

Welcome!

All of the staff at the D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center are honored to have been chosen to care for your child. Together, with the support of Gwinnett Technical College, we look forward to a long and rewarding relationship with your family.

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Important Notes:

Throughout this handbook the term 'Parent' is used to describe any person legally responsible for the care of a child enrolled in the D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center.

Administrator refers to the Director, Associate Director, Curriculum Coordinator, Office Manager, and Administrative Assistant. Any of these professionals can answer questions you may have during the course of your child's enrollment.

Enrollment is open to any child age six weeks through 8 years (extended learning and summer camp), without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, national and ethnic orientation, disability, or creed, provided the child will benefit from the program offered and does not pose a threat to the health and safety of other children or staff.

Center Phone Numbers

Main Phone.....	678-226-6510
Main Fax.....	678-376-5898
Director	678-226-6680
Associate Director.....	678-226-6511
Infant/Toddler Curriculum Coordinator	678-226-6689
Office Manager.....	678-226-6513
Infant 1.....	678-226-6516
Infant 2.....	678-226-6515
Toddler 1.....	678-226-6535
Toddler 2	678-226-6538
Toddler 3.....	678-226-6523
Toddler 4.....	678-226-6524
Preschool 1.....	678-226-3531
Preschool 2.....	678-226-6532
Preschool 3.....	678-226-6529
Preschool 4.....	678-226-6526
Pre-K 1.....	678-226-6527
Pre-K 2.....	678-226-6528
Pre-K 3	678-226-6530
Pre-K 4.....	678-226-6533

Center Address

5150 Sugarloaf Parkway
Building 800
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043

E-mail: judgens@gwinnettech.edu

Please save to your 'Favorites' to receive e-mail from the Center

Our Mission

"Providing a high quality early learning environment for children AND a model training facility for students at Gwinnett Technical College."

The mission of Gwinnett Technical College (GTC) is to prepare a workforce to meet the needs of Gwinnett County. Thus, the mission of the Early Childhood Program is to provide high quality care for children while also preparing highly skilled teachers of young children to work as paraprofessionals in the elementary school, lead teachers in Georgia Pre-K and child care programs in the community.

The faculty and staff at GTC believe that teaching young children is an art and a science. The science of teaching young children is provided through the extensive theory college students learn through the Gwinnett Tech Early Childhood Care and Education program. The D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center's goals are to provide an enriching environment in which adults can develop the art of teaching while providing the children in our program an environment that stimulates each child to reach his or her fullest potential in all areas of development: cognitive, social/emotional, language and physical.

The Goals of the D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center are:

- ❖ To provide a developmentally appropriate environment for all young children.
- ❖ To encourage children in positive social and emotional interactions within the group setting.
- ❖ To offer children an educational environment that stimulates and supports individual and group learning.
- ❖ To promote independence and a positive self-concept in children.
- ❖ To provide a safe and nurturing environment to encourage children to become risk takers in their learning process.
- ❖ To model the strategies and techniques of quality care for children as learning tools for future teachers.
- ❖ To partner with parents/caregivers to provide the best possible care and education for all children.

The Center's Philosophy

Everything done at the D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center is based on the philosophy that children are open and prepared to learn new skills and concepts when they feel safe and nurtured. Teachers must develop a relationship with each child based on trust and respect for one another and provide a safe and well prepared environment for children to explore.

The facility is designed to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to learn in a warm and secure environment that fosters the development of the whole child. Every aspect of the program from mealtime, to guidance, to classroom activities is designed to contribute to the children's learning and development. Developing a positive self-concept fosters success in life, and this is enhanced when each child is cared for in a nurturing environment that meets his or her physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs.

Children are provided with a variety of materials and activities to use in exploring, constructing, and organizing the world around them. The program offers a balance of free choice and guided activities as well as individual and group activities. Teachers help children when making choices and then in understanding that choices have natural consequences. This becomes a foundation for success in school and life.

The Hudgens Early Education Center is a place where children can learn while they play and share experiences with other children. The environment is designed to enable children to develop close relationships with members in their primary rooms while providing opportunities to expand social skills as they interact with members from secondary groups in the sensory or "messy" room and with an even larger group as he or she works on projects in the piazza. This configuration reflects society's social structures of family, neighborhood, and community.

In a further reflection of our Gwinnett community, the Center provides opportunities for children of all cultures and economic backgrounds and with a variety of abilities. The ability to work with and respect others is vital as we strive to develop our youngest citizens. By welcoming all, the Center is promoting the development of acceptance and the understanding of unity which provides a realistic view of the world.

