



BROADCASTERS'
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

BCDC Parent Handbook 2021-2022

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Welcome to BCDC!

The BCDC Administration and Board of Directors welcomes you to BCDC for the 2021-2022 school year. The Parent Handbook supplements the [Guidance for Center Families Related to Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) that you received upon enrollment and shares some key features of BCDC, both in a typical year as well as the necessary adjustments we have made in response to the pandemic. All changes to standard operations are shown in *red italicized font*

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Center Overview

History

Broadcasters' Child Development Center (BCDC) was founded in 1980 by and for employees in the broadcasting industry. The urgent need for quality infant and young child care in DC's Northwest area convinced the founders to open the Center to families in the community. In 1985, BCDC became a successful pilot program for the General Services Administration, introducing quality child care, including infant care, to the federal government. Today, BCDC offers full-day care for infants through preschool children and serves a diverse community of families. The Center provides child-centered early education and care, which respects each child as an individual, in a safe and healthy environment. We seek to build a loving foundation for each child that acknowledges the diversity of our staff and the BCDC community and provides a curriculum that respects multi-cultural values.

Philosophy

Broadcasters' Child Development Center built its reputation by providing an environment that meets the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical needs of our children. Each classroom is designed to stimulate the growth of the whole child in a developmentally appropriate and nurturing environment that encourages imagination and creativity. As dedicated professionals trained in early childhood education, we pride ourselves on meeting each child's needs by assigning each child a primary caregiver/teacher. We believe that children learn best through play activities that allow them to touch, explore and experiment with different materials. We utilize a play-based curriculum (Creative Curriculum) to guide us in planning activities which encourage curiosity, imagination, learning and growth. We recognize that families are the primary educators of their children and we pledge ourselves to partnering with our families to build a supportive and loving environment as articulated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

At Broadcasters' Child Development Center, our program philosophy is rooted in the work and theory of Jean Piaget (1896-1980), the 20th century theorist who focused on children and the critical importance of their environment and "play-based curriculum" in their development. Implementing this philosophy facilitates our goal to create a stimulating environment filled with engaged and challenged children. Children learn in many ways, including situational thinking, modeling, manipulation (of fine and gross motor skills), dramatic representation and interaction with adults and peers. Our approach to teaching recognizes both how children learn and that learning is a constant and active process. At BCDC, we recognize that the physical classroom plays a large part in the atmosphere and fluidity of the Center's curriculum and the children's needs. Additionally our curriculum promotes and maximizes an active learning environment through various learning centers, large and small group activities, as well as a theme-based curriculum which is inspired by the children's own interests.

Programs

Broadcasters' Child Development Center accepts children ages three months to five and half years old. We have twelve classrooms. The age of the students served in each classroom is periodically reviewed by the Center Director and may change to best serve the Center and its students. The current classroom programs are shown in the table below:

Lambs (Younger Infants)	Two groups of 8 children, ages approximately 3 months to 10 months with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:4 or better.
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Ducklings (Older Infants)	Two groups of 8 children, ages approximately 8 months to 15 months, with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:4 or better.
Bunnies (Young Toddlers)	Two groups of 8 children, ages approximately 12 months to approximately 18 months who must be walking without assistance, with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:4 or better.
Penguins (Toddlers)	Two groups of 8 children, ages approximately 18 months to 2 years, with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:4 or better.
Pandas (Older Toddlers)	Two groups of 8-12 children, ages approximately 2 to 2 ½ years, with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:4.
Butterflies (Preschoolers)	One group of 16 children, ages approximately 2 ½ to 3 ½ years, with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:5.
Rainbow Fish (Preschoolers)	One group of 18 children, ages approximately 3 ½ to 5 years, with a staff-to-child ratio of 1:6

Hours

BCDC is normally open from 8:00am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday, except holidays and staff development days (see [Center Calendar](#) for more details).

Administration

The Board. BCDC's volunteer Board of Directors serves as the governing body of the nonprofit corporation and has fiduciary responsibilities, such as approving each year's budget that sets tuition rates and staff compensation. The [13-member Board](#) consists of the Executive Director, a staff representative, and 11 parent and community volunteers. The Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm (*currently via Zoom*) to share perspectives, offer constructive feedback and support the staff and administration by serving on seven sub-committees (administration/systems, education, finance, fundraising, legal, marketing, and parent outreach). The Board lends their time and energy to help BCDC continuously improve, which has recently included navigating the unprecedented pandemic and helping BCDC make the transition to its current space in the fall of 2019 after more than 30 years in our previous location on Tilden Street NW. Elections for Board Officers (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary) are held in June and Board terms run from September through July.

If you are interested in joining the Board now or in the future, please email the Board Co-Chairs, at bcdc-chair@googlegroups.com.

The Board welcomes and encourages your feedback throughout the year: please email the full Board at bcdc-board@googlegroups.com or the officers (Co-Chairs, Treasurer, Secretary) at bcdc-board-executive-committee@googlegroups.com.

The Administration. The Center administration consists of an Executive Director, Assistant Director, Education Coordinator, and Operations Manager, who oversee the daily operations of BCDC, including enrollment, curriculum, parent and community relations, staff recruitment, training and evaluation, and

budget implementation.

Licensing

The Center is licensed as a child development center in the District of Columbia through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and must comply with Title 5-A regulations in order to maintain its licensure. The Center's licensed capacity is 116 children total, of which only 88 can be under the age of two and a half years old. Adult to child ratios are required to be maintained at all times during operating hours. A copy of the current operating license is posted in the Center lobby.

Staff

Our staff members are the heart of the Center. They are caring, loving and respectful of children as individuals. Many of our staff have been at the Center since its early days, in the 90's. Staff is selected based on educational background and experience working with young children. A Child Development Associate (CDA) credential (or pursuit of such) is the minimum requirement for all staff.

Staff members consistently demonstrate their ability to promote education and provide stimulation, with special attention to fostering development in the following domains: social, emotional, physical and intellectual. Each classroom has a Lead Teacher and one or two Assistant Teachers. The Lead Teachers are responsible for overseeing the classroom routines and schedules, curriculum planning and implementation, and communication with parents. Each child is assigned a primary caregiver who is the primary point of contact for parents. Although each child has an assigned primary care giver, all teachers are responsible for all children in the class.

