trips with their child's class and participate in the "Home-School Connection" classroom activities. Parents and staff communicate regularly and clearly about information important to their child's success. Communication is the foundation of effective partnerships so therefore teachers communicate with parents on a daily bases. It is our belief that when parents take an active role in their child's education, the child tends to succeed throughout their life. Sharing information is accomplished through the means of newsletters, handbooks, parent-teacher conferences, as well as e-mail, and voice mail. Translations should be made available, if needed, to ensure non-English speaking parents are fully informed.

Parenting Education

We encouraged our families to develop their own knowledge and skills. In doing so, we provide our families with a "Community Information Folder," which contains information on GED preparation, literacy instruction, basic adult education, job training, continuing education, and parenting education programs that are offered locally.

Children's Clothing Requirements

Each child must have a complete change of clothing in his/her bin at all times. Your child will experience activities involving water, sand, paint, glue and various other types of play and exploration, which can become messy. Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that you don't mind if they become soiled. Younger children, who are likely to have bathroom accidents, should have several changes of underwear and pants.

If you have a Toddler, please provide at least 5 diapers daily and wipes. We ask that once toilet training has begun, that you provide pull ups and pants that are easily pulled on and off by your child. You and your child's teachers will discuss when it is time for the big boy/girl underwear.

It is expected that children arrive at the center fully dresses and pajamas are left home unless it is a "special" pajama day party.

If you have a preschooler, dress your child in clothing that is easily managed independently and appropriate for preschool (i.e. no belts, overalls, or zippers, that they cannot do themselves).

Hats, mittens, coats and boots are required for the winter and sun block or sun screen with UVB and UVA protection of SPF15 for the summer. The children are taken outdoors daily (weather permitting) so please remember to dress them for the proper weather conditions. Also, remember to change out their extra clothing to season-appropriate when the seasons change. Label all clothing items, including outerwear, with your child's name. When your child wears snow boots bringing an extra pair of shoes is highly recommended.

Evaluation of the Program

We survey our families throughout the year to collect information on program quality. We use a variety of forms (i.e. Family Satisfaction Questionnaires, Communication Survey, Relationship Survey, Facility and Program Environment. In addition DILC collects information for yearly National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) evaluations from parents and staff members. There is a reflective process to assess the effectiveness of the program as measured by NAEYC, School Readiness and DILC Board of Directors. This process involves a Two (2) Drop Interest Council (DIC) and the Board of Directors.

Progress Reports and Assessments

Progress Reports and Assessments are a very valuable tool. We use them to:

- To support communication with parents about the child's growth and development. Parents see one aspect of the child, programs can see another. Sometimes children behave differently outside the home, and sometimes they demonstrate skills, interests or abilities that they haven't had the opportunity to share at home. Parents are better able to support their children if they have more input about the child.
- To help in program planning: Knowing what children can and cannot do and what they are interested in can help to design activities that interest and encourage children. Children's interests can become the topic for learning exploration and skill development of all kinds: cognitive, social / emotional, linguistic, and fine and gross motor.
- To support transitions to new programs. Teachers working with children new to their classroom or program will be better equipped to support and encourage the child if they know something about that child's interests and abilities from the beginning. Progress reports can be instrumental in getting children and teachers off on the right foot.

We invite parents to meet with teachers at a time that is convenient for them. If they are unable to meet with us, we make sure they get a copy of the child's progress report and give them an opportunity for feedback.

Parent Conferences

Notices are placed in parent mailboxes to remind them when it's conference time. They are encouraged to attend to gain more information about their child and to take part in their educational planning. We invite parents to meet with teachers at a time that is convenient for them. If they are unable to meet with us, they receive a copy of the child's progress report and an opportunity for feedback.

After we have shared our observations with parents and obtained their input, we let them know our plans for new and different activities to support and encourage their child's development.

When necessary, staff will refer families to outside programs for assessment from sources such as New London Public School or Birth-to-Three when there are concerns or feel other assessments may be necessary. Staff will assist families throughout the entire process, and support them as requested.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is written when there are concerns regarding aspects of a child's development. A conversation with parents will help to explore whether the same difficulties exist at home. If this is the case, then a discussion can take place about possible reasons for this. If the parents do not share the concerns or see the same behaviors at home it is helpful to ask the parents about the approaches they use at home that could also be used in the classroom setting.

Commitment to Serve All Children

We are committed to serving all children. The children in our program are individuals with diverse needs. Adaptations to our program and classroom environment are made to help children with special needs or disabilities integrate in the least restrictive environment possible. We consult with the New London Public School, Birth to Three and other community resource agencies relative to serving children with special needs or disabilities. We consult with them in effort to gain information, techniques and strategies to utilize with any individuals in our program identified with special needs or disabilities so each child can succeed within the program. If a parent has a concern about a possible special needs that has not yet been identified they are encouraged to speak with administration. The administration will contact necessary resources i.e. New London Public School Early

Childhood Specialists, Child First and United Community and Family Services (UCFS). On a monthly basis, during the Children First Initiative meetings, The Executive Director attends that meeting where the New London Public School Early Childhood Specialists is available to speak with. Teachers will work with the public school and early intervention program to provide an efficient transition for the child and their family from one program to another. Any child with an identified special need or disability has an Individual Education Plan (IEP). After observations of the child, the IEP is developed with the parent/guardian taking an active role in goal setting. The IEP is reviewed bi-annually to determine the degree, in which goals have been met, to reassess goals, and to rewrite the IEP if necessary. If requested by teacher or parent/guardian, the modification of the IEP will be done more frequently

Parent Parking

Parking for dropping off and picking up your child is located in front of the center building. Long-term parking is located on the right side of the tennis courts.