Facts

- ✓ The D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center was dedicated in August 2006.
- ✓ The 26,000 sq. ft. facility was built with private funds donated through the generosity of the Gwinnett community to the Gwinnett Tech Foundation.
- ✓ The facility cost \$6.4 million.
- ✓ There are fourteen classrooms, four piazzas, and six observation rooms in addition to administrative offices and teacher work areas.
- ✓ Each classroom has two teachers. Floaters and substitutes are also available at various times during the day to increase the number of adults caring for the children.
- ✓ Students in the Early Childhood Program observe the children on a regular basis as part of their college classes. They may be observing the developmental levels and abilities of the children; another assignment may focus on the teaching techniques used with a particular age group and/or subject area.
- ✓ The Hudgens Center follows the staffing patterns and requirements of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Guiding Principles:
Strategies, Policies, and Procedures

The teaching techniques and strategies used at the
Hudgens Center are supported by research and the
National Association for the Education of Young Children
(NAEYC)

www.naeyc.org

The Center respects your ideas and welcomes your
comments but will not implement ideas that are not
consistent with research-supported best practices.

The following is a detailed explanation of the Center's
strategies and policies. Enrolling your child in the Hudgens
Center confirms that you accept, understand, and agree
with the philosophies and operating guidelines.

General Operating Procedures

The D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center is open year round. Daily hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. until 6:15 p.m.

GA Pre-K programs operate from August to May and the program hours will vary.

Holidays

The Hudgens Center is closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving
- Winter Break (end of December, dates to be determined each year).

The Hudgens Center will also be closed additional days during the year for professional development in order to maintain the quality of the program. Families will be provided with ample notice of closings and special activities. These dates can be identified on the academic calendar as well.

Enrollment

Enrollment is open to any child age six weeks through 8 years (extended learning and summer camp), without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, national and ethnic orientation, disability, or creed, provided the child will benefit from the program offered and does not pose a threat to the health and safety of other children or staff.

Enrollment priority is given to faculty, staff, and students of Gwinnett Technical College. During the selection process the age of the child, program availability, siblings currently in program, and date of application are considered. The enrollment packet must be completed in its entirety before the child is allowed to enter the program. This includes *immunization form 3231* completed by your child's health care provider.

To help facilitate a smooth transition into the Hudgens Center you are encouraged to bring your child to visit his/her classroom prior to his/her start date. During this visit you will stay with your child, but allow the child to interact with peers and the classroom environment. This also gives you the opportunity to get the 'feel' of the classroom and increase your comfort level. The teachers will be able to talk with you on a limited basis while in the classroom, but any additional questions you have can be answered following the visit by a center administrator.

Support Services

Often children enroll at the Hudgens Center as their first experience in a group care and educational setting. Group care presents many opportunities and experiences that children may have not been exposed to in smaller care environments and in their own homes. Sometimes certain behaviors, conditions, and/or other developmental issues present themselves that parents have not seen or noticed before. Many of these situations are very typical. The staff at the Hudgens Center is prepared to help each individual child as they learn how to get along with others and adjust to a new educational environment.

Sometimes children exhibit characteristics and behaviors that are atypical and require professional expertise to help the children progress and to help parents and teachers to meet the child's needs. When these situations arise, the Center staff and administrators will work together, with the child's parents, to find out what the child needs and also to contact and utilize outside resources. The Hudgens Center welcomes professionals from *Babies Can't Wait* (Early Intervention Services for children birth to 3 years of age) and *Gwinnett County Preschool Special Education Services* (support for children 3-21 years of age). Both of these agencies provide services to help children and support families.

Please note: the Hudgens Center will make every possible accommodation, when necessary, for all children; however, **the Center is not equipped to provide one-on-one care for any child**. If your child has special needs that require special accommodations you will be asked to meet with Center administrators and teachers prior to your child's first day. This meeting will help the Center staff to better prepare and serve your child on their first day of school. The Center will allow community agencies to provide support staff for any child receiving special services for which one-on-one care is necessary. The Center looks forward to creating partnerships with community support agencies working with and for young children.

Georgia Pre-K Enrollment

Children enrolled by February 1st in a preschool classroom will be given first priority to enroll in a GA Pre-K class. Enrollment in a preschool classroom will greatly increase the chances your child will secure a slot in GA Pre-K but it DOES NOT GUARANTEE A SLOT IN GA PRE-K FOR YOUR CHILD. In the event that there are not enough GA Pre-K slots for currently enrolled preschool children, an internal Center lottery would be held for the slots. Those not chosen for immediate placement in a GA Pre-K class would be placed first on the waiting list.

Tuition and Fees

The D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center is a self supporting entity. The Center's main source of revenue is the tuition on behalf of the children. Tuition is due on a weekly basis. Checks or money orders are accepted. Automatic bank drafts from your checking account or credit card can also be arranged. The Center will not accept cash payments nor keep cash on the premises. Checks and money orders should be made payable to Gwinnett Technical College. Please include the child's name and the week(s) of care for which payment is rendered in the memo section of the check. Payments are made at the front desk of the Hudgens Center.

Payments are due on the Friday of the week preceding the week of care. Payments received after Monday at 12:00 p.m. (noon) will incur a late fee. If payment is not received by the close of business on the Tuesday of the current week of care, the child may not be brought to the Hudgens Center for care until payment is made. A service fee is charged for any check or automatic payment returned for insufficient funds, and future payments must be made with a money order.