All staff undergo:

- Criminal background check upon hire and every three years thereafter
- Child Protection Registry (CPR) check upon hire and every two years thereafter
- Drug and Alcohol testing upon hire.

Staff must maintain a current annual physical, a TB test every two years, and must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or have an approved medical or religious exemption. Staff members with an approved exemption will undergo twice-weekly COVID testing.

Each employee is required to have 21 hours of continued training per calendar year as required by the District's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). All staff are required to maintain current CPR/First Aid certification.

Educational Requirements for Early Childhood Staff in DC

Lead teachers must have a minimum of an AA degree or higher in Early Childhood Education, or an AA or higher in a related field with at least 15 credit hours in ECE. Lead teachers who have been employed in the field for more than 20 years may hold a CDA credential and have received a waiver from OSSE recognizing their continued service with a particular age group. Assistant teachers are required to hold an AA degree in early education or a related field, or a CDA credential and 15 credits from a reputable university or college and must be working towards an ECE credential or degree. Floaters must hold a CDA credential or be enrolled in a CDA program. BCDC supports our teachers in pursuing their education as it relates to working with young children.

Center Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy

BCDC admits families and employs personnel without regard to race, color, creed, gender, religion,

sexual orientation or national origin. The Center will not discriminate against children with disabilities where reasonable accommodation can be made without undue hardship on the Center. The child's right to privacy will be respected and personnel will be advised of the child's condition on a need-to-know basis.

Disclosure Policy

All information about a child's development, health and educational progress will be kept confidential. Information provided by a child's parent or legal guardian will only be shared with the administration or the child's teacher on a need to know basis. Information will be shared with regulatory authorities on request. BCDC staff will complete recommendation requests for private school applications and submit them electronically to the school admissions coordinator or system. A copy is placed in your child's file.

Code of Conduct

BCDC works to foster a safe and nurturing environment for children and we emphasize positive, responsible and appropriate interactions throughout the Center, including those involving parents and guardians with other members of the BCDC community. Such interactions include, but are not limited to: those with administration, staff, other parents and children at the Center. This standard is grounded in our belief that teachers, administrators and parents should model the behaviors we hope to instill in our children. We encourage Center families to provide constructive feedback, ask questions, share concerns and generally advocate on behalf of your child. We expect, however, that this is done in a responsible and respectful manner that does not interfere with or detract from the safe and nurturing environment that we strive to maintain. In the event that a parent or guardian's behavior fails to adhere to this standard, BCDC reserves the right to take all actions it deems appropriate to remedy the situation, up to and including termination of enrollment.

Calendar

BCDC typically closes on the following days:

1. Labor Day
2. Indigenous People's Day (Formerly Columbus Day)
3. Veterans Day
4. Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving
5. Christmas Eve (or day after Christmas depending on the calendar)
6. Christmas Day
7. New Year's Day
8. Inauguration Day
9. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
10. President's Day
11. Memorial Day
12. Juneteenth
13. Independence Day

For more details, please see the Center's calendar, which is approved by the Board of Directors' and distributed in July prior to the beginning of the school year. It is also available on the BCDC website at <https://bcdconline.org/forms/>.

In support of the professional development of our teachers, BCDC is typically closed the third full week in August for staff training, team-building, and program development. This week also provides time necessary to make changes to the classroom environment in preparation for the new school year. Tuition is not adjusted for these professional development days.

BCDC reserves the right to make adjustments to the calendar in order to meet programmatic needs.

Parents will be given as much advance notice as possible.

Every five years, the Center (with Board approval) may opt to close for one or two days so that our staff can attend the Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) at the Washington DC headquarters.

Inclement Weather

BCDC follows DC Public Schools (DCPS) for closure in case of inclement weather. If DCPS is closed due to inclement weather, BCDC will also be closed. If DCPS has a delayed opening, then BCDC will delay opening by the same amount of time (for example: if there is a 2-hour DCPS delay, BCDC will open at 10:00am). If DCPS closes early, parents will be notified via Tadpoles and text message and should pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible. In addition to media coverage of DCPS closures/delays, parents can call the BCDC information line (202-364-8799 x 100) or check the BCDC website for weather-related closing information.

In case of inclement weather, when DCPS was previously scheduled to be closed (such as for a holiday, professional development day or school break), then BCDC will follow the Federal Government's operating status. *In case of inclement weather during COVID-19 if DCPS is closed, then BCDC will follow the Federal Government's operating status.*

If there is a unique weather occurrence or an emergency occurs (such as a power outage or non-weather related event), the Director will make the determination whether to close the Center in order to protect the health and safety of the children and staff. In such cases, all parents will be notified by email and text alert from Tadpoles regarding the Center's status.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Access and Security. Access to the Center is controlled and the doors to the Center are locked at all times. Each family is given two key fobs upon enrollment to unlock the front and rear doors. Additional (or replacement) fobs can be purchased from the Operations Manager if needed. All fobs must be returned when a family withdraws from the Center.

Daily check-in and check-out is done electronically through Tadpoles on the classroom's tablet. The teachers will check your child in and out each day. This helps to ensure that the Center knows the total number of staff and children in the Center at all times. This is critical in the event of an emergency.

During the pandemic, only staff and children are allowed to enter the building. Parents drop off children at the front entrance, while social distancing.. Prior to arrival, parents should conduct a daily temperature check at home and answer the health screening questions in Tadpoles to ensure that everyone entering the building is well. All children over the age of 2 and all parents and visitors must wear a mask at drop off and pick up time. A teacher will check-in each child upon arrival to the classroom and will assist them with handwashing and putting away their belongings. For full details on pandemic procedures, please refer to BCDC's [Guidance for Center Families Related to Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

Parking is provided for parents and authorized caretakers outside of the entrance to BCDC. Since space is limited, we ask that families are mindful of the time spent dropping off and picking up. For families who walk to the Center, individual stroller storage is available in a stroller closet located in the Center or in a designated location outside of the Center entrance. *During the pandemic, strollers may only be stored outside the Center.*

Late Drop Off. Children should arrive at school no later than 10:00 AM. It is important for your child to experience transitions in the room with their peers. Exceptions for doctor/dentist appointments are understandable. Please inform us if you expect to drop off your child late, so that we are aware and can

plan accordingly.

