

University Heights United Methodist Children's Center 2017-2018 Parent Handbook



4002 Otterbein Avenue

Indianapolis, Indiana 46227

Telephone: 317-787-5865

Fax: 317-787-7696

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the University Heights United Methodist Church, we welcome your family to our childcare ministry.

Our Children's Center is an extension of the church's ministry to young children. Through its programs we seek to offer support to parents as well as guidance to their children in social and cognitive development.

As a part of this ministry, we also consider you to be a part of our extended church family. Please feel free to attend services or participate in any church activities that may be of interest to you.

If you have questions or concerns about any aspect of our Church's ministry, including the Children's Center, any of us will be happy to discuss them with you.

Thank you for sharing your children with us and allowing us to be a part of their very special early years.

In Christ,

Chris Roberts
Assistant Director

Arch Hawkins
Senior Pastor

Table of Contents

MISSION.....	PAGE 4
PHILOSOPHY.....	PAGE 4
PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM.....	PAGE 5
PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND CONFERENCING.....	PAGE 6
REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT.....	PAGE 6
INFANTS.....	PAGE 7
TODDLERS.....	PAGE 7
TWO-THREE YEAR OLDS.....	PAGE 8
THREE-FOUR YEAR OLDS.....	PAGE 8
FOUR-FIVE YEAR OLDS.....	PAGE 8
PRE-K CLASS.....	PAGE 8
FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS.....	PAGE 9
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.....	PAGE 9
CALENDAR.....	PAGE 10
PAYMENT INFORMATION.....	PAGE 10
VACATION TIME/ REDUCED TIME/ HOLDING FEE.....	PAGE 11
ABSENCES.....	PAGE 11
STAFF ABSENCES.....	PAGE 11
HEALTH AND ILLNESS.....	PAGE 12
BITING.....	PAGE 13
GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE.....	PAGES 13-14
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.....	PAGE 14
LATE DEPARTURES/EARLY ARRIVAL CHARGES.....	PAGE 14
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CHILDREN’S CENTER.....	PAGE 15
SCHOOL CLOSING.....	PAGE 15
PROHIBITIONS.....	PAGE 15
SAFE ENVIRONMENT.....	PAGE 16
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.....	PAGE 16
PERSONAL BELONGINGS.....	PAGES 17
DRESS.....	PAGES 18
DIAPERING AND TOILETING.....	PAGE 19
FUND RAISERS AND DONATIONS.....	PAGE 19
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK.....	PAGE 20

MISSION

University Heights United Methodist Children's Center offers quality care and education to children in our community from infants through age five in our child care ministry. We accept children and their families without regard for family structure, religion, race or socio-economic background.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that children learn best in a safe and nurturing environment when presented with a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences. We seek to engage all children by planning activities that address a variety of learning styles. Here at the Children's Center, we recognize that a well-rounded education for young children involves developing their social, emotional, physical and cognitive well-being.

PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

University Heights United Methodist Children's Center is a registered childcare ministry. At the time of publication, we are rated as a Level 3 Paths to QUALITY provider. This means we are qualified to accept children who use CCDF vouchers, On my Way to Pre-K grants and Preschool Scholarship Program recipients.

Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

The Children's Center serves infants from six weeks of age through children who are ready to attend Kindergarten.

We are a developmentally appropriate, play based child care provider. Curriculum is developed from our children's interests and follows the Indiana Early Learning FOUNDATIONS aligned to the most recent edition of the Indiana Academic Standards. It is our goal to insure that every child that proceeds through and completes our program demonstrates kindergarten readiness skills. Our teachers monitor progress using the Developmental Checklists Birth to Five and ISTAR-KR matrices.

Our daily curriculum includes both teacher directed and child directed activities to meet diverse learning styles. Many of our teachers use a thematic approach to meet this goal. Children are offered a choice of activities from ten learning interest centers as part of best practice for early childhood. These centers include reading, writing, art, blocks, dramatic play, math, music/movement, sensory, science/nature and manipulatives. Teacher directed activities include small group instruction, art projects, and Circle Time. Circle Time consists of classroom discussion, calendar and weather activities, participation activities and read-aloud story time. Additionally, large muscle time is included for all classrooms. This may occur in the classrooms of our youngest children, on the age appropriate outdoor playground, or in Fellowship Hall during times of inclement weather.