Full tuition is paid for each week that your child is enrolled, regardless of attendance and/or school closing. Tuition is not charged for the week we are closed for winter break.

- **Registration Fee**

A nonrefundable enrollment fee is due for each child enrolled at the Center. If necessary, this secures your child's space on the waiting list until there is availability within the appropriate class.

- **Supply Fee**

At the time of enrollment, a supply fee is due. The annual supply fee helps ensure that your child has a multitude of resources to enhance the learning environment. The supply fee is due in August of each year. *The supply fee does not apply to children enrolled in the GA Pre-K program.*

- **Multi-Child Discount**

Any family enrolling a second child will receive a 10% discount for the oldest child enrolled. Any subsequent children (3rd and on) will receive a 5% discount. The 10% discount will be given for the oldest child enrolled. The 5% discount will be given to the next oldest and so on. The youngest child will be charged full tuition.

- **GA Pre-K Lunch Fee**

The Hudgens Center provides state funded Georgia Pre-K programs. Children may attend a GA Pre-K class tuition free; with the exception of the weekly meal fee. If you or your child qualifies for any income based assistance, please see the Center Office Manager for alternative payment options.

- **Vacation**

After attending the center for six months, each child is eligible for a $\frac{1}{2}$ week vacation, one time per calendar year. Please stop at the front desk and fill out the vacation request form. You will be responsible for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the tuition for that week in order to maintain your child's enrollment.

- **Late Pick-Up Penalty Fees**

Your child's sense of security is based on routines being followed. This includes the time that you will come to pick up him or her. You have established a schedule, and the Center's staffing is based on that schedule. Therefore, if you are late in picking up your child, additional costs are incurred to pay overtime and substitutes.

To cover this, the Center charges the late family an amount for the first five minutes after closing and an additional charge per minute thereafter. Gwinnett County Department of Family and Children Services will be notified of any children left in the program 30 minutes after closing without any prior communication from a parent/guardian or someone on their emergency contact list.

We reserve the right to dismiss your child from the program if the number of times your child is picked up after closing becomes excessive.

Withdrawal

When circumstances require you to withdraw your child from the Center please complete a *Notice to Withdraw form* available at the front desk at least two weeks prior to your child's last day. Your child's classmates and teachers will want an opportunity to say good-bye.

All accounts must be up to date upon withdrawal. Any outstanding account balance one week after your child's last day will be turned over to the College's collection agency.

Please note, if you have a preschooler moving to a GA Pre-K classroom, your child must stay enrolled in the preschool program through the end of May to retain his/her slot on the GA Pre-K classroom roster. Leaving before the end of the year will forfeit your child's slot in a GA Pre-K class.

Dismissal from the Center

Children mature and accept new experiences at different ages. After careful evaluation, if Center staff and administrators feel that your child is not benefiting from our program, or that we are not meeting his/her needs, we will meet with you to discuss these concerns. If your child needs a referral to another agency, we can make possible recommendations prior to the disenrollment of your child. Please note: the Hudgens Center will make every possible accommodation, when necessary, for all children; however, **the Center is not equipped to provide one-on-one care for any child**. The Center will allow community agencies to provide support staff for any child receiving special services for which one-on-one care is necessary. The Center looks forward to creating partnerships with community support agencies working with and for young children.

We reserve the right to discontinue care for your child under any of the following conditions; however the following list is not all inclusive. The College has the right to restrict or refuse care services for any other reason that is in the best interest of the College/Center.

- Inability of the Center to meet the individual needs of your child.
- Parental refusal to allow your child to receive outside consultation or services when needed.
- Inadequate or misrepresented information on the enrollment and/or the information forms.
- Physical or verbal disrespect shown to teachers, staff, or children.
- The use of profanity in the Center (by children or parents).
- Physical punishment of child by parent while in the Center.
- Nonpayment of fees or tuition.
- Violation, disregard, or non-compliance with Center policies or State of Georgia Child Care Licensing policies or procedures.

Parental and Guardian Access to Children

Parents have unlimited access to their children while attending the Center. Because the inclusion of a parent in the classroom will change the dynamics of the children's program, parents are asked to observe their children through the observation facilities. Any questions or concerns about the programming or curriculum should be addressed to the classroom teacher and/or the Center's administrative team. Please do not enter the classroom while the class is in session unless prior arrangements have been made or you are picking up your child.

Your child's siblings are welcome at Hudgens but must physically be with you at all times. They may not be left in the piazza while you are in the observation booths.

Observation Booths

The Hudgens Center has state-of-the art observation facilities in all areas except the infant rooms. Parents are welcome to use the observation facilities but are asked to be cognizant that Early Childhood students are often there to complete class assignments. These assignments have specific due dates, so parents must be flexible with their observation times in order to allow the students to have primary access to the headphones and screens.

Please do not turn on the lights while in the observation booth. To do so makes the children able to see into the booth. Also, please refrain from talking. The booths are not soundproof, and the sound carries into the classroom.

