



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Partners in Education

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THE HOPE CENTER FOR FAMILIES

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Hours of Operation: 6:30 AM – 6:00 PM Monday – Friday

No evening or overnight care is currently provided at any Mini University locations.

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The Mini University Mission

*To provide the best working environment for staff
so that they can provide the highest quality accredited
early childhood programs for children.*

Welcome to the Mini University School Family!

We are so excited you have chosen our program for your child. We look forward to providing a safe, clean, play-filled and stimulating early learning environment for your child. During the Covid-19 pandemic, nothing has been more important than ensuring rigorous cleaning standards are maintained in every space throughout the center, to keep everyone healthy. Since vaccinations are the most effective defense against the spread of Covid, vaccinations are strongly encouraged for all employees and families.

We promise to work in partnership with you to support your child's developing mind and abilities. We are dedicated to creating a personal, family-friendly transition into our program, based on your child's needs and your family's preferences. Thank you for trusting and sharing with us!

We believe in positive partnerships with families and will always maintain open communication with you. We invite you to begin sharing information with us, so we can learn more about your expectations for us and your dreams and goals for your child. Please ask us questions and feel free to call or stop by anytime.

We also want to create opportunities for you to meet other Mini U families, so feel free to introduce yourself or talk with the teachers about ways to be more involved. Thank you for choosing Mini University to share in the wonderful experience of early childhood with you.

Respectfully your partner in education,

The Mini University Leadership Family



<https://boldbeginning.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/bold/>

Ohio's BOLD Beginning! Website is the premier way for Ohio's parents, grandparents, caretakers, teachers and child care providers to access all things related to early childhood in Ohio's state agencies. The BOLD Beginning! website includes information on Education and Child Care for Families and Step Up to Quality for providers.

The Classroom Experience...

Philosophy...Places for Childhoods

Mini University strives to create environments filled with various textures and warmth in which children and adults feel free to experience life. Jim Greenman's book, *Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children's Environments That Work*, outlines the following central beliefs necessary to creating such environments:

- Good settings respect children's abilities to learn and believe in active, hands-on learning.
- Good settings recognize and respect children as individuals and understand their needs for care.
- Good settings are established and maintained by adults who learn by observing children, drawing from their own experiences as children and as adults.
- Good settings respect adults' abilities to learn and adults' needs for comfort.
- Good settings know and feel that "life has loveliness to offer" and work hard to provide it.

In creating these kinds of environments, Mini University considers both the needs of children and the needs of adults. Modifications are made for any child or adult with special needs. Spaces are provided for quiet and active play, large and small muscle activities, and spontaneous interactions between all sharing these spaces. Soft, warm, messy, watery, wonderfully safe environments are provided inside and outside to help children feel secure in exploring the world around them.

"Given the time children spend in them, it is not an exaggeration to view childcare programs as places for childhood."

-Jim Greenman

The Power of Play

(reprinted with permission from NAEYC)

Have you ever heard someone remark about an early childhood program "All the children do there is play?" At good early childhood programs, including Mini University centers, there is a lot of play – and there should be!

Years of research on children's learning and development document the many benefits of play for children's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and language development. Children at play are actively involved in creating themes, exploring, and establishing environments, solving problems, and developing shared understandings.



Children play in many ways. They play independently, sometimes near each other but with each child engrossed in his/her own activity. They engage in what is called parallel play," perhaps using each other's toys or even talking, but not coordinating their play. They also play cooperatively, organizing roles and scenarios for group play.

As children play with each other, they learn to see other children's points of view and begin to become more empathetic and caring. They come to understand customs and rules in their own culture and to appreciate those of others. They learn to use language in new ways to describe their play and to interact with others.

Play is fun. But it is also serious business that pays big dividends to its eager, young investors. Mini University believes strongly in "the power of play" and wants to work with families to provide a strong educational foundation for each child's future school success. For more specific information about what children learn in Mini University classrooms, please talk with your child's teacher and any Center Leader.

Play is so important to optimal child development that it has been recognized by the United Nations as a right of every child.

– American Academy of Pediatrics

Your Child's First Day at the Center...

This is an exciting day! Prior to this day you will have provided the required Enrollment items: Child Enrollment and Health Form, Medical Health Form, Verification of Parent/Guardian Review of Center Policies and Procedures, and a copy of your child's birth certificate. You will also have electronically signed our Financial Policies and a Financial Agreement.

You and your child may have met the teachers during your enrollment tour, but if for any reason you have not, please make an appointment to do this. We recommend a class visit for your family and child, so your child can see you in this new environment. Meeting the teachers also helps make the first week's adjustment much easier! The following suggestions on your arrival, interaction and separation from your child should help make this first day a happy and positive experience for you and your child.

Arrival

1. Arrive 15-30 minutes before you need to leave so you won't be rushed. Your child needs to see and feel that you are relaxed and comfortable with the center.
2. Use the computer system located at the office to "sign in" your child.
3. Take your child and belongings to his/her new classroom. Place your child's change of clothing, blanket, etc. in the basket or cubbie with his/her name on it.

Interaction

4. Getting your child involved in an activity or spending a few minutes reading with your child usually helps to make the upcoming separation easier.
5. Parents of Babies: We strongly encourage you to take a few minutes to interact with your child by changing your child's diaper before leaving. This interaction time should include talking with your child, telling your child what you are doing and asking for cooperation. This is a wonderful way to intimately communicate with your child. We also encourage you to follow the same routine when you pick up your child.
6. Hellos & Good-byes: Part of the Creative Curriculum is encouraging families to create a routine with their children during arrivals and departures. Reading with your child, changing his/her diaper if applicable, or just taking a few extra minutes to pause, look your child in the eye and truly connect is so important. It helps your child and you connect and re-connect after being apart. (Thank you also for using the computer system at the office to sign your child in and out at arrival and departure.)

Separation

7. After talking with the teacher and spending some time with your child, tell your child you have to leave. A statement such as, "I have to go to work/school now, and I will be back to pick you up this afternoon," helps your child understand you are leaving and you will return.
8. Give your child a hug and kiss and exit the room. Often, the longer you stay to say goodbye, the more difficult the separation can become.

SOMETIMES... Second Days are More Difficult.

It is very normal for children to take 2-3 weeks to fully adjust to a new routine. Children in part time schedules and children who have never been in group care may take longer to adjust. In the future, if a child's routine is interrupted by vacation or illness, he/she can go through another adjustment period.

Family Participation Policy...

Procare Electronic Family Engagement App

Building and maintaining a strong school family connection is important. We know you want to be involved and stay informed of your child's day-to-day learning experiences at Mini University. Procare is the child/family database we use to track attendance, schedules and monthly billing, and we also use Procare to stay connected with our families. We are excited for you to register for the Procare mobile app! This is a great way to stay informed in real time of your child's daily activities and upcoming center events or time-sensitive information. You can also view routine caregiving such as feeding/meals, diaper changes and naps. You can even use it for contactless check-in and pick-up with GPS-enabled technology or QR codes!