We seek to partner with the community to provide fun and educational experiences for our children both onsite as well as on field trips for our older classes. Recently we have worked with the University of Indianapolis to enhance science and health education, the Beech Grove High School Music Department to

promote music and movement and the Indianapolis, Marion County Library for literacy and with parent volunteers with specific skill sets.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND CONFERENCING

We encourage parent involvement, and have an open door policy for parents during the hours of operation. Parents are invited to visit the classroom during instruction and activity periods, and may have lunch with their child. Consider volunteering in classrooms and on field trips as your schedule allows. We strive to keep the lines of communication open. To this end we will schedule at least one formal conference with parents/guardians. Parents or staff may request additional conferences throughout the year. We welcome brief conversations at arrival and dismissal as well as calls, emails and notes as needed to relay information.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

Upon enrollment in our program, parents will be given an enrollment packet which includes this handbook and a variety of required forms. It is the parents' responsibility to complete and update these forms in a timely manner with the appropriate signatures. The enrollment packet includes:

- Annual Registration Form with an annual registration/ supply fee
- Parental Agreement of Financial Responsibility (located on back of Registration Form
- Health Record signed by the child's physician with current Immunization Record attached
- Safe Transportation of Food Responsibility
- Discipline/ Guidance Policy
- Day Care Ministry Parent Notice
- Late Pick-Up Fee Policy
- Receipt of Parent Handbook
- Receipt of Transportation Policy
- Record of Medication Order for sunscreen and insect repellent (parent signature) and over-the-counter, as needed medications/ ointments or prescriptions
- Get Acquainted Form and Photo Release form

INFANTS 6 weeks- 1 year

Lambs / Cubs

Available on full time basis only

Adult to child ratio 1:3

Infant caregivers provide lots of one-on-one, nurturing attention to the children in their care during diapering, feeding and sleepy time. Caregivers encourage “tummy time” to develop core muscles. Infants are expected to sleep in their cribs while in group care. Our commitment to Safe Sleep practices prohibits sleeping in car seats, bouncers, swings or anywhere other than in arms or a designated crib. Parents can help support caregivers by establishing good sleep habits at home. See the Safe Sleep Policy form for specific sleep practices.

Parents of infants will be given and are required to complete the following documents which will become part of the child’s file while at UHUMCC. These policies include but are not limited to:

- Safe Sleep** as recommended by American Academy of Pediatrics and as required by our state licensing consultant
- **Breast Milk Procedure** required by the Bureau of Child Care if applicable
- Suggested Feeding Plan** required by the Bureau of Child Care

TODDLERS 1 year-2 years

Bears/Caterpillars

Available on full time or part time basis

Adult to child ratio 1:5

Children at this age transition to a common naptime and move from a crib to a designated cot. We encourage self-feeding as we move from highchair to tables and chairs. Sippy cups are appropriate at this age.

Preschool is included throughout the day at the Children’s Center for ages two and up. Children typically have lunch in the 11:00 hour. Nap or rest time is offered from 12:30-3:00. Children who no longer nap are asked to rest for 30 minutes before resuming play.

TWO-THREE YEAR OLDS

Tadpoles

Available on full time or part time basis

Adult to child ratio 1:5

THREE-FOUR YEAR OLDS

Joeys

Available on full time or part time basis

Adult to child ratio 1:10

FOUR-FIVE YEAR OLDS

Gators

Available on full time or part time basis

Adult to child ratio 1:12

PRE-K CLASS

Children should be 4 years by August 1st of the current school year to be eligible for Kindergarten by the start of the following year. Few exceptions apply.

There are fulltime and part time options for this class.

The fulltime option is for Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. with before and after care included in the full time tuition rate.

The part time option meets three days a week from 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. This option is billed monthly. If before or after care is needed, then an hourly rate will be billed separately from the monthly tuition.