Early Childhood students learn to observe by recording their observations on paper; thus, you may see someone writing down what your child is saying or doing. Early Childhood students are bound by rules of confidentiality. Identifying information is not used. Observations may only be shared in the Early Childhood classroom under the supervision of a faculty member.

Building Security and Safety

Safety and security of your child is of the utmost importance to the Center. All families and visitors must enter the building through the front entry doors leading to the lobby and reception area. These doors remain unlocked during operating hours.

For access to the rest of the program, you must enter through the locked glass doors on each floor. Parents will be given security swipe cards with their photographs printed on them to gain access to these areas. Each family will be issued a maximum of two (2) swipe cards. These cards are to be used by the primary persons who will be picking up and dropping off your child each day. They are not to be shared with others wishing to visit the program or those who do not regularly participate in the program.

You are required to use the cards issued to you. This helps with the Center's record keeping. Visitor cards are not for parents to use. Loss of your swipe card will result in a replacement fee. Upon disenrolling in the Hudgens Center, both swipe cards given to your family must be returned.

A plethora of audio and visual equipment is in use to monitor the security of the premises. GTC campus police also keep the Center under surveillance.

Arrival and Departure of Children

The following procedures have been established for arrival and departure to ensure the safety and well being of the children.

IMPORTANT:

- **Please keep your children within arms reach when entering and exiting the building. Children should not be allowed to run up or down the sidewalk in front of the building without a parent near them.**
- **Children are NOT ALLOWED to ride the elevator by themselves. Parents must accompany their children on the elevator at all times.**

Arrival

- ❖ All parents must enter the classroom or playground when bringing or picking up their children and alert the teacher(s) of their presence. This is for the safety of the child and facilitates contact between teachers and parents.
- ❖ Parents need to sign in/out each day. It is the parents' responsibility to sign their children in and out each day. This is a very important safety precaution.
 - Sign your child in/out electronically using the stations located in the lobby.
 - Please go to the front desk immediately if you have any problems while checking your child in or out
- ❖ Parents should not bring their children prior to the beginning of their scheduled program. Even though teachers may be in the classroom early, their attention needs to be directed to making preparations for the day's activities.
- ❖ If you would like your child to have breakfast at the Center, please be sure they arrive by their classrooms specified meal time. Food will not be available after meal times.
- ❖ *Children must finish all outside food BEFORE they enter the building. Parents can not leave until all outside food is eaten or disposed of.*
- ❖ Please note that GA Pre-K children have specified arrival times that must be followed. All other parents are encouraged to have their children at the center by 9:00 a.m. This allows the children to participate in all of the planned activities. Also, teachers may not be able to give as much time to greeting children and talking to parents arriving after this time because of ongoing activities.

- ❖ Each classroom has an arrival routine. Please assist your child in following that routine. In general, the parent should help the child wash their hands before helping them settle into an activity. This helps reduce germs and prevents the spread of illness.

Departure

- ❖ When picking up a child, parents must have direct contact with the child's teacher. Children will only be released to those adults whose names are listed on the release section of the Enrollment Form. Please keep this list updated. Children will not be released to an unauthorized person.
- ❖ Your child has a mailbox at the welcome center located close to the door of their classroom. Please check it daily for your child's work and important notes.
- ❖ An incurred late fee will be applicable even if an authorized person, who does not routinely pick up the child, is tardy in picking up your child.
- ❖ If a person is listed on the Authorization Sheet and he or she is unknown to the staff, he/she will be asked to show a picture ID. Children **will not** be released if the person on the authorization sheet does not have a picture I.D.
- ❖ Persons on the authorized list must be at least 16 years of age with a valid driver's license and be able to supply documentation of their identity. All persons picking up your child must be on the authorized pick up list.
- ❖ In an extreme emergency, when no authorized person is available to pick up a child, parents must notify the Center in writing prior to the child's release. A fax with the parent's signature is acceptable. Parents **may not call** to authorize the release of a child to persons for whom the center has not received prior written notification. This is for the protection of all the children.
- ❖ Under the laws of the State of Georgia, both parents may have the right to pick up their children, unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent, who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list, must file an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, the Hudgens Center may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity or her maternity of the child.

- ❖ If it is determined that the safety of the child is better served if the designated transporter does not drive, the child will not be released. Another person on the authorization list will be called to come to the Center. If the adult is uncooperative, campus security will be called.
- ❖ Children transported in vehicles must be buckled securely into car safety seat/seat belts that meet state requirements. Parents must take whatever steps are necessary to maintain and use car safety seats. If a car seat needs to be left at the center so that it can be used by the person picking up the child at the end of the day, the car seat is to be stored in the Car Seat Storage closet located in the lobby. The Hudgens Center is not responsible for loss or damage to car seats placed in the Car Seat Storage closet by parents. Please be aware that the Gwinnett County Police routinely patrol the campus and will enforce all Georgia laws, including the use of child safety seats.
- ❖ The Center is officially closed at 6:15 each day. Please be respectful of the staff's time and understand that they have families and/or commitments, also. You must exit the building by 6:15. If you arrive very close to 6:15, please pick up your child and exit the building swiftly.
- ❖ *Parents, PLEASE refrain from using cell phones while dropping off or picking up children. Talking on cell phones prevents parents and teachers from communicating effectively AND does not allow parents to properly greet each child. Parental attention is important to the children and sends a strong message that they are valued.*