Personal Property

We prefer that children do not bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. a book, CD, video etc.). Children have a difficult time sharing with others, and it's even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought in, please note that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy will be that a child may bring a favorite stuffed animal for naptime only, and toys may be brought for show and tell activities. Each month your child will be given an opportunity to bring something to school for "Show and Tell". We would like for the children to bring in items from home only on their "show and tell" day. This will eliminate confusion, lost and damaged toys. A notice will be sent home to inform you of what day your child has "Show and Tell".

Field Trips

Field trips can be an important enriching experience for our children. Teachers plan trips appropriate for their class that will provide a well-rounded experience.

- Information and permission slips will be put in parent mail boxes each time a field trip is planned. In order to attend a field trip, each child needs a signed permission slip and/or payment of any necessary fee.
- Any child in the class who requires any type of emergency medication (for allergic reactions, etc.) should be accompanied by one of his/her parents who will bring the child's necessary medication for the field trip.
- No siblings may accompany you and your child on the field trip. A sibling is a distraction for the chaperoning parent and for the group and can present a liability for everyone.
- For each field trip there must be adults with CPR and First Aid training. A First Aid kit and Emergency Forms will be taken on the trip.

School Age children will have the opportunities to take field trips during extended days and school vacation breaks. Each week details of the up-coming weekly trip will be provided, including how participants should dress and what items they will need to bring with them. Parents must sign the weekly permission slip in order for their child to participate.

Family Literacy

Children develop reading and writing skills as they grow. Research tells us that young children who participate in conversations, are read to regularly, have books in their home, and develop print awareness have a head start on reading and literacy skills when they enter school. As we read books that your child can understand, including those about similar families and cultures, reading becomes meaningful and engaging.

For Toddlers, it is important to continue to talk to them often; when you feed or bathe child, ask them to name different objects or clothing. You can point out colors, sizes, and shapes. When you read together, point to pictures, identifying them and asking your child to do the same.

Preschoolers learn about letters, numbers, and making sense of text. Because children learn to recognize the shapes of letters and link them with sounds, sharing the alphabet with your preschooler is important. Teach your child the alphabet song, look at alphabet books together, and practice writing his/her name. Remember to continue reading together. Preschoolers will begin to scribble their first form of writing and "pretend read," which is an important first step in learning to read.

When your child enters kindergarten, continue to read together books in which words are repeated and the story is easy to predict. Talk to your child about the stories, allowing him/her to "pretend read" the familiar phrases. He/she will begin memorizing the words and want to read it often. It also is important to write with your kindergartner. You can make an alphabet book or a storybook together. Talk about your writing so she understands that writing means something and has many uses. The following are a few of the many "Family Literacy" activities we have planned.

- "Ready to Read" Night at The Drop - Families are invited to join the New London Public Library staff and the Drop staff for a night of food, fun and information. Families receive information about the programs offered at the library and have the opportunity to obtain library cards. Each child will receive a book of their choice provided by Reading is Fundamental (RIF). Translation will be available for our non-English speaking families.
- Family Literacy Night - A guest speaker will discuss effective approaches to helping young children develop literacy skills. This is another opportunity for the children to receive a book of their choice provided by Reading is Fundamental (RIF).
- Literacy Bags - Children have the opportunity to take home a "Literacy Bag", with a book to read and an activity that parents can do with their child.
- Family Read Week - Throughout the year, families are encouraged to sign-up to read a story to the children in the program. They pick the time and date (within the designated week). Parents may read when they drop off their child, pick up their child or any other appropriate time during the day. We encourage Spanish speaking families to read a Spanish story book.
- Family Night at the Library - Our Families are invited the library to share with their child a "Read-a-Loud" story followed by an art activity that connects to the story.

Transition to Kindergarten Plan

Preparing Parents for the Transition:

We encourage parent involvement in the home and in the classroom. Volunteering to read during story time, to share cultural traditions, or to be a lunch guest are all ways for parents to feel that they are a part of their child's school life. We feel that parent and family involvement increases children's achievement and success. If preschool teachers can make parents feel welcome helping in the classroom, they will be more likely to remain involved in their child's future education. One way to really help the family with transition is to empower the parents to act as advocates for their children. Parent meetings and newsletters can help parents learn how to work with school staff, learn about volunteer opportunities at school, as well as how to prepare their child at home for kindergarten. We give our parents handout with some advice on how to help their children and themselves cope with anxieties related to transitions from preschool to kindergarten.

Preparing Children for Transition:

In the last few weeks of summer, children start getting excited about going to kindergarten, and are apprehensive at the same time. It is important for parents to treat the child's entrance into kindergarten as a normal occurrence and not build up the event in children's minds. An important way to provide continuity for the child is to find preschool classmates or other children who will be in their kindergarten class.

Transition Activities for Parents and Children:

- The more you discuss this transition in a matter-of-fact way, the more comfortable children will become. Encourage parents to prepare their child for kindergarten with the following:
- Visit the school so the children can meet the kindergarten teacher and see what kindergarten is really like. Try to arrange for them to see more than one type of classroom activity, such as seatwork time and free choice time.
- Show them where the bathroom and cubbies are located.
- Find out what lunchtime will be like. If the children are going to be getting a school lunch, they may have to learn how to open new kinds of containers.
- Read books about kindergarten.