Kindergarten readiness skills are refined in this class. Emphasis is placed on letter and number recognition, beginning writing skills, and phonemic awareness. Field trips and community partnership experiences enhance the curriculum.

FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Field trips, guests, and other special events add variety to our curriculum. Parents will notified of any field trips and will be asked to sign a permission form before each field trip. No group will leave the Children's Center, however, without prior notification of parents, except for brief walks in the neighborhood.

Parent volunteers and staff will generally provide transportation for field trips. All drivers must complete an “Application for Qualified Driver Status” and provide a copy of their driver’s license, registration as well as an insurance card. We ask that this be completed a week prior to any field trip. All children will be required to have a car seat. Parents who accompany us on the field trip will provide extra adult supervision. Due to space limitations, no siblings are allowed to attend field trips. At times it may be necessary to limit the number of parent volunteers depending on the type and location of the field trip.

Children under the age of two may go on stroller rides and walks in the surrounding neighborhood of University Heights United Methodist Children’s Center or on the grounds of the University of Indianapolis. Children older than two may also go on walks in the surrounding neighborhood or on the grounds of the University of Indianapolis.

Parents will be issued the University Heights United Methodist Transportation Policy to sign upon enrollment which further details our policy for transporting children.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All of the children in our care deserve individualized attention; however we recognize that some children are identified as having special needs. We support these children and their families through the following:

- When you enroll your child, make sure you complete the “Additional Notes and Instructions” portion of the Health Record. If more space is required, additional pages may be attached. These pages may include notes from parents, doctors, therapists or other professionals that work with your child.
- A parent/ teacher/ administrator conference may be scheduled to determine the best placement for the child’s developmental needs. This placement may be different than that of a peer of the same age.
- The conference will determine if University Heights UM Children’s Center can safely and effectively meet the needs of the child, as well as goal-

setting and what specific accommodations will be put into place for the child.

- A minimum of one annual conference will be held to evaluate the modifications made to insure that the child's needs are being met. Additional conferences may be called by a parent and/or the provider's request.
- If it is determined that University Heights UM Children's Center can meet the child's needs, every attempt will be made to integrate the child into ongoing group activities with the other children in the classroom.
- Staff will follow through with activities and interactions recommended by other professionals working with the child.
- Parent(s) and teachers will communicate with one another regarding any needs or program changes in a timely manner.

CALENDAR

The Children's Center is closed the week between Christmas and New Year's, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday following Thanksgiving. Additionally, we close for one Professional Development day each semester.

Refer to the current calendar posted on the Parent Bulletin Board located outside the office for specific dates, including Parent/Teacher Conference dates.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Current rates are listed on the registration form.

Payments are expected on the first day of the week in which the child attends. Tuition payments not received by the close of business Wednesday for child care, or the first Wednesday of month for Pre K only will be subject to a \$10.00 late fee. There is a service charge of \$50.00 for any returned check from the bank for insufficient funds. Payments should be made in advance of child care services.

We accept CCDF vouchers, Indy PSP, On my Way to Pre-K vouchers, cash or checks. We are not able to process credit card payments. Checks may be made payable to UHUMCC. Please include your child's name on your check as well as the week or weeks covered by the payment. Payment may be made in the office

or by mail using the address located on the front cover of this handbook. Please do not send payment in your child's lunchbox or backpack.

Once payment has been processed, you will receive an E-statement sent to your designated email address. There will be no refunds or deductions for absences for any cause, the exception being when a child is absent due to an illness that lasts for more than three consecutive weeks at which time the office will need a physician's written statement for any tuition payment adjustment to be considered.

VACATION TIME/ REDUCED TIME/ HOLDING FEE

Children who have completed six months of year round, full time care receive one week of vacation time that does not require a payment. Arrangements for using vacation time must be made with the office to avoid being charged a full rate. Parents will not be charged for the Christmas Break period indicated on the school calendar, the two day Thanksgiving Break or New Year's Day.