Late Pick Up. The Center's late pick up policy allows for unexpected events while providing consequences for the rare cases when families may abuse the system. The following policy applies on a rolling, 3-month basis, beginning from the date of the first late pick up.

- *First late pick-up:* We will give one (1) courtesy allowance.
- *Second late pick-up:* If a parent is late a second time, a \$50 late fee will be assessed.
- *Third late pick-up:* If a parent is late a third time, the Director will meet with the family to review the policy and a \$50 late fee will be assessed.
- *More than three late pick-ups:* If late pick-ups continue or are excessive after the third instance, the Director and/or the BCDC Board of Directors may recommend termination from BCDC.

Impaired Parent Pick Up. If, in the opinion of the senior staff member present at the Center, a parent or authorized person who arrives to transport a child home appears to be in an intoxicated or drugged condition, the staff member must:

1. Notify the other parent or guardian of the situation;
2. Offer to call a relative, friend, or taxi (at the parent's expense) to drive the person and the child home.

If the parent or authorized person insists on driving the child home, the senior staff member present will note the license plate of the vehicle and notify the local police department and Child and Family Services immediately.

Legal Custody and Pick Up. The Center cannot prevent the release of a child to the child's parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody of the child and who presents photographic identification and is on file at the Center. Usually, both parents have equal custody rights unless a court order or valid written separation agreement provides otherwise. Therefore, if you do not authorize your child's other parent or guardian to pick up your child, you must provide the Director with a certified copy of the court order or separation agreement awarding custody solely to you or denying custody to the other parent or guardian. If you are experiencing custody difficulties, we strongly urge you to keep the staff fully advised of circumstances that might affect the Center. In the event a non-authorized parent or guardian comes to pick up and we have a court order on file, the senior staff member on duty will contact the local police department.

Non-Parent Pick Up. The Center requires written notice (email to an administrator is acceptable) from a parent authorizing pick up by a non-parent. All non-parents picking up students at BCDC must be at least 18 years of age. BCDC staff will require proof of age and identity via a government-issued identification card with photo. In the event written notification is not possible, then the parent must speak directly with an administrator to grant permission to release the child.

Emergency Procedures

Drills. As required by the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education and D.C. Fire Marshal, fire, shelter in place, lockdown, and emergency evacuation drills--both announced and unannounced--are held monthly. Evacuation plans are posted near each classroom indicating how to get the children outside. These primary and secondary routes are discussed and practiced with the staff and children on a routine basis. At BCDC, children of walking age must keep their shoes on at all times, including naptime, in case evacuation is necessary.

Emergency Evacuation. If an emergency occurs where the children and staff are instructed to evacuate the building, everyone will proceed on foot to National Presbyterian Church located at 4101 Nebraska Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20016. The phone number for the church is 202-552-4232. Staff will take

their backpacks with emergency supplies and their iPad. The Center also has an emergency supply duffel bag that would be transported with us during an evacuation. Before departing and upon arrival, staff will conduct name to face recognition to ensure that everyone is accounted for. The Center will then notify all parents via Tadpoles email and text message of the Center's need to evacuate and the pick-up procedures and instructions. Please be sure your contact information is always up to date for parents and legal guardians or those authorized to pick up your child. If another person will be picking up the child, they must have a government-issued identification card with photo and permission to do so. The Center is required to report all emergency incidents to OSSE via an Unusual Incident Report within 24 hours.

Medical: In case of a serious medical emergency (such as unconsciousness, broken bones, serious cuts, foreign object in the eye/nose/ear, etc.), a staff member must:

1. Call 911 and request an ambulance.
2. Notify the Director or designated senior staff member.
3. Call the parent(s) and notify them of the incident and where the child is being transported.
4. Ensure that the child's emergency form (located in the child's file) is taken to the hospital with the child and a staff member. The staff member will accompany the child until the parent arrives at the hospital.
5. Call the Center to notify the Director about the status of the situation.
6. Fill out an accident/incident report, upon arrival back at the Center, and put it in the Director's office. A copy will be given to the parent.

In cases of ingestion or suspicion of ingestion of a poisonous substance, we will call the Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222. Parents will be notified by phone.

Enrollment Policies

Application

Families must complete and submit an application along with a \$100 non-refundable application fee. The [application form](#) is available on our website. Depending on availability, families may be placed on a waitlist in order of application. Priority for admissions is determined by the following preferences in the order as listed: current siblings, alumni, and community members. In addition, tours of the Center are offered several times during the week. Prospective families are welcome to visit the Center (although a tour is not a required part of the application process). *During pandemic operations, tours are only taking place after hours. Daytime tours will resume when the pandemic is over.*

Enrollment

Upon receiving an offer to enroll at BCDC, a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$350 is due within 5 business days of accepting an offer. This secures your child's space in the program. The first month's tuition will be prorated if the child is starting mid-month. All required enrollment forms and the first month's tuition payment are due prior to the child's first day at the Center.

Transition

Prior to the official first day, the child's primary caregiver will schedule a transition meeting with the parent(s) to share information about the classroom and learn about the child. During the week prior to a child's start date, new children will have a transition period of 3-5 days to get accustomed to their new classroom. Generally these visits will be for a few hours and progressively get longer to help acclimate the child to a full day schedule. *During the pandemic, transition meetings will happen virtually via video chat or by telephone.*

Supplies

Families are responsible for providing the following items for their child. Please remember to label all items with a permanent marker or name labels.

- Three complete, seasonally appropriate changes of clothing, including underwear and socks. • Sunscreen (if over 6 months) and a sun hat.
- All diapering items, including diapers, wipes, and ointment in a tube (for children in diapers only). We must have a medication form completed for all topical ointments.
- Two sets of bedding supplies for nap time. A portable crib sheet and sleep sack are needed for infants. All other children need a crib sheet and blanket. Bedding will be sent home each week to be laundered.
- Parents of infants must provide pre-made bottles and food (clearly labeled with the child's name and date of preparation).
- Parents should provide an alternate entree item for children who have food allergies or dietary restrictions (see Health regarding Center policies on allergies)
- Children may also bring personal belongings (such as a plush toy, blanket, photo or book, etc.) that may help them during nap time or moments of insecurity. Older children's classrooms encourage children to bring other toys and books on the designated weekly share day.