How do I receive the app? You will receive an email from Procure with a 10-character invite code and instructions on how to download and log into the app.

Each classroom uses an iPad to access the app. Your child's teacher will use this app to securely share photos, videos, and your child's daily report. As a family member, you can use the app to share information with your child's teacher, such as feeding and sleep schedule, and any additional information you would like your child's teacher to know for that day. You can also easily mark absences, vacations and illness using the app, saving you a few phone calls to the office.

Family Participation & Involvement in Center Activities

Please feel free to...

- Share information with your child's teacher in our Family Engagement app prior to arrival.
- Take time each day to talk with your child's teacher.
- Join us for breakfast, lunch, or afternoon snack.
- Visit the center anytime. All parents have unlimited access to all areas of the center used for childcare during the hours of operation.
- Schedule a conference with the teacher or any Center Leader to discuss your child's developmental progress or any concerns.

Regular opportunities to participate include...

- Field trips
- Parent, Career or Special Interest Visits: Many of the topics we explore are enriched by the unique cultural and career diversity of our parents.
- Please let the teacher know if you would like to share your talents with a group of our children.
- Family programs such as Fall Harvest, Holiday Celebrations, and End of the Year Programs.
- Family Participation Days are coordinated every few months, including Water Play Days, Snack with Families, Summer Learning Day, and Literacy focused Read Alouds.

Please look for...

- Electronic messages, these will arrive in the app or your email.
- Daily Schedule and Lesson Plans – posted on the bulletin boards to keep you up to date on your child's class.
- Photos – posted in classrooms and throughout the center.
- The Weekly Menu – posted outside the kitchen available in the center.
- A Parent Roster – available upon request for your child's class. This is a list of names and phone numbers of the parents who have authorized the release of this information.

Nutrition and CACFP...

Mini University, Inc. is responsible for ensuring your child's nutritional needs are met while he/she is at the center. This is accomplished by providing breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack to meet at least one-third of your child's recommended daily dietary allowance.

The food service operation varies at each center. Most centers participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a child nutrition program of the United States Department of Agriculture. The meals must meet CACFP meal pattern requirement for infants and children. Mini University provides iron fortified infant formula and baby foods for families that choose to use these in our Nursery. All children have a breakfast, lunch and snack each day that meet the requirements set forth by CACFP.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

Mini University is an equal opportunity provider.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: How to File a Complaint, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. Mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
2. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov. or

The menu for the current week is posted by the kitchen. Copies of the menu are available upon request. All meals are served "family style" which means children sit at the table with a few friends, serve themselves as much as possible, including pouring their milk and engage in conversation around their "dining table". Due to the busy kitchen schedule, the center will expect children to have already eaten if they arrive after the specified mealtimes.

The following definitions help parents understand this aspect of our program.

- **BREAKFAST** includes milk and a fruit/vegetable and a grain/bread. Sample Breakfast menus include French toast, oranges and milk or scrambled eggs, toast, blueberries, and milk.
- **LUNCH** includes milk, meat/protein, grain/bread, fruit & vegetable. Sample Lunch menus include chicken, peaches, green beans, bread and milk or spaghetti with meat sauce, slice of cheese, bread, apples, cucumbers, and milk.
- **AFTERNOON SNACK** includes one serving from any two food groups (milk, meat/protein, bread/cereal, fruit or vegetable) and water. Sample Snack menus include cheese, crackers and water or carrots, apples and water.

All children are encouraged to try all foods served and water is available in all classrooms and outside. If your child does not like something on the daily menu, please allow us the opportunity to serve this food to him/her several times. Many parents have said, “I don’t believe it. Why won’t my child eat vegetables for me?” our lunch/group situation often affords us the unique opportunity to allow children to taste food with their friends. We’ve had great results!

Food supplements or Modified Diets

Due to state and federal regulations regarding child nutrition, Mini University is unable to change the menu for individual children, or substitute or eliminate any food or milk. Please stop by the office to pick up the required paperwork if your child requires a food supplement or a modified diet. Your child’s pediatrician is required to sign off on this paperwork, so we have written information about the dietary changes needed. Our menus are reviewed annually by external nutrition staff, and we welcome suggestions from families to improve our menus. Vegetarian options are frequently offered. Please speak with the Director if you have any questions or need assistance.

Outdoor Play...

Every day teachers take children outside to enjoy nature, dig in the sandbox, run, ride trikes and PLAY! Outdoor play is provided every day for children of all ages, including young babies. When children cannot play outside because of weather or safety, large motor activities take place in the classrooms or hallways.

Outdoor Experiences or Going Outdoors is the Creative Curriculum category used on the weekly Lesson Plan which is posted outside of each classroom. You can see more specific gross motor and outdoor activities defined here each week. On a daily basis in all types of weather, children play outside, so even on days with a few rain sprinkles, snowflakes or wind, children will go outside. We always keep children’s safety in mind and are attentive to extreme weather conditions and weather alerts. Please dress your child in clothing appropriate for the weather such as hats, mittens, boots, warm coats, and jackets. Young babies are taken for buggy and stroller rides outside every day, even if it’s only for a few minutes.

Outside time is often shortened to 5 or 10 minutes in length on cold or hot days when extreme temperatures persist. On weather advisory days, including temperature, humidity, wind chill, ozone levels or pollen count, the children may only go outside early in the morning, generally before 10:00 a.m. Local radio station weather conditions and advisories are consulted in making these decisions. Children do not play outside during lightning or ice storms.

Napping and Resting...

There is a quiet naptime in the center, generally between 1:00–3:00PM, for all children except those in the Nursery. (Babies eat and sleep on demand throughout the day as each child needs.) Depending on their age, children generally sleep or rest quietly on their cots or engage in quiet activities, allowing those who need to sleep the opportunity to do so.

Mini University practices the “ABCs of Safe Sleep” as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Ohio Hospital Association. This means:

A is for Alone

B is for on the Back

C is for an empty Crib

All babies in the Nursery are placed in a sleep sack, used only during naps. Mini University provides sleep sacks in various sizes for all children. This is the safest way for your baby to sleep, and we follow this practice in all our programs. This also means that nothing else is in the crib with your baby, so no need to bring blankets or stuffed animals; however, a pacifier is certainly fine. Following the ABCs of Safe Sleep is the best way for your baby to sleep at home and school.

Babies sleep on demand, according to each child’s own schedule. In accordance with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services licensing requirements, children are only in their beds when sleepy. This helps babies learn that beds are for sleeping. Based on the recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the state of Ohio regulations require childcare centers to place infants on their back. The only exception to this rule is made when a physician and parents sign the Sleep Position Waiver requesting that the child be placed on his/her stomach.