ABSENCES

If a child will not be in care due to vacation or family plans, parents are asked to notify the office as soon as possible. If the child is ill, please notify the office via phone or email the morning of the child's absence.

STAFF ABSENCES

In the event of a staff member absence due to personal time off, illness, injury or death the staff member will be replaced with a another staff member as the situation warrants. If a substitute is not available, children may be reassigned to another classroom temporarily to maintain the appropriate child to adult ratio.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

The Children's Center is required to have a Health Record with an attached immunization record on file for all children in attendance. This form must be signed by a physician or nurse practitioner. Immunization records must be current. Therefore, with each new immunization, please give the office a copy.

If you believe your child may need over-the-counter medications, ointments, insect repellent or sunscreen while at the Children's Center, you must have an annual Record of Medication order completed by the child's physician. This allows us to store medications as needed for use on site. Parents may sign off on sunscreen and insect repellent. All other treatments and medications must have a physician's signature. Should your child receive a prescription medication, please stop by the office to drop off the medication and complete the necessary paperwork. All prescription medications must be transported in the original container with the prescription details and are kept locked in the office.

Parents are asked not to bring sick children to the Children's Center. We do not have facilities to isolate children who may have a contagious illness, and we cannot keep them with the other children. Ill children require more individualized attention than caregivers are able to provide in a group setting, and children simply do not feel well enough for group care.

If your child is running a fever (as defined as a temperature of 100 degrees or more), has vomited in the past 24 hours, has diarrhea, conjunctivitis (pink eye), a skin rash, or evidence of lice or scabies infestation, do not bring them to the child care. If any of these symptoms occur while the child is at the Children's Center, we will call the parent or guardian to come and get the child. We expect sick children to be picked up within one hour. Please have an alternate plan for your child in the event that you are unable to leave work yourself. Be advised that a child that has been sent home because of illness cannot return to care until they have been symptom free without the aid of medication for 24 hours. Again, we suggest an alternate plan for these inevitable occurrences.

Parents will be notified if their child has been exposed to a serious communicable disease at the Children's Center.

Occasionally injuries do occur. Parents will be informed immediately of any injury the caregiver and Director consider to be serious in nature. If an accident results in a minor bump or scrape, the incident will be reported on a written "Ouch Report" and explained to the parent at the time of dismissal, if requested. Parents are responsible for keeping emergency contact information up-to-date. Any change in home or work telephone numbers is especially important.

BITING

Biting is a developmental issue that is common in children under the age of three. An understanding of various reasons while children bite, along with a positive approach to handling this behavior is essential for caregivers and parents. More detailed information regarding how we respond to biting at the Children's Center is available upon request.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

The environment of the Children's Center is planned to promote positive learning experiences for the children and enjoyable interactions amongst children as well as between children and their teachers. The goal of the Children's Center is to help each child develop a feeling of self-confidence and success. Therefore, discipline will be approached with the idea that children need to learn self-control as well as understand and apply rules of behavior.

The teachers will convey an attitude of firmness with kindness in explaining limits and expectations for children's behavior. Each child's individual rights will be respected at all times.

When misbehaviors are addressed **we will not:**

- Use threats or bribes
- Use physical punishment
- Deprive your child of food or other basic needs
- Humiliate or isolate

When misbehaviors are addressed **we will:**

- Respect your child
- Establish clear rules
- Be consistent in enforcing rules
- Use positive language to explain desired behavior
- Speak calmly, at eye-level with the child
- Redirect behavior to a new activity
- Move your child to time out only if they are age 3 or older and for no longer than one minute per year of the age of the child

If your child's behavior is very disruptive, a private parent/ teacher/ director conference may be scheduled to discuss our next steps.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our center opens for childcare at 7:00 a.m. and closes at 5:30 p.m... If a child comes to our center only for preschool, he or she should arrive at 9:00 a.m. and will dismiss at 12:00. Pre-K dismisses at 2:00 p.m. rather than 12:00p.m...

Parents will accompany their child to the classroom upon arrival. Parents should not leave until a caregiver has acknowledged the child's arrival. Usually brief and positive goodbyes in the morning make for the easiest transitions for parents, caregivers and children. Parents with more than one child in the program should drop off the youngest child last and pick up the youngest child first.