- Answer children's questions in a straight forward way about what they will do in kindergarten. Tell them they will listen to stories, do counting activities, have group time, and play outside.
- Explore how long the kindergarten day is and what the daily routine will be like. They will want to know what will be the same as preschool and what will be different.
- If the children are going to a school that presents more diversity than they are familiar with, talk honestly with them about racial and ethnic differences and disabilities.
- If children are going to be taking the school bus for the first time, you will need to discuss school bus safety rules.
- Reassure children that they will be picked up from school every day just as they are in preschool.
- Check to make sure your pre-kindergarten children are capable of basic kindergarten "readiness" skills. Discuss this with your child's preschool teacher.

Transition Activities for Teachers:

- The Drop will support, in collaboration with the New London Public Library and our families a "1,000 Books before Kindergarten" program. This program encourages families to read to their child and chart the books they have read.
- School Readiness preschool teachers will facilitate collaboration between parents and kindergarten and familiarize children with the workings of kindergarten.
- School Readiness preschool teachers will attend Public School open house/orientation.
- School Readiness preschool teachers will provide families with portfolios and assessment records which may be forwarded to kindergarten teachers.
- School Readiness preschool teachers will attend kindergarten transition workshops.

Teaching Staff and Plans for Professional Development

All DILC teachers meet or exceed the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood licensing requirements. All of the head teachers are classified as Quality Staff Members (QSM) and have completed required coursework in early childhood education. Every year, the director, teachers, and assistant teachers must

complete a required number of continued training hours. All of the staff have experience working with young children in a supervised program.

Professional development refers to the ongoing, formal preparation that gives child care staff the knowledge and skills they need to best serve children and families.

Well-designed professional development includes a broad range of activities and audiences:

- It benefits providers in all settings, Toddler, Preschool and School Age classroom
- It responds to the needs of providers at all levels, from entry-level assistants to multi-site directors;
- It spans a continuum of depth of knowledge, from short-term workshop-style training to college-level education.
- Continued professional development for teachers of young children is imperative to stay up to date and keep your teaching skills sharp.

Trainings and workshops will be in the areas of: effective communication with families and children, recognizing and reporting child abuse, early childhood assessments, universal health and safety precautions, serving children with special needs, First Aid/CPR training, positive discipline, social and ethnic diversity, and literacy.

As training becomes available, staff will attend. Some staff members may not be able to attend every training or workshop, so therefore it is the responsibility of those that were able to attend to conduct in-house workshops. These in-house workshops will allow all staff members to have the benefit of the knowledge gained by those who attended.

Staff attends curriculum trainings yearly that are offered by qualified agencies. These trainings give staff the opportunity to explore ways to set up the environment, equipping and using various learning centers found in the classroom. These trainings assist in the effective planning of activities and experiences based on children's individual needs, knowledge, and interest, which impacts the quality of our program.

Staff are encouraged to enroll and complete credit bearing course work as needed.

Vision, Hearing and Dental Screenings

DILC advises parents/guardians to have their child's vision and hearing checked prior to entering the program. We have a representative from a local children's dentist office visit our program which brings literature that encourages families to establish routines for dental check-ups and teeth cleaning. The Lions Club, National annual vision screenings are done on site annually. DILC staff will provide resources and information for referrals of hearing exams if staff notices any abnormally. Parents will be notified and requested to have screening(s) at their earliest convenience.

Fee Policy

The DILC is an independent, nonprofit program. Families are charged a fee determined by either the School Readiness Sliding Fee Scale, Care4Kids, or tuition at the rate determined each year by the DILC Board of Directors. Staff is available to assist families in accessing the Care 4 Kids Program (for School Readiness families applying for Care4Kids is voluntary). Fees are paid on a weekly or monthly basis. Checks are made payable to Drop-In Learning Center.

Weekly tuition is paid in advance and is due by 5:00 PM on Friday for the next week's program. If tuition is not paid by closing time (5:00 PM) on Friday, your child will not be permitted to attend until the tuition is paid. Each business day that the tuition remains unpaid, an additional \$5.00 will be added to the balance. In the event payment is not received for two (2) consecutive weeks, the child will be withdrawn from the program and not allowed to return (a new application must be submitted) until all past due tuition and penalty fees are paid in full.

Monthly tuition payments are paid in advance and are due by 5:00 PM on the last day of the month for the upcoming month. If tuition is not paid by closing time (5:00 PM) on the last day of the month, your child will not be permitted to attend until the tuition is paid. Each business day that the tuition remains unpaid, an additional \$5.00 will be added to the balance.

Tuition is due whether a child is present or absent from the program, regardless of holidays, snow days, vacations, or illness.

Penalty Fees:

- A. **Returned Check Fee:** There will be a \$25.00 charge for a check that is returned by the bank for any reason. This fee, along with the face amount of the check, must be paid (in cash or by money order) before the child can return to preschool. After one returned checks, only cash or money orders will be acceptable as payment for the child's tuition.
- B. **Late Departure Fee:** There will be a charge of \$1.00 for each minute that a parent or guardian is late picking up their child. This late fee must be paid with following week's tuition or the child will not be allowed to return to the program. Time will be calculated using the DILC time clock.
- C. **Late Payment Fee:** If tuition is not paid by on your scheduled payment day (Friday, for weekly payments or the last day of the month, for the monthly payments), your child will not be permitted to attend until the tuition is paid. Each business day that the tuition remains unpaid, an additional \$5.00 will be added to the balance.