Parking

- Parking spaces for families are located up the hill on the south side of the Hudgens Early Education Center. Please use the sidewalk to reach the main entrance.
- Parking in the circle drive in the front of the building is prohibited as is indicated by the yellow curbs. The parking spots allocated in the circle drive are for parents of infants who are not yet walking. *Parking passes will be issued to all families who have an infant.*
- Parking is also prohibited in the entrance drive.
- State issued permits are required to park in handicapped spaces.
- Double parking is never allowed.
- Parents are required to escort their children to and from the classrooms.
- Do not leave your car running while going in to pick up your child.
- Never leave unattended children in your vehicle.
- Drivers must exercise patience and caution during arrival and departure times.

Parking laws will be strictly enforced by Gwinnett Tech Campus Security, a branch of the Gwinnett County Police Department. **You will be ticketed if you disregard the above policies.**

Fire and Tornado Drills

It is the Center's responsibility to help children learn what to do in case of an emergency. Center wide drills, both announced and unannounced, will be conducted by the Center administration.

- Fire Drills are conducted once a month.
- Tornado Drills are conducted once a quarter.

As Early Childhood professionals, Center staff does everything they can to make this safety measure as stress free as possible to your child. Some young children may show signs of distress at the flashing warning lights. If this happens, please let the teacher know so that we can provide additional support to that child in future drills. Children may not be excused from fire or tornado drills.

Inclement Weather

In cases of hazardous weather conditions, the Hudgens Early Education Center will close if Gwinnett Technical College closes. Please tune into local news programs, such as WSB 750 AM, WSB 98.5 FM, or check the GTC website, <http://www.gwinnetttechnicalcollege.com>, to verify closings.

Pets

Pets are not allowed to be brought to the Center without prior approval. This includes bringing pets into the building when picking up or dropping off children.

Items for School

Please label ALL items that come to school with your child's name

Clothing

- Children should wear clothes appropriate for active play. Activities are often messy, and washable, comfortable clothing is important for children to fully participate in planned programs.
 - ✓ In cold weather, children need warm coats, hats, and mittens and to have their legs covered. This allows outdoor play to be fun and healthy.
 - ✓ In hot weather, shorts and sandals that buckle or tie are appropriate. If children choose to wear flip flops to school, please also provide socks and tennis shoes in their bag. We suggest closed shoes and socks or sturdy sandals for comfort and safety.
 - ✓ For the safety of everyone, shoes with wheels are not permitted at the Center.
- ***Additional set of clothes*** - Each child should have a complete change of clothes (underwear, shirt, pants or skirt, and socks) at school at all times. Even if a child no longer has toileting accidents, unusual circumstances can cause an accident and clothing may be required for other reasons, such as rips or spills. All items should be labeled with the child's name, and be appropriate to the season. Please do not bring expensive clothes to the Center. The Center is not responsible for lost or misplaced clothing.
- ***Linens*** - Crib/Cot sheets will be provided and laundered at the Center. Your child may bring a small blanket and pillow from home. All blankets will be sent home with your child on their last day of the week for laundering. Please label your child's blanket with their name. Your child may bring one soft toy for nap time. Our storage space in your child's cubby is very limited, so please plan accordingly. All items must fit inside his/her cubby.
- ***Diapering*** - Please bring a supply of disposable diapers. Clearly label the package of diapers with your child's name. Your child's teacher will notify you when the supply of diapers and ointment is low. Should your child require the use of diapering ointments such as A&D, Desitin, Vaseline, etc., you must complete a form allowing us to use these products. You must also include the specific application instructions. Diapering ointments must be in a tube, not in a jar, to prevent contamination.

- **Toys** - Please do not bring toys from home to the Center, as these items frequently create disruptions in the classroom environment. Toys from home will be placed in a basket for children to retrieve when they leave that day. Children in older classrooms may have designated days to bring items from home to share with their class. Please make sure the items brought are clearly labeled with first and last names. Fragile items and toy weapons (guns, knives, swords, etc.) are not permitted. Please ask a teacher or administrator if you have any questions about what is allowed to be brought to school. The Center is not responsible for personal items that are lost or broken.

The Learning Environment

Our Center creates a play-based learning environment that encourages children to explore and construct their own learning. Everything - from the way time and space are structured, to the furnishings, to the equipment and materials, to the ways adults and children interact - all support the learning environment.

Children are constantly learning what the world is like, how it works, what they are capable of, and their place in it. Schedules, learning centers, classroom furnishings, and the playgrounds are carefully planned to allow children to independently explore, discover, and learn through developmentally appropriate play.