Children WILL NOT be released to anyone other than those designated on the authorized pick up list included on the registration form. In an emergency the parent may call and notify the office staff that another person will be picking up the child. In this case staff will ask for proper identification before the child is released.

LATE DEPARTURES/EARLY ARRIVAL CHARGES

University Heights Children's Center operates with an NO EXCEPTION LATE POLICY which states that a fee of \$1 for every minute that your child is in the building beyond 5:35 will be automatically added to your account. You will receive a "late pick-up notice" in writing and by email the day following late pick-up. It will state how many minutes late and the appropriate fee. This amount must be paid by the end of the week.

We understand that a rare occasion may arise in which late pick-up is unavoidable. However, chronic or habitual late pick-up will not be tolerated, and

care may be terminated. Parents are advised to be weather-aware on a daily basis so as to make necessary arrangements for a timely pick-up.

Upon the fourth late pick-up, a penalty of \$30 will be billed in addition to the applicable per minute fee.

Likewise, parents should not plan to drop off children prior to 7:00 a.m...

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CHILDREN'S CENTER

A two-week written notice is required prior to withdrawing a child from care. If notice is not given, parents are expected to pay the equivalent of two weeks of childcare. The security deposit paid at the time of registration will be applied to the final bill.

SCHOOL CLOSING

The Children's Center is closed all major holidays as indicated on the current school year calendar. We are also closed from Christmas Eve until at least January 2 of the following year.

Should the Children's Center need to close for inclement weather or an unsafe building situation, an announcement will be sent to WTHR Channel 13 and WISH Channel 8. It will be reported as University Heights Children's Center. Parents are encouraged to be "weather aware" and check for school closure. It is best to have an alternate plan in place in case we are closed.

PROHIBITIONS

University Heights Children's Center does not allow:

- The use of tobacco in our facility or where child care is being provided
- Use or possession of alcohol or any illegal substance in our facility or where child care is being provided
- The possession of a fire arm
- The use of toxic substances either intentionally or unintentionally

In the event that a parent or person from the authorized pick-up list arrives to pick up a child while seemingly intoxicated, staff will attempt to delay the impaired parent as long as possible. First, the provider will attempt to contact the

other parent or other authorized persons indicated on the registration form. IF no adult from the authorized pick up list can be reached, or IF the intoxicated parent refuses to cooperate/acts in a threatening manner, a judgement will be made by Children's Center staff as to what a reasonable person would do under similar circumstances concerning release. For instance, alerting police and/ or Child Protective Services. Child care services provided by University Heights Children's Center will be terminated immediately.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

University Heights Children's Center is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children. Our building is secured with locked doors. Registered parents are issued key fobs for entry. All visitors and guests are required to use the intercom system in order to be identified, greeted and allowed entry into our facility.

All children are actively supervised within sight and sound of our staff. As conditions of employment, all staff are fingerprinted, background checked, have passed both drug testing and TB testing, have had a physical screening, and are trained in First Aid, CPR and Universal Precautions. Additionally, staff participate in annual training in the detection and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

We strive to keep the building and grounds in good repair, and will keep children from areas where maintenance and repair is being completed.

Our facility is cleaned daily. Equipment, toys and furniture are sanitized weekly, as they become soiled using the recommended bleach solution for the items being sanitized.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire and tornado evacuation routes are posted in all rooms and adult restrooms. We practice regular fire and tornado drills. If we are required to evacuate our building and cannot return, our alternate location is the University of Indianapolis/Good Hall, located on Otterbein Avenue. All parents will be notified by telephone if we are required to change locations. Should an emergency occur, the Children's Center staff will be assisted by the church office staff. Calls will be

made to the appropriate agencies as well as parents. The center will continue to provide a safe environment for all students.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We ask that children not bring their own toys to child care. Besides the danger of loss or damage, it is often difficult to share one's special, personal belongings with other children. We have a large quantity and variety of toys at the Center for all of the children to enjoy. Children are welcome to bring a favorite book or CD since these items lend themselves easily to group sharing. Parents are asked not to allow children to bring money, candy or chewing gum with them to the Center.