After the pandemic, parents are welcome to come in during the day to nurse their child and an appropriate facility is available.

Re-Enrollment

The re-enrollment process occurs annually in late February/early March. Parents are asked to complete a re-enrollment survey if they wish to re-enroll their child for the following school year or to notify the Center if they plan to withdraw their child before the next school year begins.

For children who are eligible for DC Pre-K4 (turning 4 years old by September 30th), the deadline for re-enrollment occurs after the DCPS lottery results (usually the first week of April). At this time, families must return their form stating if and when their child will be disenrolling from BCDC. If the child will be remaining at BCDC, families must submit a non-refundable deposit equal to the current year's monthly Butterfly/Rainbow Fish tuition rate by the re-enrollment deadline to hold their child's space. This deposit will be credited towards the September tuition. This allows the Center to plan its enrollment for the next school year and to notify parents on the waiting list of upcoming vacancies. Before re-enrolling, a family must not have any outstanding debt to the Center.

Withdrawal

Written notice is required prior to withdrawal from the Center and must be given by the last day of the month prior to the child's last month at the Center (i.e., written notice must be given by October 31st if the child plans to leave the Center at the end of November). During the summer months of June, July, and August, two (2) months' advance notice is required. Families must also return the BCDC key fobs to the Operations Manager. Please note that tuition is not prorated if a family chooses to leave the Center before the end of the month.

Dismissal from the Center

The Center reserves the right to take any appropriate action, including the right to terminate a child's enrollment, if any of the following occur:

- The Director and Board Chair determine that the child's behavior threatens the physical or mental health of other children or staff at the Center.
- The Director and Board Chair determine that any individual responsible for the child engages in

inappropriate conduct toward any other member of the Center community or fails to comply with the Center's Code of Conduct (see Center Policies).

- If after meeting with the family and exhausting outside resources, the Center is unable to meet the developmental or social needs of the child.
- Tuition is 15 days or more late (see Tuition Policies).
- Repeated failure to pick-up child by 6:00 pm (see Center Policies).
- Failure to maintain up to date health, immunization and/or dental records (see Center Policies).
- Failure to abide by any BCDC policy.

Tuition Payment Procedures

Tuition is paid monthly and is due on the 1st day of each month. If payment is received after the 8th day of the month, a late fee of \$50 will be charged. The fee for a returned check is \$25 plus any applicable late fee. If a family is late two times within a six month period, the Center will require that family to participate in the automatic payment program.

Tuition can be paid by personal check, money order, or cashier's check and deposited in the tuition box in the Center lobby. An automatic payment program (ACH) is also available where an authorized agreement for direct payments is completed and monthly tuition is automatically deducted each month. Automatic transfers are acceptable.

Tuition is non-refundable and must be paid in full regardless of vacation, illness, holidays, inclement weather closures, or other closures beyond the Center's control (e.g. related to COVID-19) for as long as your child is enrolled in the Center. If parents plan to have a child out of the Center for more than a month, they may withdraw by giving the Director written advance notice (see *Withdrawal Policy*). The child can be placed on the waitlist for the desired return date, however, we cannot guarantee that an opening will be available at that time.

Changes in overall tuition rates are made by the Board of Directors on an annual basis and announced in July for the new school year beginning in September. Current tuition is posted in the lobby of the Center and online.

Center Activities

Curriculum Planning

BCDC utilizes the Creative Curriculum® as a guide for implementing activities which address all developmental domains. Teachers create weekly lesson plans which are based on children's interests, a theme or a topic of study. They plan activities that meet the needs of individual children and the group and share the lesson plan with families. Activities include; language arts, math, science, music, movement, art, cooking, dramatic play, blocks and fine motor activities.

Outdoor Play

Play is the essence of being a young child; not only is it fun, but it is the way children learn and develop. Weather permitting, children will be taken outside twice a day to play on BCDC's private playground. In addition to time on the playground, children may also take short walks around the block with their class and may utilize the green space across Van Ness Street. Infants will take walks around the block in specially designed strollers. BCDC is fortunate to have an indoor play space for the days when the weather does not permit outdoor play. *The indoor play space is not in use due to COVID-19 restrictions.*

Your child should have appropriate outdoor clothing (and footwear) as dictated by the day's weather. We still go outdoors if the air temperature is above 27 degrees, but the time spent outdoors will be

dictated by the children's activity level and comfort. We ask that during the summer months, you apply sunscreen to your child before coming to school and provide a hat.

Closed-toe shoes are required; flip-flops are not permitted to be worn by children at any time.

BCDC monitors the air quality to determine if any restrictions on outdoor play are necessary to protect children's and staff health. During a Code Orange, outdoor play is limited to 20 minutes per group. If a code Red is issued, all classes will remain inside.

Enrichment Activities

Enrichment activities led by external instructors are included for all children at BCDC, including infants, at no additional cost. Enrichment programming may include music, soccer, spanish, yoga and movement class. The Center may bring in other performers throughout the school year as well. *Due to COVID-19 restrictions, enrichment classes are being conducted outside until further notice.*

Field Trips

Field trips outside of our neighborhood are planned for children three years old and older as a resource for learning and discovery. For these field trips, information about the trip and permission forms will be given to parents in advance for their signature. A child must turn in their permission slip signed by the parent/guardian in advance of the trip or the child will not be allowed to go on the field trip. We maintain an adult-to-child ratio of one to two for all non-neighborhood outings. This requires the help of parent volunteers, who are recruited to chaperone field trips in their child's classroom. *Please note, no field trips are taking place during pandemic operations.*

Birthday Celebrations

Children may enjoy celebrating birthdays at the Center. Parents are encouraged to discuss ideas with their child's teachers. A treat (such as cake, cupcakes, fresh fruit, cookies, etc.) is a popular way to celebrate, but please be aware of dietary restrictions in the classroom (including food allergies and our [peanut and tree nut free policy](#)). All items should be store-bought, individually wrapped, unopened and with an ingredient label. Baked goods from home are not allowed. Balloons are not permitted since they are a choking hazard for young children.