Nap Time for Toddlers & Two and Pre-Kindergarteners:

A small blanket, pillow, or stuffed animal may be sent to the center for your child to use on his/her cot at naptime. Please mark these and all items with your child’s name or initials. Cot sheets and crib sheets are provided by the center and are laundered at least weekly. Cots and cribs are also disinfected weekly.

All items brought in by the family, such as blankets, pillows, etc. must be taken home and laundered once a week.

Clothing

Children's clothing is very similar in size and styles and needs to be clearly marked with your child's last name or initials. We recommend you consider washable and comfortable play clothes that your child can manage as much as possible. Because the children spend part of each day outdoors, they also need to be dressed according to weather conditions. Safety alert: long, dangling jacket or sweatshirt drawstrings, and long scarves can get caught on playground equipment and tricycles. Please remove any drawstrings. Shoes should be closed toe such as tennis shoes. Sandals should be avoided. We also ask each family to provide two complete sets of extra clothing. Mini University, Inc. does not assume responsibility for loss or damage to clothing or any items brought from home.

Classroom Transitions...

Families often ask about Mini University's policy of moving children from one room to another. It is our goal as your child grows and changes, to minimize room changes and provide your child with the highest quality educational program and experiences.

NAEYC and RIE believe strongly that children's teachers and environment should remain consistent and constant. The center's goal is to have your child remain in the same class for as long as possible to promote this secure, consistent attachment. Mini University provides consistency for each child by partnering with your family to place your child in the appropriate classroom in each age group.

Nursery: 6 weeks - 18 months * Toddler & Twos: 18 - 36 months

Pre-Kindergarten: 3 - 5 years

Besides age, factors that determine when a child moves to a new age group are the child's development, schedule, and input from the family and the child's current teacher. The total enrollment in each class is also taken into consideration. When it is time for your child to move to a new age group, your child's teacher will be the first to contact you. The Director and your child's teacher will work with you to develop a transition plan for your child. This written plan will include the beginning and ending date of the transition period and include a transition schedule. This transition is typically 1-2 weeks.

Step Up to Quality...



According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the state licensing agency for child care centers, "There are 1,892 days from birth until school starts. Step Up to Quality programs know every day matters. Step Up to Quality was created to help families identify early learning and development programs that go beyond the minimum standards of licensing. Star rated programs demonstrate higher levels of quality in a variety of ways." All Mini University programs have a degreed teacher in every classroom who is committed to living these quality expectations to maintain the highest, 5-star rating.

Creative Curriculum

Objectives for Development and Learning...

Mini University uses the research-based curriculum created by Teaching Strategies called: *Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos* and *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. The Objectives for Development & Learning used as the foundation of this curriculum are outlined below.

Social-Emotional Development

There is a strong connection between children's early relationships and behaviors and their later development and learning. The social-emotional objectives are:

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations.

Physical Development

Physical development includes children's gross-motor (large muscle) and fine-motor (small muscle) skills. The physical development objectives are:

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination

Language Development

Strong language skills are essential for children's success in school and life. The oral language objectives are:

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills

Cognitive Development

Cognitive development is influenced by various factors including biological makeup, the environment, and how the child approaches learning tasks (e.g., attention, persistence, curiosity, and flexibility). The cognitive development objectives are:

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
12. Remembers and connects experience
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and image to represent something not present

Literacy

The early years are critical for literacy development. The literacy objectives are:

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet

17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills

Mathematics

Research has made a clear link between early math skills and later school reading and math achievement. These mathematics objectives are:

20. Uses number concepts and operations
21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
22. Compares and measures
23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Science and Technology

Young children are natural investigators. They are curious about how things work and what will happen next. The science and technology objectives are:

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

Social Studies

When young children study social studies, they learn how to be critical thinkers and active members of a classroom community. The social studies objectives are:

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

The Arts

The early childhood years are very important in helping children realize their creative potential. Children's involvement in the arts also helps support other areas of learning and development.

The arts objectives are:

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

English Language Acquisition

Language learning is a basic feature of the early development of all children. Because simultaneous language learners' need to know twice as many words, their vocabulary development may be less extensive in each language in comparison to monolingual children. The English language acquisition objectives are:

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

Teaching Strategies, Inc. (2010) Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD™

Child Assessments & Confidentiality

Mini University works in partnership with families and other agencies to gather accurate developmental screening information when children enroll and annually thereafter. Our Teachers watch children play and gather observation data every day, so they can plan for and document children's growth and development. Mini University conducts formal assessments on enrolled children but does not share child level data with ODJFS pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-17 of the Administrative Code. Screening tools and more formal assessments may change over time, so please refer to the Assessment Plan & Confidentiality Policy provided to families upon enrollment. For the past several years, Mini University has used:

- Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3) – developmental screening
- e-DECA – social/emotional/behavioral health screening aligned to Conscious Discipline
- Early Learning Assessment – Ohio Department of Education
- Teaching Strategies GOLD™ – child development assessment

Children's files, which include health, safety and assessment information, are kept confidential at all times. The parent/legal guardian has full access to their child's file and can request copies at anytime.

Children's files are immediately available to the following:

- Administrators and teaching staff who have consent from the parent
- Children's parents or legal guardian
- Regulatory authorities

Program staff follow all aspects of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct at all times. Confidential information about a child or family is never discussed with co-workers, other families, or anyone who does not have permission. We follow our Social Emotional Policy and Assessment and Referral Policy which includes a release of information from the parent/legal guardian only when there is a need to share pertinent information for the health, development, and well-being of the child.

Family Teacher Conferences

Communication with families is an essential part of each day in a Mini University center. We encourage daily dialogue and use our electronic communication system to keep families informed of their child's activities. Families have an opportunity to meet with teachers regarding their child during drop off or pick up, and families may always request a conference, meeting or Zoom call with the Teacher or a center leader. More formal conferences are held once/year and families may request them more frequently as needed. During the formal conference, time is allotted for the teacher to be out of the classroom to talk with families without distractions of other activities. Conferences are a good opportunity to review your child's development and educational progress, and for families to share their input and goals for their child. Conferences are also used to discuss any concerns parents and teachers may have. Families, teachers, and administrators working together to help children learn and grow are the key to success.

The Nursery and Toddlers & Twos...

Mini University Teachers use the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos, developed by Teaching Strategies. We also incorporate the standards from NAEYC's Accreditation Criteria, Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, and the Resources for Infant Educators (RIE) philosophy, based on the research of Magda Gerber and Dr. Emmi Pikler.