Items that need to be stored at the Children's Center may be kept in the child's tub or cubby. The exception to this is medication which must be stored in a locked cabinet in the office per state regulation

Each child in the infant and toddler rooms will have a tub in the room labeled with his/her name. Extra clothing, diapers, and other personal items will be kept in these tubs. Parents should check periodically to be sure there are adequate supplies for your child. Infants' bottles/ food items and Toddlers' lunches will be kept in the classroom refrigerator.

Children age two and above will have a cubby located in the main hallway. Coats, extra clothing, and other personal items will be kept in these cubbies. Children who will be taking naps or resting are welcome to bring a blanket, stuffed toy or any "security" item that will make this time more comfortable for them. Due to the small size of the cubbies, the children should not bring sleeping bags.

Lunches will be kept in a designated refrigerator.
No back packs are needed for younger children.

All children need to have a complete change of clothing (including socks) to leave at school to be used in the event of toileting accidents or spills of any nature. Parents should check these outfits every few months to see if they still fit and are seasonally appropriate.

Please label everything with your child's name!

DRESS

Comfortable play clothes are the appropriate dress since we will engage in messy art projects, sensory activities, and outdoor play. Smocks are used for all painting activities and water play, but accidents can happen. Children will participate more freely in such activities if they don't need to worry about soiling special clothing.

Shoes must be worn by all children who walk. For safety, we request that children toddler age and older wear tennis shoes or another rubber-soled, closed toed shoe. This is essential so that we may allow the children to safely use our indoor and outdoor climbing equipment.

In summertime, children may go outside for water play. A swim suit, towel and extra pair of shoes should be kept in their cubbies. Sunscreen should be applied at home each day. Extra sunscreen may be kept in the classroom for later application if it is recorded on the Record of Medication Order. If health officials deem that the heat index and/ or the air quality is unsafe, outdoor activity will be replaced with indoor gross motor activity.

Parents should be certain that their children are adequately dressed for outdoor play in cold weather, since we will be on the playground unless the weather is wet or severely cold (wind chill below 25.) Warm jackets, hats, mittens and boots (if snowy) will allow children to enjoy their time outside. If your child wears snow boots to school, please bring a pair of indoor shoes. Snow boots are not very comfortable or safe to walk in when playing inside. Please **LABEL** all outerwear with your child's name to avoid mix-ups.

DIAPERING AND TOILETING

For sanitation reasons, we only use disposable diapers at the Children's Center. Parents are asked to donate a minimum of one package of sensitive skin wipes each month until the child is reliably toilet trained.

We request that you keep an ample supply of diapers and seasonally appropriate changes of clothes kept at the Children's Center.

Although children are ready to potty train at differing ages, we typically experience the most success at the Children's Center around age two *and* after the parents have made a concerted effort at home first. If you are considering potty training, speak with your child's teacher regarding setting your child up for success while in group care. The office can provide you with a Potty Training Readiness Checklist if you wish.

If you prefer that your preschooler use flushable wipes while toilet training, you will need to provide those.

FUND RAISERS AND DONATIONS

Throughout the year the Children's Center may sponsor fundraisers for special projects. Some fundraisers include t-shirt sales, , spring, fall and Christmas flower sales, restaurant nights and an annual Silent Auction.

We gladly accept gently used toys, books, children's clothing, office supplies and other materials that could be used in our program. Monetary donations are welcome. If you would like a giving statement for tax purposes, please inform the Children's Center office.



Please return this page to the Children's Center office.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

OF THE

**UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS UNITED METHODIST
CHILDREN'S CENTER PARENT HANDBOOK**

**I have received and read all the information contained in the Parent Handbook.
I agree to follow the policies and guidelines established in this book.**

**I agree to provide the Children's Center with the necessary documents enclosed
in the enrollment packet and to maintain current information.**

Name of child or children _____

Parent Name (printed) _____

Parent signature _____

Date _____