Sliding Fee Scale

We use the current (dated June 2025) DSS Sliding Fee Scale form to determine the family fee. Parents are required to submit one (1) month of proof of income from all members of the child's household. Acceptable proof of income includes: pay stubs, previous year's income tax return, unemployment compensation, supplemental security income and/or cash assistance from federal, state and municipally funded programs. All fee calculations are reviewed with parents and parents sign and receive a copy of the calculation form. We are also required to collect proof of New London residency. Acceptable proof of residency includes: electric bill, cable bill or copy of your lease.

The fee is calculated by using the State Median Income Guidelines and family income. Based on this figure, the weekly family contribution is determined. The calculation is then reviewed with parent. Parent will then sign the weekly family contribution sheet and receive a copy. A copy is placed in a confidential binder kept in Executive Director's office.

Re-determination is done every six (6) months. Families are given notice and are requested to submit required paperwork (proof of income and residency,

employment and updated family information). The fee is determined and reviewed with the parent. The fee calculation form is signed and parent receives a copy.

Medical Insurance

If you do not have medical and accident insurance for your child, we encourage you to purchase insurance coverage that is available through the school district. Your family may also be eligible for the Husky Program that is available through the Connecticut Department of Human Services. Connecticut Health Department staff will assist you with completing an application. Call 211 or 1-800-CALL-HUSKY to request forms.

Staff will assist families in completing paper work and making initial appointment if requested. All medical forms are reviewed on a quarterly basis in order to ensure updated and accurate information is on file.

Nutrition Policy

DILC participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a federal program through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The CACFP provides nutritious meals and snacks to infants and children in child care centers and to children participating in eligible at-risk afterschool care programs. To enhance the well-being of children in our program, we focus on healthy nutrition and its impact on physical activity, mental health and oral health.

Daily, breakfast, lunch and snacks including a beverage, are provided to the children in the center. Menus are posted in advance informing what the meals and snacks will consist of. If a family chooses to bring in a lunch for their child, we encourage parents to pack a nutritious lunch (following "My Plate" published by the USDA). Portion sizes vary according to age group.

A nutritious lunch includes:

- a protein such as meat, cheese, peanut butter, eggs, tuna, beans or tofu.
- vegetable and fruit such as salad, fresh or canned fruit in fruit juice not syrup.
- milk or dairy products such as string cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese or pudding
- grains or bread such as rice, pasta, bagel, pita or whole wheat bread.

Families are asked to refrain from bringing soda or candy into the preschool as part of their child's lunch. Milk, 100% fruit juice and unlimited amount of water are the beverage choices.

Parents should label all containers including lunchboxes and bags with their child's name on it. Any heat-able lunch dish must be prepared at home and brought to school in a labeled microwave safe container. Heat-ables may take no longer than one minute to warm in the microwave. This reduces the time your child may have to wait for their lunch.

Along with nutrition, physical activity is important and will be a part of the daily curriculum. Daily, children are engaged in planned physical activity. This will ensure that adequate physical activity is part of the children's day and that the benchmark of 60 minutes is met. Physical activity is defined as an activity that elevates the heart rate, such as;

- Power walking ("Stop and Go" walking)
- Running games
- Follow the leader
- Obstacle course
- Ball play (throw and retrieve, ball kicking)
- Rhythm movement
- Music and dance
- Marching band
- Jump rope
- Parachute games
- DILC's nutrition policy aims to improve the health and well being of all children, by reducing their consumption of unhealthy food and beverage, increasing their intake and knowledge of healthy food and beverage.

Many nutritious foods can be hazardous for young children unless cooked or cut into bite size pieces. Here are some foods that may cause problems:

Size

Both small and large pieces of food may cause choking.

- Nuts, cherries with pits

- Raw carrots, raw broccoli, raw cauliflower
- Hard fruit especially those with peels, such as crisp apples

Shape

Food items shaped like a tube may cause choking because they are more likely to completely block the throat than other shapes.

- Hot dogs
- Link sausage
- Whole carrots
- Grapes
- Frozen banana pieces

Texture

Foods which are firm, smooth, or slick may slide down the throat into the airway.

- Hard candy
- Whole kernel corn
- Peanuts, especially Spanish peanuts

Dry, hard food may be hard to chew yet easy to swallow whole.

- Hard pretzels
- Tortilla chips

Sticky foods can stick to the back of the mouth or roof of the mouth and block the throat. They are difficult to remove.

- Nut butters alone
- Processed cheese chunks/slices

Hard to chew foods which are fibrous or tough.

- Bagels
- Steak, roast, other fibrous meats
- Meat Jerky

Prevention is the best solution:

- Always supervise eating
- Decrease outside distractions
- Cut food into bite size pieces or thin slices
- Cook food until soft, especially beans, pasta and rice
- Steam vegetables, such as carrots and broccoli
- Eating in cars/buses may also cause problems
- Serves small amounts of food at a time

Health Regulations

Each child's parent/guardian must provide the following health information prior to entrance:

- A. A copy of a complete physical assessment of the child (done less than a year prior to entrance). Health records are reviewed every three (3) months to ensure all records are current. You will be notified when your child is due for a well-child exam.
- B. Proof of immunization showing the date on which the child was immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and HIB.

Medication (prescription or non-prescription) can be administered at DILC by our staff. If a child needs medication during the day, a parent or guardian must fill out all necessary forms.

This information is kept in child files and is available to administrators, teachers, parents, legal guardians and program assessors unless indicated by parent/legal guardian not to share file information.

A child who arrives noticeably ill, with rash, fever, or any symptoms of an illness shall not be admitted for that day.

Medications

Some children will require medication while in the childcare setting. We ask that parents administer any medications at home whenever possible. The parents and physician should try to minimize the need for medications while in childcare.