The RIE (pronounced "rye") philosophy is based on **RESPECT** for each child. In the Nursery, families will see the teaching staff or "Educators" demonstrating respect by talking directly to each child, explaining what he/she is about to do, making eye contact, and by waiting for the child's response. RIE's goal is to help nurture **AUTHENTIC** infants who are: Competent, Confident, Curious, Attentive, Exploring, Cooperative, Secure, Peaceful, Focused, Resourceful, Self-Initiating, Involved, Cheerful, Aware, Interested, and Inner-Directed.

Developmentally appropriate programs for children from birth to age 3 are **distinctly different from all other types of programs**. They are not scaled-down versions of a good program for Pre-Kindergarten children. These program differences are determined by the unique characteristics and needs of children during the first three years:

- Changes take place far more rapidly in infancy than during any other period in life.
- During infancy, as at every other age, all areas of development (cognitive, social, emotional, and physical) are intertwined.
- Infants are totally dependent on adults to meet their needs.
- Very young children are especially vulnerable to adversity because they are less able to cope with discomfort or stress.

Sample Schedule, including frequency of diaper checks

Please refer to the schedule posted on your child's class bulletin board for information specific to your child's center. All children in the Nursery eat and sleep "on demand" and all schedules are individualized based on the needs of each baby. Diapers are checked at least every two hours and more frequently during routine caregiving activities such as eating, sleeping and getting dressed.

Creative Curriculum defines the following Routines and Experiences you will see in our Nursery and Toddler & Twos classrooms.

Routines

Warm, responsive daily routines are important parts of the day for Infants, Toddlers and Twos. Routines provide opportunities to build relationships with children that promote the development of trust and security. As children gain new skills and can participate more actively in daily routines, they develop a sense of their own competencies. Consistent and nurturing routines meet the physical and social-emotional needs of children, helping them build trust and autonomy.

Routines include:

- Hellos & Good-Byes *(see Interaction section on page 7)*
- Diapering & Toileting
- Eating & Mealtimes
- Sleeping & Nap Time
- Getting Dressed

Experiences

Children whose basic needs have been met consistently and who have secure attachments are eager to explore the world. Caring for Infants, Toddlers and Twos is deeply satisfying for families and teachers when they appreciate and find joy in the everyday discoveries that delight a young child.

Experiences include:

- Playing with Toys
- Imitating & Pretending
- Enjoying Stories & Books
- Connecting with Music & Movement
- Creating with Art
- Tasting & Preparing Food
- Exploring Sand & Water
- Going Outdoors

Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos, Third Edition Vol. 2 Routines and Experiences © 2015.

Onsite Breastfeeding/Pumping

Mini University strongly supports breastfeeding and encourages nursing mothers to continue breastfeeding or pumping as long as desired, in the comfort of the Nursery or in a more private area within our centers. Please ask your baby's caregiver or the Director if there is anything we can do to make this important time more enjoyable for you and your child. We also encourage nursing mothers to provide expressed milk so fathers can share in this feeding and bonding time with their babies.

RIE Parenting Basics (9 Ways to put Respect into Action)

By Janet Lansbury

<https://www.janetlansbury.com/2013/12/rie-parenting-basics-9-ways-to-put-respect-into-action/>

RIE parenting could be summed up as an *awareness* of our babies. We perceive and acknowledge them to be unique, separate people. We enhance our awareness by observing them — allowing them the bit of space they need to show us who they are and what they need.

RIE parenting also makes us more self-aware. Through our sensitive observations we learn not to jump to conclusions; for example, that our babies are bored, tired, cold, hungry, or want to hold the toy they seem to notice across the room. We learn not to assume that grumbling or fussing means babies need to be propped to sitting, picked up, or rocked or bounced to sleep. We recognize that, like us, babies sometimes have feelings that they want to share and will work through them in their own way with our support.

We learn to differentiate our children's signals from our own projections. We become more aware of the habits we create (like sitting babies up or bouncing them to sleep), habits that can then become our child's needs. These are artificially created needs rather than organic ones.

In short, RIE parenting asks us to use our minds as well as our instinct, to look and listen closely and carefully before we respond. Sensitive observation proves to us that our babies are competent individuals with thoughts, wishes and needs of their own, and once we discover this truth there's no turning back. Then, like Alison Gopnik, one of several psychologists on the forefront of an exciting new wave of infant brain research, we might wonder, "*Why were we so wrong about babies for so long?*"

Practiced observers like RIE founder Magda Gerber weren't wrong. More than sixty years ago, Gerber and her mentor, pediatrician Emmi Pikler, knew what Gopnik's research is finally now proving: infants are born with phenomenal learning abilities, unique gifts, deep thoughts and emotions. Pikler and Gerber dismissed the notion of babies as "cute blobs" years ago, understood them as whole people deserving of our respect.

Gerber's RIE approach can perhaps be best described as putting respect for babies into action. Here's how:

1. We communicate authentically. We speak in our authentic voices (though a bit more slowly with babies and toddlers), use real words and talk about real things, especially things that directly pertain to our babies and that are happening *now*. We encourage babies to build communication skills by asking them questions, affording them plenty of time to respond, always acknowledging their communication.
2. We invite babies to actively participate in caregiving activities like diapering, bathing, meals and bedtime rituals and give them our full attention during these activities. This inclusion and

focused attention nurtures our parent-child relationship, providing children the sense of security they need to be able to separate and engage in self-directed play.

3. We [encourage uninterrupted, self-directed play](#) by offering even the youngest infants free play opportunities, sensitively observing so as not to needlessly interrupt, and trusting that our child's play choices are *enough*. Perfect, actually.

4. We [allow children to develop motor and cognitive skills naturally according](#) to their innate timetables by offering them free play and movement opportunities in an enriching environment, rather than teaching, restricting or otherwise interfering with these organic processes. Our role in development is primarily *trust*.

5. We [value intrinsic motivation and inner-directedness](#), so we acknowledge effort and [take care not to over-praise](#). We trust our children to know themselves better than we know them, so we allow children to lead when they play and choose enrichment activities, rather than projecting our own interests. We encourage our children's passions and support them to fulfill their dreams.

6. We [encourage children to express their emotions](#) by openly accepting and [acknowledging](#) them.

7. We [recognize that children need confident, empathic leaders](#) and [clear boundaries](#), but not shaming, distractions, punishments or time out.

8. We [allow children to problem-solve](#) and experience and [learn from age-appropriate conflicts](#) with our support.

9. We [understand the power of our modeling](#) and recognize that our children are learning from us through our every word and action about love, relationships, empathy, generosity, gratitude, patience, tolerance, kindness, honesty and respect. Most profoundly, they're learning about *themselves*, their abilities and their worth, their place in our hearts and in the world.

The outcome of all this? I couldn't agree more with the promises Magda Gerber stated: "RIE helps adults raise children who are **competent, confident, curious, attentive, exploring, cooperative, secure, peaceful, focused, self-initiating, resourceful, involved, inner-directed, aware and interested**".