Babysitting Policy

BCDC does not encourage or endorse staff to babysit for families at the Center, particularly with children in their own classroom. If a family chooses to ask a staff member to babysit, you understand that staff are not insured by or representing BCDC outside of work hours, and that BCDC is not responsible for any such arrangement.

Traditions

BCDC has many wonderful traditions that we have developed during our 40 years of operation. These events are highlights for families and staff and are another way we strive to foster community at BCDC. *In light of the pandemic, many of our in-person traditions will be adjusted to virtual events.*

Holiday Events

- **Halloween Parade** *During the pandemic, a virtual parade with all children in costume.*
- **Holiday Party** Typically a show performed by each classroom, with musical accompaniment and snacks for all. *We are working on a creative virtual option this year.*

Other Traditions

- **Fall Picnic:** A potluck playground event to enjoy beautiful fall weather!
- **Food Drive:** Families contribute canned and dry goods to donate to a local food pantry.

- **Hat and Mitten Tree:** Children donate a hat or glove/mittens and hang them on a tree in the lobby. They are then donated to a school in another ward to distribute to children in need.
- **St. Jude Trike-A-Thon:** An April event for the older classrooms to learn about philanthropy and bicycle safety!
- **Achievement Picnic:** A summer celebration as the children prepare to transition or leave BCDC.

Parent Involvement

Open Door Policy

In compliance with health and safety procedures, during the COVID-19 pandemic access to the center is restricted to children and staff. However, during normal operations the Center is open for you to visit any day. Please feel free to drop in and visit your child's class at any time. Parents are a valuable resource at the Center. If you (or a family member) has a project/interest you would like to share with your child's class, please let their teacher know. If appropriate, they will arrange a time for you to share with the children. Parents are expected to comply with the Center's Code of Conduct while at the Center (see *Code of Conduct*).

Communication

We believe that communication between parents and teachers is key to a successful school experience for your child. We use a communication tool on the classroom iPad called Tadpoles to facilitate daily check in and check out of children. Throughout the day, teachers input information about the child's day and activities and can share photos and videos with families. Every day when your child is checked out on Tadpoles, you will receive a daily report from your child's teacher in your email or on the Tadpoles Parent app on your phone. You will also receive Center-wide weekly emails with updates and information about upcoming events.. In addition, periodic email reminders of Center events are distributed as well as flyers posted in the classrooms and on our front door. Parents can also leave daily notes for the teachers on Tadpoles and they will respond to you as soon as they are able.

Each year, the Board of Directors circulates an online survey for parents to provide feedback on various aspects of the program, policies, what we are doing well and what we can do to improve our program for children and the BCDC community. Results are shared with the Board and with families and staff.

The BCDC website (www.bcdconline.org) is also a great source of information about events at the Center. In addition to Center-initiated communications, we encourage parents to talk with their child's teacher at the Center during drop off or pick up. For families whose primary language is not English, the Center will make every effort to provide written and/or oral translation of Center policies and procedures upon enrollment and throughout the child's time at the Center.

To facilitate classroom communication and coordination, each classroom has a parent email list (Google group). You will be automatically added to your class list shortly after your child starts at BCDC, but may unsubscribe if desired. If you would like to confirm you're on the list, or have any other questions, please email bcdc-parent-outreach@googlegroups.com. The google groups may not be used for the purpose of advertising or promotional gain, nor do we allow communication that is abusive, defamatory or obscene.

Conflict Resolution

If a situation arises regarding a child or a parent has a concern, the parent is encouraged to speak directly to one of the child's classroom teachers. If there needs to be a more in-depth conversation, the parent can schedule a mutually convenient time with the teacher and the Center will provide coverage in the classroom during the meeting. If the parent feels the concern was not addressed or met satisfactorily, they can speak to a member of the administrative team. An administrator will follow up with the teacher and respond to the family within 24 hours. If further discussion is required, a family meeting can be scheduled with the parent, the Lead teacher and the Director. In the rare situation that a parent feels that their concern has not been met or addressed, they can contact the chair of the Board of Directors to express their concern. The Board Chair will then speak to the Director to discuss the situation and will respond to the parent as soon as possible with next steps or a solution.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Teachers use My Teaching Strategies (formerly Teaching Strategies GOLD) to assess their primary children throughout the year. Assessments look at social, emotional, cognitive and physical areas of development and learning. Parent-teacher conferences typically take place in December and May. The conference is an opportunity for teachers and parents to share information about their observations of the child's development, discuss any concerns and set goals/strategies for the child to help them meet the next objectives. Parents are provided with a copy of the family conference form after the meeting. Conference sign-up sheets will be shared with families and conferences will be held at a time that works for the parent(s). *During the pandemic, all parent-teacher conferences will take place via Zoom.*

Developmental Screening

The Center uses a developmental screening tool called the ASQ-3 within the first 120 days of enrollment for children under two years of age to establish a baseline understanding of where the child is developmentally. Parents complete a questionnaire to inform of development that may not be observed in the classroom setting. This informs the teachers of areas of need, so that they can plan activities that will encourage developmental progress. This information may only be shared with parental permission.

Outside Consultants

BCDC has established professional relationships with consultants from DC regulatory agencies including Strong Start and Early Stages, private early childhood experts in various fields (ie: speech, language, child development, special needs, etc.), and early childhood trainers who work with our staff. If a concern about a child arises, the Center may contact the parent and offer these resources to the family. We will work closely with parents to determine if these resources could be helpful to the child, the parents, or the classroom teachers. If support from an external consultant is agreed upon, the parent would sign a release form, giving permission for the Center to release information about the child to the consultant. The initial contact can be made by a parent or by the Center with the parents' permission. The Center also utilizes these resources for our staff, to aid them in their classroom interactions and teaching practices. At no time would a child be observed by a consultant without BCDC first obtaining parental permission. In-person support takes place in the child's classroom or natural setting depending on the time of day.

Volunteer Opportunities

Parents traditionally devote time to volunteer activities at the Center. Volunteering not only enhances the quality of the program for the children, but it also promotes the open communication necessary to establish continuity between home and the Center. Volunteer opportunities also provide a way for

parents to get to know teachers and other parents better, which contributes to the strong sense of community that BCDC values.