Medicines ordered twice a day should normally be given before and after, rather than during childcare hours. Medications ordered to be given three times daily also may be planned so that they are given in the morning before the child leaves for childcare, in the afternoon after the child returns home, and again during the evening. However, in some cases, administration of medications during childcare hours is unavoidable. All medications (prescription and non-prescription) brought to the DILC must be given to staff with written instructions for dispensing, and with a signed doctor's ordered medication form.

Sick Child Policy

To protect the children attending the center, the following guidelines apply concerning early dismissal of a sick child. If at any time the Head Teacher or Executive Director confirms that child is too ill, contagious, or experiencing behavioral issues (in cases of extreme endangerment to self and others) to stay at the preschool, parents will be notified and he/she will be sent home. If your child displays any of the following symptoms, he/she will be sent home:

- A. Oral temperature of 101 degrees or above
- B. Conjunctivitis: redness in eyes, burning sensation, or thick yellow discharge
- C. Unexplained rashes: these need to be identified by a physician
- D. Impetigo
- E. Ringworm
- F. Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- G. Severe cough
- H. Severe cold with fever
- I. Runny nose with yellow or greenish color

A child will not be permitted back in the program for 24 hours after treatment for the following: Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), severe cough, diarrhea, vomiting, severe cold with fever, Head Lice, Impetigo, Hepatitis A, Pinworms, running nose with yellow or greenish color and Ringworm

Behavioral Policy

To protect the children attending the center, the following guidelines apply concerning early dismissal of a child that displays disruptive behavior that requires constant attention from staff.

If your child displays any of the following symptoms, he/she will be sent home:

- A. Inflict physical or emotional harm on other children
- B. Abuse staff or extreme disruptive behavior
- C. Persistent violent actions: choking, punching, biting, spitting, etc.
- D. Rude and obscene influence: cursing, body language, etc.
- E. Persistent disobedience of the rules which guide behavior during the time spent at DILC

Accident and Injury Policy

All accidents and injuries, regardless of severity shall be documented. Staff will do so using the appropriate accident/injury report form. This report shall describe the injury sustained and care given. The report will be completed immediately following the injury and care. The parent will sign and receive a copy of the completed injury report. When an injury is severe enough to require medical attention, an ambulance shall be called immediately and the parent notified.

Emergency Plan Policy

- A. **Medical Emergency:** In the case of a medical emergency, our staff has been trained in child/infant first aid and CPR. If further medical attention is warranted, 911 will be called, the child will be taken to Lawrence and Memorial emergency room for treatment, and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and alternate coverage will be provided for the classroom.
- B. **Fire Emergency:** The building is equipped with a sprinkler system and a direct link with the New London Fire Department. In case of fire, the building will be evacuated through the emergency door in front. This will

enable quick and convenient evacuation. Fire drills are conducted monthly with the children in order to ensure a safe and orderly exit of the center. The teacher in charge will take the sign in sheet with emergency phone numbers; make a check of the classroom to ensure that all children are out of the building while the remaining staff assists the children with the evacuation process. Outside, a head count will be taken to ensure all children are present. In case of any emergency and children are unable to return to the center; we will temporarily relocate to **the Yarnall Athletic Center**. In the event that the facility must evacuate, **Campus Safety Office will assist with this phase of the evacuation by escorting the DILC children and staff along the path by the little league fields to the Yarnall Athletic Center**. Should it not be possible to return to the building, the caregiver will be contacted via cell phone to pick up their children. If the caregiver cannot be reached then staff will call the emergency contacts to pick their children. Two staff will remain with the children at all times until all the children are pick-up by their caregiver. Parents will then be notified of the situation.

- C. **Severe Weather** (Including Snow): The center will be closed at the discretion of the Executive Director whenever necessary due to severe inclement weather. In the event of snow, families should check the local television stations for a cancellation notice. In the event the preschool is closed in the middle of the day due to inclement weather, parents will be notified by phone and parents are responsible for arranging for pick-up of their child as soon as possible. In the event of severe lightning and thunderstorms where no evacuation is needed, we will relocate to the hallway outside of the preschool classroom where there are no windows.
- D. **Nuclear Emergency**: This outline summarizes concepts and action that will be taken by DILC in the event of an emergency of the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant.

I. DESCRIPTION OF EMERGENCY PLANNING ZONE AROUND MILLSTONE.

A. EMERGENCY PLANNING ZONE

1. The Emergency Planning Zone consists of an area of about ten (10) miles in radius around the nuclear facility. The communities located within approximately 10-miles of the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant referred to as the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) are: East Lyme, Groton City, Groton Town, Ledyard, Lyme, Montville, New London, Old Lyme, Waterford, and Fishers Island, NY.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

A. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Parents are urged to listen for public announcements released through the Emergency Alert System (EAS).
2. If you hear a steady tone lasting approximately three (3) minutes, listen to the Emergency Alert System (EAS) radio or television stations below for more detailed information and any instructions.

a. Radio Stations

WTIC 1080 AM	WSUB 980 AM	WMRD 1150 AM
WICH 1310 AM	WLIS 1420 AM	WTIC 96.5 FM
WDRC 102.9 FM	WNPR 89.1 FM	WPKT 90.5 FM
WCTY 97.7 FM	WNLC 98.7 FM	WKNL 100.9 FM
WAXK 102.3 FM	WIHS 104.9 FM	WQGN 105.5 FM
WBMW 106.5 FM		

b. TV Stations

WFSB-Ch. 3	WTNH-Ch. 8	WHPX-Ch. 26
WVIT -Ch. 30	WTIC-Ch. 61	

3. Prepared announcements will generally fall into the following categories:
 - a. Initial alert
 - b. Take shelter
 - c. School evacuation

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. ALERT

1. An alert message will be broadcast when special circumstances exist that warrant notification of the public prior to any requirement to take shelter or evacuate.
2. Building operations will be continued according to regular schedule.