But what I'm most grateful to Magda for is the deeply trusting, mutually respectful relationships I have with my children. Respect and trust have a boomerang effect. They come right back at you. As Magda promised, I've raised kids I not only love, but "in whose company I love being."



Pre-Kindergarten Program Philosophy...

Mini University uses *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, which has been aligned to Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, as the educational framework for our Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* is one of the most widely used curricula in the nation for 3-5 year olds. It is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum featuring exploration and discovery as a way of learning.

Teachers create high-quality learning environments and support deep understanding of early childhood best practices, theories, and research. Robust *Daily Resources* provide the instructional tools and materials to engage children in project-based investigations and make every moment of the day meaningful, intentional, and engaging.

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is...

- [Proven to increase kindergarten readiness](#)
- [Academically rigorous and promotes social-emotional development](#)
- [Rated higher than any other preschool curriculum](#)

Our Pre-Kindergarten classrooms are set up using the Interest Areas defined by our curriculum, and literacy, math, science, social studies, technology and the arts are incorporated throughout the indoor and outdoor classroom. *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* Interest Areas include:

- Art
- Block
- Cooking
- Computers
- Discover
- Dramatic Play
- Library
- Music & Movement
- Sand & Water
- Toys & Games
- Outdoors

Sample Pre-Kindergarten Schedule

The following sample schedule outlines the Creative Curriculum Interest Areas and general schedule for our Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. Refer to the schedule posted near your child's classroom for more specific information.

6:30/7-9:00	Arrival, Learning Activities in all Interest Areas & Breakfast
9:00-10:00	Group Meeting, Read-Aloud Storytime & Small Group Work Time
10:00-11:00	Learning Activities in all Interest Areas
11:00-12:00	Outdoor Play & Gross Motor Activities
12:00-1:00	Family Style Lunch, Toothbrushing, Stories & I Love You Rituals

1:00-3:00	Nap/Rest Time
3:00- 3:30	Snack
3:30-5:00	Learning Activities in all Interest Areas
5:00-6:00	Outdoor Play & Departures

Learning Without Tears:

Get Set for School

Mini University uses the *Get Set for School* materials in all Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. The *Get Set for School* resources provide a developmental approach that is based on the research of how children learn best.

The *Get Set for School* programs incorporates child-friendly opportunities, such as music and movement to engage children in lessons and various manipulatives to build fine and gross motor skills. These activities teach body awareness, cooperation, taking turns, listening, crayon grip, drawing, building, letter and number recognition, capital letter and number formation.

Physical development and social/behavior skills are extremely important in the early years. Children need to develop both fine and gross motor skills to be able to learn to write. These skills are predictors of future success. At Mini University we believe in providing a developmentally appropriate environment and materials to teach children these essential skills.

Kindergarten Readiness...

To prepare for Kindergarten, children need to be supported and nurtured in all areas of development. It is also important children are physically, socially and emotionally ready to participate in school. This list can serve as a guide for families as their children prepare for the exciting transition to Kindergarten.

Can your child separate from a primary caregiver without anxiety?

Use self-control?

- Keeping hands to self
- Sharing and taking turns
- Cooperating and playing with other children
- Using classroom supplies appropriately

Cooperate with adults and authority figures?

- Following directions
- Communicating needs effectively

Demonstrate self-help skills?

- Using the restroom independently
- Putting on and zipping own coat
- Tying shoes

Use classroom tools and toys efficiently?

- Cutting with scissors
- Holding and using a pencil, crayon or marker
- Building with blocks or Legos

Express self-awareness in a variety of ways?

- Knowing first and last name
- Writing first name
- Naming the letters in first name\
- Knowing name of primary caregiver(s)

Ohio Ready for Kindergarten, Ohio Department of Education

Supervision & Child Guidance...

“Discipline is not something you do to children it is something you instill within them.” – Dr. Becky Bailey

Children are taught the skills of problem solving and conflict resolution through role modeling and the use of appropriate language to solve conflicts. Teachers use and implement the seven basic skills of Conscious Discipline to encourage positive relationships and guide child behaviors. The seven basic skills are:

- **Composure:** Self-regulation in action. It is the prerequisite skill adults need before disciplining children.
- **Assertiveness:** Clear, vigilant communication that focuses children’s attention on what we want them to do. It is essential for setting effective and respectful limits.
- **Encouragement:** Encouraging children to help others creates a sense of belonging in which the intrinsic desire to be of service to be of service outshines attention-seeking behaviors.
- **Choices:** Internally motivated choices bathe the brain in helpful chemicals that foster an optimistic “I can” attitude, increase compliance, enhance decision-making and focus attention.
- **Empathy:** Teaches emotional regulation, integrating the brain so children can take personal responsibility for their actions.
- **Positive Intent:** We must see children differently in order for them to behave differently.
- **Consequences:** Teach children to examine their behavior, reflect on the impact of their choices, and make changes until they reach their highest goals.

Adapted from www.consciousdiscipline.com 800-842-2846

At Mini University, teaching staff are responsible for helping each child learn how to identify emotions and self-regulate. Our hope is that each child will learn self-discipline through careful and supportive guidance. Your child will be treated with love and respect. If children are treated

with respect, they in turn learn to respect the teachers and their peers. Our expectations will be kept within the child's capabilities and the child will be made aware of these expectations.

In addition to teaching and using Conscious Discipline skills, when children's behavior is not appropriate, all Mini University employees will:

- Use the developmentally appropriate techniques suitable to the children's ages and circumstances.
- Use developmentally appropriate separation from the situation only as necessary.
- Communicate and consult with parents or guardians in implementing any specific behavior management plan.

Biting

It is very common, when young children are together, for aggressive behavior to occur. Babies and Toddlers are generally not capable of expressing themselves and their needs verbally and may try to get what they want by using physical means. Biting is a very natural tendency for young children. It is normal for Infants, Toddlers and Twos to experiment with biting, and by the time a child enters Pre-Kindergarten, this behavior and developmental stage typically ends.

As preventative measures with Babies and Toddlers we:

1. Schedule many activities to keep children busy.
2. Provide alternative toys and activities when several children want the same toy or to participate in the same activity.
3. Encourage "soft touches" and being "gentle" when relating to each other.
4. Encourage the children to use words to express their desires. ("No, I want that toy" or "I am looking at that book".)

When biting occurs, we immediately say to the child who bit, "Gentle, gentle, gentle. You may not bite children; biting hurts." We also offer alternative activities to this child such as "you may bite the teething ring" or "If you are hungry, I will get you a cracker."

We take care of the child who was bitten. We stroke the child's cheek or arm saying, "Gentle" and reflect the feeling this child is showing. For example, "I see you are crying. Biting hurts. Your friend needs to be soft and gentle with you." The bite is cleaned with soap and water and ice is often applied. If the skin is broken, the family is contacted. The teacher completes an Incident Report to notify the family. This also help us keep track of the time and frequency of such incidents. The parents of the child who has bitten are also notified.