In a typical year, each classroom has one or two parents who volunteer to serve as Room Parents. Room Parents are responsible for organizing community-building playdates outside the center; supporting teachers, the classroom, and the Board by sending out reminders or helping teachers with special events in the classroom; and organizing birthday and appreciation celebrations for their classroom's teachers using funds collected from the class. Given the reality of the pandemic on operations and socializing, some Room Parent duties have been adjusted and monetary collections have been centralized through the Board. We hope to restart formal Room Parent roles as soon as pandemic operational restrictions are lifted. If you are interested in serving as a Room Parent, please contact the BCDC Board Parent Outreach Subcommittee at bcdc-parent-outreach@googlegroups.com.

Fundraising

While the majority of BCDC's operating budget is covered by tuition income, as a non-profit organization, BCDC also relies on fundraising to supplement its core budget. Fundraising is led by a volunteer, parent-run Fundraising Committee and targets current and alumni families, grandparents and other relatives, and local corporate sponsors. Contributions are always optional and fundraising goals emphasize overall participation, not specific amounts. In this way, the community works together to achieve goals that benefit our children and the Center.

Typically, the Fundraising Committee leads the planning and execution of an annual fundraising event in January/February, such as an auction, with a target of raising money to benefit the Center. In the fall of 2019, BCDC parents led an online campaign to successfully raise \$35,000 to purchase and install a new playground structure and sun shade.

Prior to the pandemic, we have held in-person events to drive fundraising. This year, we will focus on outdoor and virtual events, grants and financing from external sources. Families and grandparents are always welcome and encouraged to donate to BCDC, a tax-exempt organization, at any time, this year in particular. All donations will be used to directly support the Center's operations. *Fundraising may look different than previous years given the pandemic, but it is more vital than ever to our operations. If you would like to join this committee, please email bcdc-fundraising@googlegroups.com*

Community Events

The Fundraising Committee also coordinates community events (approx. 6-8 per year) at local restaurants and businesses where a portion of the proceeds benefit BCDC. These events allow BCDC to raise funds from families eating or working out at the local spots that we would regularly enjoy while building community and helping us solicit donations from these local businesses later. Flyers for these events are typically posted near the front desk and shared via Tadpoles. Occasionally, there is an online sign-up when events have space constraints. If you have connections to local businesses or ideas, please email bcdc-fundraising@googlegroups.com

Monetary Gift Collections for BCDC Teachers

BCDC continues to thrive because of the wonderful teachers and staff who take such great care of our children on a daily basis. BCDC has several traditions of expressing parent appreciation for teachers and staff. The Board leads Center-wide collections for teacher and staff birthdays, holiday gifts, and Teacher Appreciation Week festivities to ensure gifts are distributed consistently. If you are interested in volunteering to help organize teacher celebrations, always a highlight for staff, please email bcdc-parent-outreach@googlegroups.com.

Birthdays. The BCDC community celebrates all teacher and staff birthdays with a gift card, a shareable

cake, and a card signed by the class. *During the pandemic, we have shifted to e-cards, e-gift cards, and individual treats.*

Teacher Appreciation Week. During the first week in May, BCDC celebrates Teacher Appreciation Week with multiple center-wide staff meals for the week and a gift card for each teacher.

Holiday Gift. In December, BCDC has a longstanding tradition of collecting money from parents and distributing it evenly among the staff as a holiday gift. A holiday gift is our way of showing each and every teacher how much we appreciate the work they do, and undertaking a general collection for the entire staff allows us to avoid disparities across teachers or classrooms. For the past several years, **the suggested amount has been \$130 per child.** In recent years we have collected the suggested amount from nearly every BCDC family and have thus been able to provide a generous holiday gift to the entire staff.

<u>Collections</u>		
You will receive an email from the Board detailing the collection request and payment methods in September, November/December and March		
September 2021 <i>Covers teacher and staff birthday celebrations</i>	November/December 2021 <i>Covers holiday gift</i>	March 2022 <i>Covers teacher appreciation festivities</i>
*2021-22 suggested contribution per child: \$25	*2021-22 suggested contribution per child: \$130	*2021-22 suggested contribution per child: \$25

**Suggested amounts may fluctuate slightly based on enrollment. Contributions are always voluntary and any amount is welcome. Thank you on behalf of our wonderful teachers and staff!*

Resources

2020 and 2021 have been unprecedented years in many ways. Navigating the new normal of COVID-19 alongside the struggle against systemic racism, violence and injustice can be overwhelming. BCDC has curated several resources in an effort to support families and staff during this time.

BCDC Anti-Racism Book List. [A list of books and websites](#) recommended by BCDC community members to help families discuss race, privilege, bigotry, and hate with young children.

BCDC Facebook Group. A [private facebook group](#) for our community members to connect and support one another during pandemic times and beyond.

BCDC Mental Health Resources List. A [list of mental health resources](#) that may be useful to the BCDC community.

Parent Meetings. BCDC convenes a parent meeting in the fall and spring each year with external speakers presenting on various child development topics. Please contact bcdc-board-education@googlegroups.com with topic suggestions or requests.

Health-Related Policies

Health and Immunization Record Keeping

The DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, which oversees child care licensing in the District, requires that all children maintain current health and immunization records at the center where their child is enrolled. Parents must submit to the Center a new D.C. DOH Universal Health Certificate upon enrollment and after a child's annual well-visit for certification of exam as well as any updates to vaccination records. The District of Columbia requires all American Academy of Pediatrics recommended immunizations be given at the recommended age, as well as lead testing and a tuberculosis test. Also, children aged three and older are required to have an annual oral health exam, and parents must submit the D.C. Oral Health Assessment Form to BCDC. The Assistant Director will attempt to notify families when their health and/or immunization records require updating, but it is the parents' responsibility to keep these records up to date. Failure to maintain updated health, immunization, and dental records can impact your child's enrollment and constitutes grounds for dismissal from the Center. These forms are available on the Center's website, OSSE website or from the Center. *Having children receive vaccines on the recommended schedule is important to their own safety and that of peers and staff that they interact with each day.*

Sick Policy

We want to keep all of our children, staff and families healthy. Therefore, as a courtesy to the BCDC community, we ask families for their full cooperation in following the Center's sick policy.