B. TAKE SHELTER

1. The governor will request that people living, working or traveling in a ten (10)-mile area around the facility take shelter.
2. Children attending DILC will take shelter within the building until ordered to evacuate, continue normal operations, or proceed with an alternative plan a directed by the Emergency Management Agency.

C. EVACUATION/SCHOOL EVACUATION

If the governor recommends the evacuation of all persons living or working within a ten (10)-mile radius of Millstone:

1. Parents with children attending school within the ten (10)-mile of Millstone are advised that their children are subject to the school's evacuation plan while school is in session.
2. Children attending DILC will be evacuated to **Windham High School 355 High Street Willimantic, CT 06226 (860) 465-2460**. The children will be transported by bus and/or van to the designated shelter.
3. Once an evacuation has been ordered, parents are urged to **pick up their children at Windham High School, located on 355 High Street Willimantic, CT 06226 (860) 465-2460. Please do not pick up children at DILC.**

Parents are urged to cooperate with school officials. Do not try to enter schools within the ten (10)-mile zone once an evacuation has been ordered. Upon entering a school building outside the ten (10)-mile zone, please abide by the regulations established by school officials. Properly identify yourself and before leaving with

your son/daughter be certain his/her name has been taken off the class list. Review the plan of operation at Parent meetings, so that you are familiar with the procedures that will be followed. All parents should take time to review your plan of action with each member of your family should an order to evacuate be issued. Should an incident at Millstone be announced, two of the most critical problems will be communications and transportation. Parents are urged to listen carefully to public announcements over the Emergency Alert System (EAS) radio or television stations and avoid calling or driving to schools located in the ten (10)-mile zone. Your cooperation in implementing this plan will be absolutely necessary if we are to protect the health and safety of our children.

Evacuation Procedures

- A. The Executive Director or Office Manager arranges bus transportation.
- B. Children will wear nametags with identifying information and K1 information.
- C. Children and staff will be transported by bus and/or van, where they will remain accompanied by teacher(s) while parents/guardians/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made for their pick-up.
- D. Staff will take with them:
 - a. Children's file w/emergency contact names and numbers.
 - b. Envelope containing K1 pills along with names and pictures of children who are not able to take the pill.
 - c. Water, Food (snacks), Blankets and First-aid Kit.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policies and Procedures

All DILC staff is mandated reporters and has the responsibility to prevent child abuse-neglect of children enrolled in our program. In the case where child abuse-neglect is suspected, staff is required by law to file a report with Department of Children and Families (DCF). The purpose for reporting is to protect the child and to help a family maintain a safe and healthy environment. Parents are also encouraged to notify the preschool immediately of incidents occurring which causes physical injury or emotional stress to their child.

I. SUMMARY OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

PUBLIC POLICY OF STATE OF CONNECTICUT

The public policy of this state is to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect; to strengthen the family and to make the home safe for children by enhancing the parental capacity for good child care; to provide a temporary or permanent nurturing and safe environment for children when necessary, and for these purposes to require the reporting of suspected child abuse, investigation of such reports by a social agency, and provision of services, where needed to such child and family.

WHAT IS DCF AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

DCF is the Department of Children and Families. All children's protective services are the responsibility of DCF. DCF must evaluate and/or investigate child abuse-neglect reports when received. If abuse-neglect is found evident, DCF will proceed to protect the child, following an appropriate procedure meeting the needs of that particular case.

WHO IS MANDATED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE-NEGLECT?

- Any person who works with children in any public or private facility, day care center or family day care home which is licensed by the State.
- Many professions are MANDATED, or required by law to report suspected abuse; physicians, nurses, dentists, teachers, social workers, public officers, day care employees, and many more.
- Mandated reporters are required to report, or cause a report to be made, when in their professional capacity they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 has been abused, neglected or is placed at imminent risk of serious harm by a person responsible for the child's health, welfare or care, or by a person given access to the child by the responsible person.
- Therefore, All Employees and Volunteers At DILC Who Work With Children At Any Time Are Mandated To Report Suspected Abuse-Neglect Immediately.

IS THERE A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Yes. The staff is required to attend educational training programs for the accurate and prompt identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

- Mandatory training shall be provided for all new staff prior to their assuming childcare responsibilities.
- Mandatory training shall also be provided to update and refresh all staff annually.
- Documentation of such training will be maintained at the Center and available for Department review.

DO THOSE MANDATED TO REPORT INCUR LIABILITY?

No. Any person, institution, or agency, which, in good faith, makes or does not make a report, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability provided such person did not perpetrate or cause such abuse or neglect.

IS THERE A PENALTY FOR MAKING A FALSE REPORT?

Yes. Any person, institution or agency that knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or neglect shall be fined not more than \$2,000 or imprisoned not more than one year or both. The identity of such person shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

DOES LAW FROM DISCRIMINATION OR RETALIATION PROTECT STAFF PERSONS FOR REPORTING ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

Yes. No employer shall discharge, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against, any employee who in good faith makes a report or testifies in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes.

WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

An oral report shall be made by a mandated reporter by telephone or in person to the Hotline or to a law enforcement agency within 12 hours of having, in their professional capacity, reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected or is placed at imminent risk of serious harm. If a law enforcement agency receives an oral report, it shall immediately notify Hotline. Within 48 hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall submit a

written report to Hotline (Note: Oral reports to the Hotline shall be recorded on tape). Mandated reporters are under no legal obligation to inform parents that they have made a report to DCF about their child. In deciding whether there is a suspicion of abuse/neglect, it may be necessary and/or beneficial for a professional to talk with parents/guardians. However, in cases of serious physical abuse or sexual abuse, it may not be wise to talk with parents before reporting the case to DCF. This may put the child at greater risk and interfere with a possible criminal investigation. If the mandated reporter is a staff person of the Center: The reporter shall also submit a copy of the written report to the person in charge or the person's designee. A copy of the written report shall also be sent to: the Executive Head of the State-Licensing Agency and the Executive Director of Center. The person in charge of the Center must immediately notify the child's parent or other person responsible for the child's care that a report has been made. The employer shall maintain confidential documentation of all abuse/neglect records including, but not limited to, written abuse/neglect reports, disciplinary and/or corrective action plans by the employer and the State-Licensing Agency.

ARE ACTIONS TAKEN IF A STAFF PERSON IS ALLEGED IN ABUSE/NEGLECT?

Yes. The DILC Executive Director and/or the Board President shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective actions for allegations of child abuse/neglect report concerning an employee. DILC maintains a zero tolerance policy for child abuse and neglect.

Whenever DCF, based on the results of an investigation, has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected by a staff member of the facility providing childcare, DCF shall notify the facility and provide records concerning the investigation to the Executive Director.

The Center may suspend the employee. The suspension must be with pay, not diminish or terminate the employee's benefits and remain in effect until resolved by the person's employer.

Disciplinary actions are private. Only the necessary parties at the Center will be included in any action taken. Any violation may, at the discretion of the employer and with or without a verbal and or written warning, be grounds for immediate termination.

WHAT MUST BE REPORTED?

If a mandatory reporter has reasonable cause to suspect or believe any of the following has been inflicted upon a child or youth by a person responsible for such child's health, welfare or care, or by a person given access to such child by such responsible person, you are mandated to report it (Note: A non-mandated reporter may report "in danger of abuse.").

Child Abuse: any child under the age of 18, who has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon them by a person responsible for their health, welfare, or by a person given access to the child by the responsible person other than by accidental means or has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment or has been neglected.

Physical Abuse refers to the act or failure to act by a parent or caretaker that causes some physical injury or some impairment of future growth and development of the child.

Sexual Abuse: is exposure of a child to sexual stimulation that is inappropriate for the child's level of psychosexual development. Emotional Abuse is a form of maltreatment including the parent's/guardian's lack of love and proper direction, inability to accept a child with the child's potentialities as well as the child's limitations, and failure to encourage the child's normal development by assurance of love and acceptance.

Child Neglect: any child under the age of 18, who has been abandoned, or is being denied proper care and attention, physical emotionally or morally or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to their well-being.

Physical Neglect refers to the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, medical attention, shelter, supervision and protection. Emotional Neglect refers to extreme lack of attention, affection and emotional support; or permitting serious misconduct; or refusal of recommended treatment of services (recommended by school officials, or medical personnel, etc.).

Child at Risk: reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is in danger of being abused as opposed to belief that the abuse has actually occurred.

Child Under 13 with Venereal Disease: a physician or facility must report to Hotline upon the consultation, examination or treatment for venereal disease of any child not more than 12 years old.

WHAT STEPS ARE TAKEN TO PROVIDE VICTIMS OF ABUSE/NEGLECT WITH NEEDED MEDICAL SERVICES?

Staff using the appropriate injury report shall document all injuries, regardless of severity. This report shall state a description of the injury sustained and care given. This will be done immediately following the injury. The parent will sign and receive a copy of the completed injury report.

All oral and written reports shall contain, if known, whatever action, if any was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child. When an injury is severe enough to require medical attention, an ambulance shall be called immediately and then the parent notified. In the case of a medical emergency, our staff has been trained in child/infant first aid and CPR. If further medical attention is warranted, 911 will be called and the child will be taken to the Lawrence and Memorial emergency room for treatment, and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

DO PRIVATE CITIZENS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORTING?

Yes. A separate section of the law indicates that any person in addition to those specifically mandated shall give an oral or written report to DCF, when there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse-neglect. Such a person making the report in good faith is also immune from liability, civil or criminal. There is however, no penalty for not reporting. However, the person is subject to the penalty for making a false claim.

II. PROCEDURES TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE/NEGLECT

Any staff member who suspects that a child is being abused/neglected by anyone is mandated to report it to DCF immediately.

Call DCF Hotline at 1-800-842-2288 to report suspected abuse; ask for Intake Screener. If urgent, local or state police should be contacted first. Mandated reporters are required to give their names and professional address when making a report, however, anonymity may be requested. This means that the reporter's name would not be disclosed unless required by law, i.e. criminal prosecution or a court hearing where a reporter's testimony is required. Be prepared to give child's name, address, date of birth or age, parent/guardian's name and address.