How parents can help

You can help at home by further encouraging your children to use their words and use "soft touches" and "be gentle". Demonstrate and role play what these words mean. We also request that parents remember that young children cannot distinguish games or playful biting from real bites. For example, nibbling fingers may seem like fun at home, but it may lead to biting at school.

In extreme circumstances: Conferences are held with the parents of a child who chronically bites, and if all other efforts have failed, the child's schedule may be reduced or "paused" for a period of time. Only in very rare cases is a child temporarily disenrolled for biting.

Families & Teachers Working Together

Mini University believes guiding children's behavior is a shared responsibility between parents, extended family members and teachers. When children's behavior is deemed disruptive to the learning environment, parents will be notified and a plan to teach the desired social behaviors and eliminate the negative behavior will be established. If a child's behavior continues to cause a disruption, a possible reduction in schedule or temporary "pause" (suspension) of enrollment may occur. We are counting on parents to provide the support necessary for teachers to create an optimum learning environment for all children.

Additional resources are available in the community to help the child, family and our classroom teaching staff. The Director will coordinate those services and meet with the family, documenting concerns in writing. A behavior management plan can be written and is often a helpful tool for everyone involved. This plan would be developed in consultation with the family and would be consistent with the requirements of Rule 5101:2-12-22 OAC.

The safety of all children is always our primary concern. If a situation arises where a child is consistently endangering himself, peers, or staff, more formal referrals will be made to help the child. Our goal is not to disenroll a child, but rather to find the right supports so the child can learn new social skills and re-join the class. Every attempt will be made to work together with the family and the child to teach and correct the behavior. Any family needing assistance with any problems should seek assistance from the Director or Assistant Director at any time. Families, leaders, and teachers working together to help children learn appropriate ways of behaving are the key to success.

Summer Camp "Seniors" ...

The oldest children in a Mini University center are the school age children, affectionately referred to as "the Seniors." These children range in age from 5-10 years old, and, depending on the center, may be divided in 1-2 classrooms.

The emphasis in our school-age Summer Camp is placed on group activities that stress cooperation and respect for others. The children are allowed time to explore, socialize and work on Projects with their friends. The classrooms are fun, exciting, and developmentally appropriate for the students.

School age children are allowed to run short errands inside the building or use the restroom alone in groups of three without adult supervision as long as the children are within hearing distance of a teacher. The teacher checks on the children regularly until they return to the group, and the restroom is for the exclusive use of the center.

Summer Camp Sample Field Trips

All Day Field Trips – 2 trips each week and swimming generally ½ day each week

- Museum of Natural History & Science or COSI
- Wegerzyn Gardens & Oxford/Dayton local parks
- National Museum of the US Air Force (WPAFB)
- Cincinnati Zoo

Sample Summer Camp Schedule

6:30/7:00-8:30	Breakfast and Project Work
8:30-9:00	Preparing for Field Trip (two full days/week and often ½ day swim)
	Morning Meeting to plan for the day
9:00 – 3:30	Field Trip or Onsite using the following schedule
9:00 - 11:15	Small Groups/Project Work – Block building, Dramatic play, Math & Games, Computers, The Arts & Construction
11:15-12:30	Outdoor Recess & Lunch
12:30-2:15	Independent Reading & Teacher Reading Chapter Book & Small Groups/Project Work
2:15-3:30	Outdoor Recess & Snack
3:30-6:00	Group Meeting to review the day, continued Project Work & Math & Games

Swimming and Water Safety

Written parent/guardian permission is required for all recreational or instructional swimming and water play activities. Parents also need to indicate whether their child is a swimmer or non-swimmer. Classroom teachers review swimming and/or water safety rules with children each time they participate in water activities. Mini University staff actively supervise children at all times in addition to lifeguards of the recreational or instructional swim program. All Summer Senior swimming activities take place in local pools. Younger children participate in water play activities on the playgrounds.

Field Trips and Transportation...

Mini University, Inc. maintains vehicles for transporting children on field trips and routine trips. Teaching staff always carry a cell phone on all field trips and routine trips.

Staff and parents may never transport children (other than their own) in their privately owned vehicles for any function associated with Mini University, Inc. Appropriate behavior is expected of all students participating in a field trip and/or riding in any Mini University vehicle.

Field Trips & Routine Walking Trips

Field trips are a regular part of Mini University Pre-Kindergarten and Summer Camp. Teachers plan field trips to places such as farms and grocery stores to bring real life experiences to what is being studied in the classrooms. Other field trips may be to local park settings for fun and exercise or to historical museums where history can come alive. Parents are always welcome on trips!

Pertinent information regarding field trips and routine walking trips for children of all ages is posted for families prior to the excursion. Written parent/guardian permission is required prior to all trips. Most routine trips are within walking distance of each center. These policies are followed on all field trips and routine walking trips:

- Each child must wear a seat belt (only one child per belt) or be secured in a car seat, and the number of children in a vehicle is limited to the appropriate amount for that vehicle.
- Children are assigned to a specific staff member for all routine trips and field trips. At least one staff member has current certification in CPR, Pediatric First Aid and Management of Communicable Disease. First aid supplies are available while on the trip.
- At no time are children left attended in vehicles. Drivers will check vehicles at each destination to make certain all children are out of the vehicles.
- Vehicles are exited and boarded at curbside.
- No smoking is ever permitted in vehicles.
- Drivers are at least 25 years of age and have earned a CDL.
- Weekly inspections and annual vehicle safety inspections are completed on all vehicles. Documentation is on file.
- Every child, while on any field trip or routine walking trip, must wear a name tag, t-shirt, or vest with the center name, address, and telephone number.
- Teachers must have signed permission slips, emergency forms and health records for all children on all field trips or routine walking trips.
- Supervision & Attendance: Name to face attendance is taken multiple times on all routine walking trips and field trips, including swimming.

Management of Illness and Medications...

Mini University provides children with a clean, safe and healthy environment. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many prevention strategies became even more important to protecting children, families and our ECE staff, especially those who are not or cannot be fully vaccinated. Some of these strategies included promoting vaccinations, consistent and correct use of masks among all families and employees, physical distancing, opening windows and doors for increased ventilation, hourly handwashing and respiratory etiquette, increased cleaning and disinfecting protocols and everyone staying home when sick. As the pandemic transmission declines, some of these strategies will fade, but remaining attentive to cleaning, disinfecting, handwashing, and staying home when sick will always remain.

Children are observed as they enter the program to quickly assess their general health, and any child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and sent home:

- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit if taken axillary, when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally, unexpectedly or unexplained loose stools within a 24-hour period)
- Severe coughing (causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound)
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other sign of illness

Children will be readmitted to the center after at least 24 hours of being free of fever without medicine and other symptoms. If they are not symptom free a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious. Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. The parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in center activities the parent will be called to pick-up the child. Anytime a child is isolated they will be kept within sight and hearing of a staff member. The cot and linens used will be washed and disinfected before being used again.