- We ask that parents use their best judgment in determining if their child is well enough to attend and does not meet any of the exclusion criteria.
- **Parents are required to comply with all health screening and exclusion criteria during the COVID-19 pandemic. See Guidance Document for Families for updated exclusion criteria list.**
- Parents are required to notify the Center if their child contracts any contagious illness or disease. Some illnesses require reporting to the DC Dept. of Health.
- If your child becomes ill at the Center, a parent or authorized individual will be notified and asked to make arrangements to pick up the child asap or within an hour. **Children exhibiting COVID symptoms will be taken to BCDC's isolation room with a staff member until a parent arrives.**
- Children sent home with any of the symptoms below will need to be kept home for at least 24 hours and must be symptom-free before they can return to BCDC or have a doctor's note stating they may return to school. Children sent home with a fever must be kept at home for at least 24 hours without a fever and without the use of fever-reducing medication before they can return to the Center. Symptoms include any of the following:
 - Fever above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Colored mucus coming from eyes, nose, ears, or mouth
 - Conjunctivitis ("pink eye") i.e., colored drainage, crustiness upon waking itchiness/eye pain, and/or redness of the eye
 - Skin rash (must be diagnosed by a doctor and return to Center requires a doctor's note)
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea

Medication Rules and Guidelines

Non-Prescription Medication. We encourage you to visit the Center to administer over-the-counter

medicines. However, if this is not possible, our staff will administer such medications, provided you have a physician's written authorization, the medication is in the original bottle or package, and a completed and signed [medication authorization form](#) is completed with the following information: child's name, date, name of medicine, dose and time(s) the medication should be administered, and name and phone number of the child's physician. Once all information and medication are provided as described above, a staff member who has completed medication training will administer the medication and keep a daily record of medication administered. A new prescription is needed with each illness and for each medication.

Regularly-Required Medication. A physician can write standing orders for regularly needed medication (including for allergy, asthma), but the parent must complete and sign a [medication authorization form](#) for each period of time medication is administered. The medication authorization form for administering medication will not exceed one year.

Teething Medication. If the parent and caregiver determine that a child is uncomfortable and/or presenting a low grade fever (under 101F) as a result of teething, a physician may write a 3-month prescription for acetaminophen (Tylenol or equivalent) or topical soothing aids that states it is to be given for symptoms related to teething only. Aspirin will not be given at any time because of the danger of Reye's syndrome.

Prescription Medication. In order for our staff to administer prescription medications, the parent/guardian must complete and sign a [medication authorization form](#) with the child's name, name of medicine, dose, time and route medication should be administered and signature. Prescribed medication must be given to the Center in the original prescription bottle with the pharmacist's label, and a staff member who has completed medication training will administer the medication and keep a daily record of medication administered. The name on the bottle is the only person to whom we are authorized to administer the medication. As with non-prescription medication, we encourage you to visit the Center to administer the medicine at any time. A new prescription is needed with each illness and for each medication.

Allergies

An [allergy action plan](#) must be completed for any child with a known allergy, which includes documentation specifying the child's allergy and the physician's signature.

A [Medication Authorization Form](#) must be completed for any medication that may be required if there is an exposure at the Center. This is required by licensing and allows us to administer the medication needed until a parent or EMS arrives. All anaphylactic exposures will require an EMS call and the parent will be notified to meet their child at the nearest hospital. An exposure to an allergen is reported immediately to the child's parent(s).

A list of children with allergies is maintained in the classroom and in the Director's office, as well as elsewhere in the Center if appropriate (i.e., food allergies posted in kitchens). Parents should update a child's allergy information and instructions with the child's teachers and administration as needed.

Given the increasing number of children with life-threatening allergies to peanuts and tree nuts, BCDC is a **peanut and tree nut free** center. We ask parents and teachers to assist children in washing hands upon arrival at the Center and before beginning to play to minimize any transmission of allergens from home to school. For more details, please refer to our [Peanut and Tree Nut policy](#).

Safe Sleep Practices

BCDC staff are trained in safe sleep practices and work closely with infant families to establish safe sleep habits. Babies are always placed to sleep on their back. Once they are able to roll over, parents give permission to leave them on their side or stomach and a roll over sign is placed on the child's crib. The use of swaddles, blankets or sleep positioning devices is prohibited. Sleep clothing is provided by the parents and may include a one piece sleeper, sleep sack, or sleep trainer. If an infant falls asleep in a glider, on the floor or in a stroller, they are then placed in their crib for sleep. Crib sheets are provided by parents and sent home to be laundered. No blankets or stuffed animals are allowed in cribs. All staff members are trained annually on safe sleep practices and on the prevention of shaken baby syndrome.

Head Lice

BCDC recognizes that head lice is a common occurrence in facilities where children and adults are in close contact with one another. BCDC has a "No Nits" policy. This means that a child who is identified as having head lice, must receive pediculicide treatment at home or from an outside professional in order to remove any live lice or eggs (nits) before returning to school. The child will be re-examined when they return to school.

Whenever a case is identified, the Center takes the necessary precautions in the classroom to eliminate any possible sources or possible reinfestation. All children in the affected class are checked as well. Parents are instructed to take the same steps at home to prevent reinfestation as well, before the child returns to school. Parents are provided with an information sheet and resources, if needed. We recommend that all family members are checked and receive treatment if evidence is discovered.

Snacks and Meals

BCDC serves two nutritious snacks each day. A morning snack is served between 9:00 - 9:30am and an afternoon snack is served between 3:00 - 3:30pm. These healthy snacks consist of two food groups (frequently cereal and milk or fruit/vegetable and grain). A snack calendar is posted in each classroom. Both milk and water are provided to children at snack time.