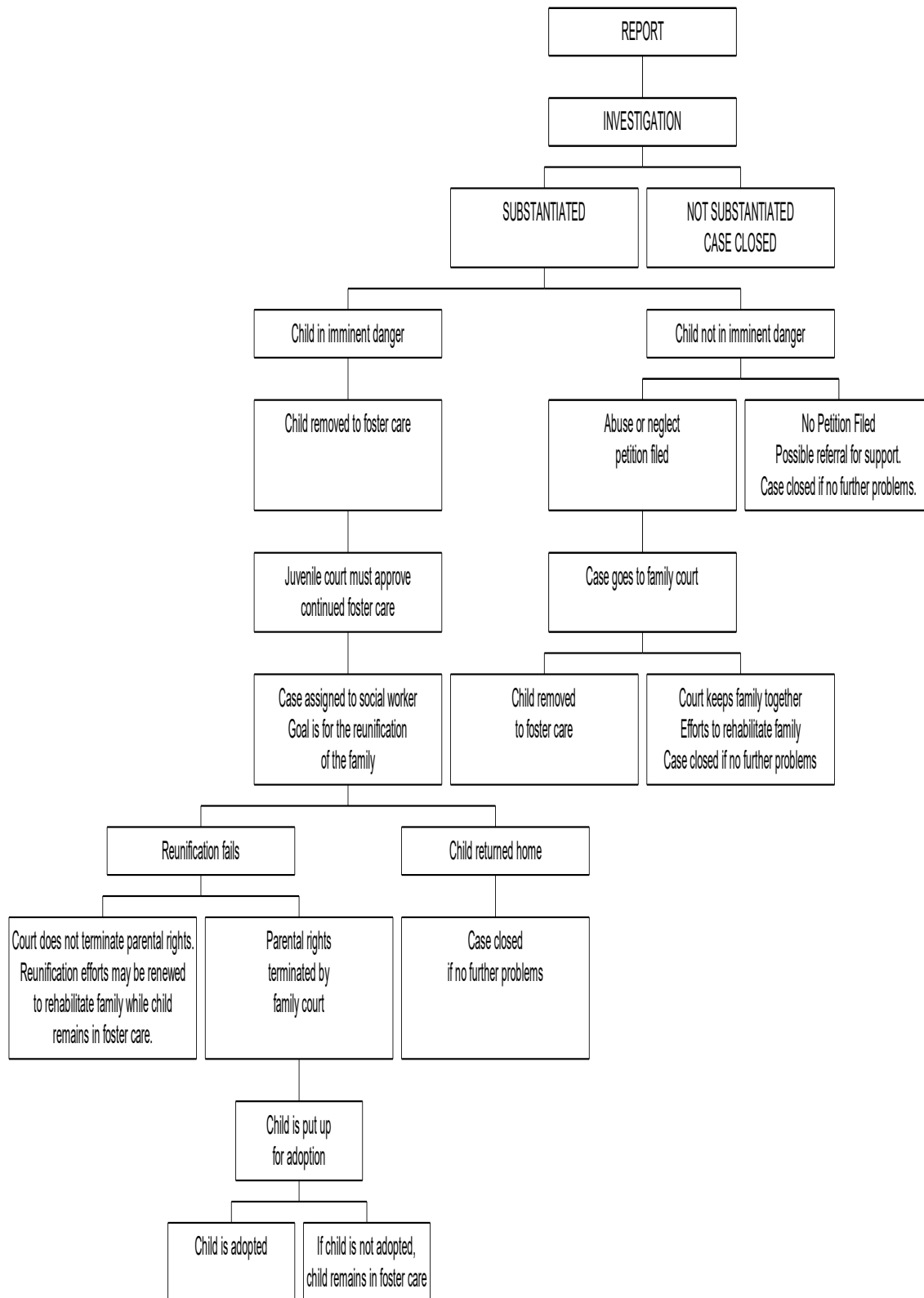
Make sure you get DCF worker's name and write it down. Describe nature of incident, injury, behavior, etc. Have there been other injuries, incidents, etc.? How are other children who live in the home? If you are not sure that the information you have should be reported, call and tell a caseworker what you have documented. DCF will assist you in deciding whether a report must be made or not. Ask the caseworker for guidance. If appropriate, talk to the child in a calm, non-threatening manner about child's version of the incident. Record on appropriate observation forms (health and education) what the child says in his/her own words. Section 11 of Public Act 97-319 requires that mandated reporters submit a written report (DCF-136 "Report of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect") to DCF within 48 hours of making an oral report. The staff person who observed the incident/injury and who made the phone report to DCF, must also complete the written report. The white copy of the report must be sent to Department of Children & Families (DCF) at 2 Courthouse Square, Norwich, CT 06360.

The yellow copy must be kept on file at Child Works Preschool. A brief, factual, written description of the incident/observation/injury/behavior must be recorded in the child's center or home-base file. Documentation should NOT BE incriminating, biased, opinionated or judgmental. Give facts only.

III. DCF INVESTIGATION OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT REPORT

Upon the receipt of a child abuse/neglect report, Hotline shall cause the report to be classified, evaluated immediately and forwarded to the appropriate investigation unit for the commencement of an investigation within timelines specified by statute and policy.

Diagram: What happens to reports of child abuse?



Annual Handbook Review Policy and Procedures

It is our policy to ensure we are always maintaining the highest quality of care. We are striving to provide the best possible childcare, far exceeding the requirements set out by Licensing to ensure our policies and procedures reflect the best practices and all new philosophies that are being used in the Early Childhood Education Field. We have made it our policy to review our Staff, Parent, and Policies and Procedures Handbooks Annually. This revision process will first be done by the Management Team, then with the Drop Interest Council (DIC) parents who wish to help and all of the staff. Communication of this process will be done verbally, via email, notices, and in the newsletter. Once all reviews are completed and adjustments have been made, the new handbooks will be put into place and all staff will re-read and sign off on all sections of the handbooks. New copies of the revised handbooks will be made available to all the parents.