Children need challenges and opportunities to practice and master skills. This environment also allows staff to focus on quality individual teaching moments with one on one time or small groups. Small and large group activities are an integral part of the learning environment.

To assist us in providing your child with individualized care and education we provide lowered teacher-to-child ratios and group sizes set forth by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Research concludes that low teacher-to-child ratios are one of the best indicators of quality care for young children.

The D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center provides an inclusive learning environment. Inclusion rests upon the belief that young children with disabilities and their typically developing peers can learn together in the same classroom or community setting, reflecting the diversity of the society in which we live. We provide an educational setting that supports the individual needs of all children enrolled. Early intervention services and strategies are provided by the Gwinnett County Public School District or Babies Can't Wait for designated children. If your child is under the care of a private therapist, arrangements can be made for sessions to be conducted in the classroom.

Individual Differences

Whether this is your child's first experience in a group child care setting or not, we wish to make it a successful experience. One of the biggest things to remember is that *ALL children are wonderfully different!* Children come from different backgrounds, different life experiences, and all have different skill levels and interests. Early childhood professionals view all children as individuals. Staff are instructed to avoid comparing one child to another. Children progress along the developmental continuum at their own pace. It is important to remember this developmental principle while giving children the time they deserve to get to where they are going.

As a parent, please avoid comparing your child to others in the program. Most children have areas that they focus on and excel in. Once they have mastered their current focus, they typically move on to a new area. They have different developmental needs at different times. If your child is not spending their day developing the areas you think they should be, please understand that their interests will change over time.

Curriculum

Children learn through play. As they interact with peers and with teachers in a planned environment, they construct their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

At the Hudgens Center classrooms are arranged in learning centers. The activities in the learning centers are carefully planned by the teachers to support the theme or focus of the week. What may appear as just playing to an observer is a well-planned learning process. The Center's physical space was designed to support the learning process.

Messy Rooms - Leading theorists tell us that children learn through their senses. The Messy Room encourages creative and sensorial play at a greater level than most children are ever allowed.

Children's Sinks - The peninsula sinks in the classroom were designed to promote independence of children in caring for their personal hygiene. Hand washing is a very effective means of disease prevention and is an integral part of our health curriculum. In addition, the low counter is designed for cooking (chemistry) activities.

Open Restrooms - Restrooms were built into each classroom to promote children's independence. Toileting is a natural part of the day. Children are encouraged to take care of their needs whenever they occur. The restrooms are open to both genders at all times which means children of different genders may be using the restroom at the same time. Children of all ages served at Hudgens do not view toileting as a sexual activity. The physical arrangement of the restrooms promotes a natural understanding of physical differences.

The half doors of the restrooms give an element of privacy while allowing the teachers to maintain supervision of the restrooms at all times. All teachers will supervise the bathrooms regardless of the teacher's gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, race, or age.

Open restrooms are an integral part of the learning process for young children and a part of the Center. If, over the course of your child's enrollment at the Center you become uncomfortable with this part of the program you will need to reconsider your child's enrollment.

Piazas -

Children from more than one classroom may be in the piazza at the same time. This allows opportunities to promote social interaction and problem solving in children. In addition, the piazza is used during inclement or extremely hot/cold weather for large muscle activities.

Playgrounds-

The Hudgens Center is fortunate to have three (3) playgrounds, each designed for a specific age group.

Outside play is crucial for the overall development of young children and is included in our plans every day, even in hot and cold weather. If a child is too ill to go outside, then he/she is too ill to be at the Hudgens Center and should not be in attendance.

The events on the playgrounds are designed to promote the development of specific skills. Children are encouraged to run, climb, hop, twirl, and stretch - not only their muscles but also their abilities. Children are allowed to take risks within limits. This is fundamental to the development of a strong self-concept.

Curriculums/Philosophies Implemented

As a teaching facility, one of our roles is to model and implement quality curriculums. For this purpose, the Center uses two curricula models for young children. Each is based on a foundation of developmentally appropriate practices as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The Center equally supports each of these models that address the “whole child” and engage children in active learning.

Model	Characteristics
<p style="text-align: center;">Creative Curriculum</p> <p>Developed by Diana Trister-Dodge in 1988. Research-based preschool curriculum model, which utilizes Jean Piaget’s theories of how children think, learn, and develop physically as a philosophical foundation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For further information contact: 800-637-3652 or www.teachingstrategies.com</p>	<p>Classrooms are typically arranged into eleven interest areas to support developmentally age-appropriate instructional practice and social competence. The environment, daily schedule and lesson plans are set up to support children in active learning and engage children in constructing knowledge about the world around them. There are twenty goals and objectives for Infants and toddlers and fifty goals and objectives for preschool children, ages 3-5. These goals and objectives are met through Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, The Arts, Technology and Thinking Skills. It incorporates an assessment system that helps teachers purposefully observe children and use what they learn to plan for each child and the group.</p>

Sources: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning www.dec.state.ga.us
Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum, Kostelnik & Soderman. Prentice Hall 2006

Reading and Writing

Typically one of the areas parents are most concerned about is reading and writing. Both reading and writing are Kindergarten and First Grade skills. At the Hudgens center we focus on emergent literacy skills. Emergent literacy is defined as: *What children know about reading and writing before they can actually read and write.* This includes skills such as holding and mouthing (putting books in the mouth) books (infants/toddlers), memorizing and reciting books, pointing and naming pictures, letter recognition, left to right orientation, scribbling, building fine motor skills to be able to hold a writing implement (even if not the correct way), beginning of letter formation, drawing, and dictating what the picture is about to a teacher who can write it down word for word (shows children that their words have meaning and a written form). All of these experiences will be available throughout the program.