The Communicable Disease Chart is located in the Front Office area, so it is readily accessible to all families. Parents are notified through the Family Engagement app if children have been exposed to a communicable illness.

Medications & ADA Compliance

The center administers medications once/day after a parent completes a Request for Medication form. All sections of the form must be completed, and all medication is checked in and stored in a separate container or refrigerator at the Front Office. Medications are inaccessible to children. Medications are never stored in a child's cubby or backpack. The only exception to this requirement is for school-age children. Only school-age children are permitted to maintain control of their own emergency medication, such as inhalers, and topical products such as ointments or lip balms. Parents must sign a release form stating that they are permitting their child to have access at all times. Based on national safety recommendations, Mini University does not administer any over-the-counter cold/cough medicines to children younger than age 4. Mini University ensures compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) including the administration of medication and other care procedures for children with disabilities.

Care of Children Without Immunizations

Mini University believes it is important to a child's success as an early learner that all immunizations and screenings are completed. If a parent, legal guardian or physician determines exceptions to the immunization requirements pursuant to 5104-014 ORC, additional information is required on the child's medical statement. This includes the names of diseases against which the child has not been immunized and the reasons why they have not been immunized. The family can review specific details on JFS 1305-Child Medical Statement and other side of the form with the Dear Parent Letter that is part of the enrollment packet. If a child/adult enters the program and has a vaccine-preventable disease, the following takes place:

1. Immediate notification to the parent to pick up the under immunized child.
2. Immediate removal of child (if necessary) to a secure supervised place in the building where he/she is not directly exposed.
3. Child will be picked up by the parent/legal guardian within 1 hour, as our communicable disease policy states.
4. The Director will discuss with the family the incubation period of the disease and will require medical clearance in writing for when the under immunized child can return to school.
5. The Director will communicate with the family including when it is safe to return to the program.

Safety and Supervision Policies...

The following information is required by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to be included in the Family Handbook.

- An adult supervises all children at all times.
- **Attendance:** Each child must be clocked in and out upon arrival and departure by the parent or guardian at the Front Office. The parent or guardian must accompany the child to the appropriate classroom. Attendance is also taken upon arrival and departure of each child in each classroom. Occasionally a child is scheduled to arrive from another program or activity (i.e. Local school district transporting a child from public preschool) and does not arrive. The Director or Enrollment Coordinator will contact the parent and/or the other program to see where the child is. Generally the child is absent due to illness or vacation and the family forgot to notify the center. We always want to ensure children are safe so we will call!
- **Custody Situations:** Court orders or divorce decrees, granting temporary and/or permanent custody, are required from the parents when necessary. This information is shared with the child's teacher; however, the confidentiality of all parties is respected. The center's focus is on the child's interests. A parent of a child enrolled at the center who is not the child's residential parent is permitted unlimited access to the center and is afforded the same rights as the residential parent unless there is court documentation

limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent. Upon entering the center, the parent or guardian shall notify the administrator or designee of his or her presence. Custody paperwork generally outlines who is allowed to pick up the child. Whomever has legal custody is responsible for completing the enrollment paperwork accurately to ensure the center releases a child at pick up to the designated adult. See the following policy for additional information.

- **Releasing a Child to People other than the Parent:** All parents or guardians must give written authorization for anyone to pick-up their child. This is done by completing the appropriate section on the child's enrollment form or by giving a written note to the Front Office. Anyone picking up a child must be sixteen years of age or older. Anyone coming into the center is visually identified. Anyone unfamiliar to the person at the Front Office must present a picture I.D. before having any contact with and/or leaving with any child.
 - Parents: Please let all of your Emergency Contacts know our policy regarding picture I.D.'s. We do not mean to offend anyone with this policy, and we have found grandparents to be especially sensitive to this. For the safety of the children, we ask everyone for a picture I.D. if we do not recognize them. We apologize for not knowing all of the grandparents!
- Telephones are available for use in case of an emergency.
- The Director conducts fire drills and tornado drills at varying times each month. A record of drills is maintained. Attendance is taken after each drill.
- In case of a tornado or severe weather, children are taken to and seated in the hallway. Staff members remain with the children at all times.
- Infants are placed in evacuation cribs and removed to a safe designated area in case of fire or severe weather.
- An Emergency Medical Plan is posted in the office by the telephone and in each room, explaining what to do in case of fire or weather alerts. Diagrams showing primary and secondary evacuation routes are also posted.
- All outlets in the center are covered with safety caps or equipped with manufactured child protected plates. Safety outlets are marked to indicate they do not need safety caps.
- An Incident/Injury Report will be available to parents on the day of an incident.
- Incident Reports are completed and given to the person picking up the child, on the day of the injury:
 - An illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment.
 - A bump or blow to the head.
 - An injury requiring emergency transportation.
 - An unusual or unexpected event that jeopardizes the safety of a child.

The center shall also contact licensing personnel from the appropriate ODJFS office within 24 hours when there is a "general emergency" or "serious incident, injury or illness." The report will be provided to licensing staff within 24 hours of the incident.

Universal Precautions

The term “universal precautions” is used by health care professionals and means all patients are treated in the same manner, regardless of known or unknown infectious disease. The universal precautions used by all Mini University employees administering any type of first aid ensure the health and safety of the child and the employee. Any time any first aid is administered, all persons are treated as if they have an infectious disease.

Emergencies and Accidents...

Environmental Situations or Threats of Violence

1. Threats of Violence – An administrator shall call Security or Public Safety and notify them of the situation. If at all possible, the children and staff are quickly and quietly evacuated from the building to a safe area. Efforts are made to isolate the situation or person as much as possible. Security personnel are in charge of emergency situations.
2. Loss of Power, Heat or Water – If the loss of power, heat, or water occurs and is projected to not be temporary, the center will close. Considerations are given to the risk or the health and well-being of children and staff, the amount of natural light in the center, the temperature in the center and the ability and necessity of heating food and formula. Parents and/or emergency contacts are called to pick up the children within the hour. A sign is posted on the door about the emergency closing when staff leave the building.
3. Emergency evacuation of Centers – Buildings have been identified for each center to use in case of an emergency or evacuation. Most locations are within walking distance. (Older children will walk and Infants are transported in the buggy and strollers.)

In Case of Emergency...

1. No child is left alone or unsupervised.
2. If any question of back or head injury exists, the ambulance is called, and the child remains on the accident site until moved by a paramedic. The child's health and medical records shall be taken with the child to the hospital.
3. In the event that a child must be transported, and appropriate permission is on file, a staff member shall accompany the child with his or her medical records to the emergency facility. An Incident/Injury report is available to the parent picking up the child from the center on the day of the accident.
4. In the event a child requires medical attention, but it is not a life-threatening situation, the child shall remain at the center and the parents are contacted to transport their child to a medical facility.
5. Parents are notified immediately and informed of the situation. At this time parents are told of the location of their child, whether the child is kept at the center or transported to an emergency facility.