BCDC serves a catered hot lunch provided by the Good Food Company that includes a vegetarian option. The menus follow the Dept. of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines and are provided to parents each month. Children eat together in their classroom. We use a family style dining approach at meals which allows children to serve themselves, learn to recognize hunger signals and regulate their food/drink intake. It also encourages children to try new foods that they may refuse at home. *There is no family style dining during COVID-19.*

For infants under 12 months of age, parents provide all formula/breast milk as well as jarred food, cereal, and home-prepared food as desired for the child. Infants are held when given a bottle. Teachers encourage infants to learn to hold their own bottle when developmentally appropriate. Once a child is sitting up, then they engage in mealtime with other children. This provides an opportunity to watch and learn from others, while establishing a positive mealtime environment. Teachers provide feedback and information about eating to the parents in the child's daily report or by phone conversation. No new foods are given to infants without parent permission and parents should try new foods at home first to ensure there is no allergic reaction.

Diapering and Potty Training

For children in diapers, parents provide diapers and wipes and topical cream tubes to be used with parent permission. Staff check and change diapers as necessary and at regular intervals in the daily

schedule. BCDC does not have a potty training requirement, as we believe that children develop this capacity at varying ages. Teachers work closely with families if a child is showing physical signs of readiness or showing interest in using the toilet. Parents are provided tips and suggestions to make the process easier. The more consistency between home and school, the more successful the process will be for the child. Teachers will support the family in the process they choose and praise the child for effort as well as success, to support their self-esteem. The center has potty seats that fit on the regular toilet, but parents may also speak with the teachers about using a familiar potty in the beginning of the toilet training process.

Pet and Animal Policy

BCDC adheres to all local laws, regulations and ordinances governing the keeping and maintenance of pets or animals. BCDC does not allow pets which require registration or vaccinations as classroom or Center pets. Pets that visit the program as part of a unit of study, must comply with registration and vaccinations and have approval from an administrator to visit.

BCDC will advise parents or guardians if a classroom has a pet. All pets must be in good health and their enclosure will be maintained in a visibly clean manner by the teaching staff. Only teachers handle pets or supervise contact with the pet. BCDC will remove any pet showing signs of illness from the classroom. BCDC will ensure that no pet is allowed in areas where food is stored or prepared.

If an animal bites a child and the skin is broken, BCDC shall notify the parent and report the incident to OSSE. The pet would be removed from the classroom.

Behavior Management

The philosophy of BCDC is to provide opportunities for children to develop self-control, to learn to make good choices and to get along with others.

Building Positive Relationships. A trusting relationship between teacher and child must be established and must display mutual respect for the child and his/her family. Through a primary caregiving system, teachers form strong bonds with the child, which provides a sense of physical and emotional security. This is imperative to the success of the child in the program in encouraging exploration and opportunities for learning.

Helping children learn to solve their own problems is a process which evolves over time and is the goal of our guidance for children. Through modeling and positive supportive guidance, the ability to resolve behavioral and emotional issues which may arise throughout the course of the year is enhanced. We try to redirect behavior by using space, time and materials creatively and by stressing positive social reinforcers. Discipline means helping children develop strong self-confidence, self-control and to begin to learn to solve their own problems with appropriate guidance from the teachers.

Positive Behavior Support. At all times, staff should positively reinforce a child's good behavior. Helping a child solve a behavior problem should be a learning experience and end with a positive statement or encouragement concerning future behavior. Staff should acknowledge the child's feelings and verbalize the desired behavior to the child. Staff members should utilize alternative strategies to allow the child time to gain self-control, assist the child in communicating the problem or their feelings to their peer(s) and provide comfort and support to the child. At no time shall a child be removed from his or her classroom. BCDC views discipline in terms of guidance, rather than punishment or humiliation.

Parent Conference. If inappropriate behavior continues, the staff will take observational notes to assess the situation. This provides the opportunity to see if a pattern can be seen and what underlying causes

may be influencing the child's behavior. The Director will be apprised of the situation. If a parent conference is in order, documentation will support any statements made and will guide the team (teacher, Director, parents) toward a collaborative strategy for acceptable behavior.

Biting. Biting is a normal phase in the development of many children aged 12 months to three years old and may occur for many reasons. We use the opportunity to help children understand the consequences of their actions and provide them with alternate ways to express themselves (if able). We always write an incident report for both children involved so that parents are aware. The teachers use multiple strategies to try and eliminate the behavior. If biting continues with a child, the teacher will talk with the parents or arrange to meet to discuss patterns of biting and possible motivations for the biting incidents. Articles and ideas will be shared and the teacher and parents will agree upon strategies to use at home and at the Center. A follow-up meeting will be arranged to discuss how the strategies are working.

Discipline. Per OSSE regulation 141.4, BCDC staff members are prohibited from using any of the following:

1. Physical harm, including but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, shoving, pushing, spanking, striking, kicking, biting, yanking, strangling, kneeing, poking, or plucking;
2. Fear, shaming, intimidation, or humiliation;
3. Derogatory remarks or profane language;
4. Confinement in a locked room or an enclosed area where a child cannot be seen or supervised by Facility staff;
5. Force feeding against a child's will;
6. Withholding of food, water, rest, toilet use, outdoor activities, or outdoor play; or 7. Physical or chemical restraints.

Any use of physical or corporal punishment (spanking) is strictly prohibited.

The Center does not permit any discipline related to:

- Food: withholding any food or drink, forcing a child to try or to eat foods or bribing with food as a reward.
- Toileting: forcing a child to use the toilet, punishing a child for accidents and/or requiring a child to clean up after themselves when an accident occurs.
- Napping: physically forcing or restraining a child on their cot, using a cot or crib as punishment, withholding activities if a child does not sleep or abruptly waking a child from sleep by removing their cot.

Child Abuse and Neglect. Pursuant to DCMR 29; 147(b) child care centers are required to report evidence or suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Child care staff are mandated reporters. All staff are required to take mandated reporter training annually through www.dc.mandatedreporter.org Reporting to an administrator only does not meet the obligation for reporting.

Cases of abuse or neglect are reported within 24 hours to the Child and Family Services Agency(CFSA) hotline at 202-671-SAFE. Individuals reporting must supply their name and all requested information to the intake person and get their ID number. The agency then determines if the report warrants an investigation by their office or MPD. BCDC will comply with the request of information from any government agency conducting an investigation.

Child care centers are also required to submit an Unusual Incident Report of abuse or neglect to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education(OSSE) by faxing to the Licensing and Compliance Unit at 202-727-7295 or by email to OSSE.ChildcareComplaints@dc.gov. All UIR reports are kept on file in the Director's office.