None of the classrooms will use worksheets or ask the children to write or read specific words. Instead, literacy opportunities are embedded throughout the classroom centers in creative ways that make this process natural and fun for the children. This practice is central to a high quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood program.

Assessment

A very important part of quality programs for young children is assessment. Regular assessment of what each child is doing must be done on a continual basis. Assessment information is used in planning activities that follow a child's interests and ability levels. Classroom activities must be modified to meet the wide variety of skills that are inevitably present in each group.

Assessment allows teachers to plan environments that are challenging yet not frustrating for children. When assessing children, the following developmental domains are considered:

- Social and emotional development
- Language development
- Physical development
- Cognitive development

Rest Time

All children have a daily rest period. During this time they are encouraged to remain on their cots and rest or sleep. Children who do not sleep or who wake early are offered quiet activities for the remainder of rest time.

- All children will be provided a crib (infants) or cot with a sheet.
- As required by State Child Care Licensing:
 - **591-1-1-.45 Infant-Sleeping Safety Requirements.** In order to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), staff shall put an infant to sleep on the infant's back unless the center has been provided a physician's written statement authorizing another sleep position for that particular infant. The infant shall be placed for sleeping on a firm, tight-fitting mattress in a sturdy and safe crib. If the crib has sidebars, the bars will be no more than two and three-eighth inches (2 3/8") apart. Any crib used for sleeping shall have a tight-fitting bottom crib sheet with no pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other soft items in the crib. If a blanket is required for the comfort of the infant, the infant's feet shall be placed at the foot of the crib and the infant shall be covered with the blanket only to chest level with the blanket tucked firmly under the crib mattress. The infant's sleeping area shall be maintained within a temperature range of sixty-five (65) to eighty-five (85) degrees, depending upon the season. When an infant can easily turn over onto his or her stomach, staff shall continue to put the infant to sleep initially on the infant's back but allow the infant to roll over onto his or her stomach as the infant prefers. Positioning devices that restrict the infant's movement in the crib shall not be

used unless a physician's written statement authorizing its use is provided for that particular infant.

- Children under two years-of-age cannot use pillows.

State Funded Georgia Pre-K Programs

The Hudgens Center provides state funded Georgia Pre-K programs. Children may attend a GA Pre-K class tuition free; with the exception of the weekly meal fee. If you or your child qualifies for any income based assistance, please see the Center Office Manager for alternative payment options. Proof of income eligibility for free meals must be given to the office manager before the meal fee will be waived.

Selection for the state-funded pre-kindergarten program is done annually each spring. Children enrolled by February 1st in a preschool classroom will be given first priority to enroll in a GA Pre-K class. Enrollment in a preschool classroom will greatly increase the chances your child will secure a slot in GA Pre-K but it **DOES NOT GUARANTEE A SLOT IN GA PRE-K FOR YOUR CHILD.** In the event that there are not enough GA Pre-K slots for currently enrolled preschool children, an internal Center lottery would be held for the slots. Those not chosen for immediate placement in a GA Pre-K class would be placed first on the waiting list.

- ✓ To be eligible for the Pre-K class, a child must be four years old on or before September 1.
 - Proof of date of birth must be provided (certified birth certificate).
 - Proof of Georgia residency is also required.
- ✓ Available slots (after internal enrollment process) will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis as determined by the date and time stamp on the application.
- ✓ Center administration will make decisions regarding which GA Pre-K classroom each child is placed in.
- ✓ There is no enrollment or supply fee for Georgia Pre-K programs.
- ✓ Our Georgia Pre-K classrooms implement the Creative Curriculum.
- ✓ Extended Day learning opportunities are available for children in the Georgia Pre-K program for a fee.
- ✓ Times for the GA Pre-K programs are staggered to efficiently facilitate arrival and departure for the children (and parents).

- ✓ Parent conferences are scheduled twice each year in December and May for children enrolled in *GA Pre-K*. Parental attendance is required.
- ✓ In accord with *Georgia Pre-K* policies, tardiness, behavior issues, and lack of attendance will result in your child being disenrolled.
- ✓ In addition to the policies of the D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center, parents must also comply with *Georgia Pre-K* policies and procedures as issued by Bright from the Start, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

Child Guidance Techniques

Learning to act in a socially acceptable and appropriate manner is vital to the well-being and successful development of young children. Guidance of children at the Hudgens Center is part of the learning environment. All behavior is viewed as an opportunity to learn.