6. In the event a child or staff member has become ill or injured and 911 has to be called, all decisions for medical care are left to the emergency medical team. While waiting for the ambulance after calling 911, one of the staff members trained in the administration of emergency First Aid attends to the child or children involved in the emergency.
7. Those children not involved in the emergency are supervised in the area or taken to another area where appropriate supervision can be maintained.

Emergency Treatment with Refusal of Transport

Mini University requires JFS 1234-Child Enrollment and Health Information form for each child who enrolls at the center. Parents complete the emergency transportation authorization section on the form. Most parents give permission to transport in case of emergency. For a parent who does not give permission to transport, child care services are still provided yet we also want to ensure the safety of the child. The Director meets with the parent to discuss their decision and understand the action to be taken. The center staff will always follow the safety procedures outlined in the Family Handbook while being mindful of the family's wishes. In the event the child or staff member has become ill or injured and 911 must be called, all decisions for medical care are left to the emergency medical team, including transport even if a "no transport" is indicated on JFS 1234. Families will always be contacted immediately, and the child is never left alone or unsupervised.

First Aid and Other Basic Health Training

The state of Ohio requires all childcare centers to have at least one staff member trained in the following areas during all hours of operation:

1. Pediatric First Aid
2. CPR
3. Child Abuse Recognition and Prevention
4. Management of Communicable Disease

NAEYC criteria require that, "At least one staff member, who has certification in emergency pediatric first aid treatment, CPR for infants and children, and emergency management of choking from a licensed health professional, is always present." Mini University ensures all employees earn and maintain these certifications, so children have adults with them at all times who keep them safe.

Weather Related Closing

Mini University, Inc. does not anticipate closing, but the centers are under the direction of our sponsoring organizations in such situations. If Miami University, Sinclair Community College or WSU closes campus, Mini University will also close. In the case of severe weather in the Dayton/Oxford areas, please listen to the local television and radio stations for the latest information about school delays or possible closings. Mini University will also use our website and electronic communication system to post information to all families.

Additional Information

Mini University Financial Policies outline additional information and are provided to families prior to enrolling their child. Please refer to the most recent policies in the event there are any discrepancies between the following general information and the most current policy. These items are required to be included in the Family Handbook.

Registration Fees: Registration Fees are charged when a child enrolls, is placed on the waiting list, or in the future if a child withdraws and wishes to re-enroll. All registration fees are non-refundable.

Monthly Tuition: Mini University tuition is charged on the first of each month for the schedule a family has selected. Weekly Co-Pays are determined by the state and charged 4 or 5 times on the first of the month, based on the number of Mondays in the month. A late fee is charged to any account not paid in full within one week of tuition being charged. Services are discontinued within two weeks if payment has not been made in full.

Absent Days & Absence Notification: Tuition is charged regardless of attendance or absence. We appreciate knowing when any child will be absent. All families can login to the Family Engagement app to report an absence or call the center.

Payment Schedule/Responsibility for Payment: By enrolling in a Mini University program, a family accepts financial responsibility for the full tuition charges and all fees. Maintaining eligibility and completing all required paperwork in a timely manner for any tuition assistance including public funding is the responsibility of each family. Tuition assistance may not be used for Backup Care.

Payment Methods: Tuition and/or Co-Pays are billed once/month. Upon enrollment, families select their method of payment. Options include automatic bank account authorization for electronic funds transfer (ACH), paying online by credit card and paying at the Touch clock-in device at all centers. Tuition Express (TE) provides families with the safest and most secure method of payment and gives families 24/7 access to account balance and payment history information. An automatic ACH semi-monthly payment option is available to families whose monthly tuition is over \$800.

Overtime Charges/Late Pick-Up Fees: We appreciate those families who are respectful of our teachers and pick up their children before the center closes. All centers close no later than 6:00 p.m. and families must be out of the center by the posted center closing time or the following charges apply:

- \$25.00 per child is charged and due for each 15 minutes or fraction thereof the family is late or still in the building after the center closes, up to 1 hour. The police are called to pick up any child left at the center more than 1 hour after closing.
- No grace period is given, and families are dis-enrolled if late pick-ups occur more than 3 times/year.
- Late fees are the responsibility of all families at the time of pickup or before dropping off the child on the next scheduled day. No tuition assistance is available for late fees.

Holidays & Center Closing Schedule: Each center follows a holiday closing schedule aligned to the sponsoring organization. Regular monthly tuition is charged, regardless of the number of days per month the center is open and regardless of the child's attendance. See the Financial Policies for specific dates each year. All centers are closed on the following major holidays:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day and Thanksgiving and the Friday after Thanksgiving. The Hope Center for Families, Sinclair and WSU are also closed for Veterans Day.
- All centers are closed for Holiday Break, generally between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day.
- All centers are closed one week in early to mid-August for Teacher Inservice.

Termination of Enrollment (*Suspension & Expulsion*)

After reasonable efforts have been made to integrate a child or family into the program, a child's enrollment may be suspended or terminated if the child or family is deemed chronically disruptive. This is an extreme circumstance and is only considered in the event that all other options to resolve an issue have been exhausted. Generally, a family would be involved in at least 2 conferences with the Teacher and /or Director and receive at least one written warning prior to being suspended or disenrolled. During one of these conferences a Plan of Action will be developed in an effort to improve the behavior of the child or family. A brief "pause" of enrollment (suspension) or a reduced schedule may be part of this Plan of Action. All attempts will be made by Mini University to successfully resolve the problem; however, parents are equal partners in this process and are expected to work with Mini University to resolve issues.

Immediate termination will result should an adult in any way harm another person or commit an unlawful act during normal center hours or at any timely Mini University sponsored event. Failure to make timely payments will also result in the child(ren) being disenrolled from the center.

<u>RATIOS & GROUP SIZES:</u>	STATE	MINI U-NAEYC
NURSERY (birth-18 months)	1:5/2:12	1:4/2:8 3:10-12
TODDLERS/TWOS (18-36 months)	1:7-8/2:14-16	1:5-7/2:10-14
PRE-KINDERGARTEN (3-5 years)	1:12-14 2:24-28	1:10/2:20
SUMMER CAMP (6-10 years)	1:18/2:36	1:14/2:28

Center Parent Information

Mini University, Inc. is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability to meet with parents and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio department of job and family services.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, or national origin or in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>

*All communication between programs and families
should be based on the concept that parents are and should be
the principal influence in children's lives.*

NAEYC Accreditation Criteria & Procedures