While your child is at the Hudgens Center, his or her behavior will be guided through encouragement, redirection, and the setting of clear limits which helps the child become more self-regulated. Guidelines are established in a predictable, clear, and sensitive manner. The Center intentionally provides opportunities to help children develop a sense of autonomy and share control in the decision-making process.

To help a child learn appropriate behavior, the Center's primary goal is to help children establish "inner discipline" or self-control. This reduces their dependence on adult-imposed control. This learning process occurs daily through interactions with teachers and other adults. If a child's behavior is inappropriate or unsafe, the Center uses positive redirection (directing a child to another activity that is appropriate), facilitation of problem solving, and conflict resolution techniques.

Peaceful conflict resolution is an integral part of our daily curriculum. Adults in the Center will consistently model appropriate language and actions for the children as a means to teach them to resolve their own conflicts with peaceful, verbal means. These methods help children understand and make better choices in the future.

The staff at the Hudgens Center will help children understand that actions have consequences. For example, if a child hits another child, the teachers will use this opportunity to comfort the child who was hit and then talk to the child that hit about how it made the other child feel and encourage the use of their words instead of their hands. If this event is repeated, the child may have to sit with a teacher (not by themselves) and talk about different ways to handle the situation.

The Hudgens Center does not use spanking or any other form of corporal punishment. The Center also does not employ or practice other methods to correct your child which will attempt to intentionally humiliate, shame, frighten, or otherwise cause damage to your child.

The Hudgens Center recognizes the rights of parents to choose their methods of guiding and disciplining their children. However, parents must refrain from using corporal punishment or other forms of physical discipline at any time you are on the Hudgens Early Education Center grounds because of the impact these types of discipline may have on other children in the center. Using physical punishment with your child while at the center is grounds for dismissal and disengagement from the program.

A Word on Biting and Children Who Bite Others:

Generally children who are biting are not doing it just to be mean. The experience is just as frustrating for the parents of the biter as it is for the parents of the child who was bitten. Biting is a disturbing and potentially harmful behavior that parents and educators must discourage from the very first episode. For most children, biting is a temporary problem that is brought on by experimentation, frustration (often due to lack of language abilities), or a need to control their environment. In any case, biting must be handled swiftly. When any child exhibits biting behaviors, teaching staff are instructed to inform administrative personnel. Classroom teachers will be given support to monitor and modify the behavior appropriately. There will be times when parents of a child who is biting will be asked to meet with center staff to determine the potential 'cause' of the behavior. Parents are expected to work with teachers to help the child who is biting while also keeping all of the children in the class safe.

It is the Center's policy not to divulge the name of the child who bit. Please understand this is to protect the confidentiality of the child and family. Both parents will get a copy of the biting report for any incidence of biting that occurs.

Teachers and Staff

The D. Scott Hudgens, Jr. Early Education Center is fortunate to have a talented staff of both genders and a multitude of racial and ethnic groups. The teachers and staff at the Center are chosen through a detailed interview process.

Consideration is given to matching the teaching style of the adult to the needs of the children in each classroom.

The Director, the Associate Director, and the curriculum coordinator all have advanced degrees. The Center strives to have all teachers in leadership positions with degrees in Early Childhood. Some have Bachelor Degrees and others have Associate Degrees. All have relevant experience working with children.

All teachers and staff at the Hudgens Center have had criminal background checks when hired.

Teachers and staff participate in professional development throughout the year to stay current on the best practices of working with young children and to better understand the latest research on young children. Research shows that a key factor in the brain development of young children is the educational level and training of the caregivers.

Administrative Staff

The following staff is charged with ensuring that the quality of the programs offered is always maintained.

- Director
- Associate Director
- Curriculum Coordinator
- Office Manager
- Administrative Assistant

The Vice President for Finance and Administration at Gwinnett Tech has direct oversight of all aspects of the Hudgens Center.

Please feel free to direct any questions and/or concerns to any of the above individuals. All administrators and teachers work as a team striving to provide the best environment for the children.

Gwinnett Technical College Students

The Hudgens Center serves as a lab school for the Early Childhood Program at Gwinnett Technical College. As part of classes throughout their program of study, students are often given assignments to observe. The assignment may be to observe aspects of child development or teaching strategies and techniques. If

appropriate, students may present learning activities to the children under the supervision of a college instructor.

Some Early Childhood students may do extended experiences at the Hudgens Center. These Practicum and Internship experiences provide hands-on opportunities for students to develop and polish their teaching styles and bring additional adults into the classroom. This provides more opportunities for your child's daily interactions with talented adults. All college students who spend time in the classrooms have had satisfactory criminal background checks.

Students are often required to document their observations. The pictures of the children with their first name and date of birth in the observation booths help them complete their assignments as they analyze the activity or event based on the chronological age of the child.

Meals

At the Hudgens Center, breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided each day. Menus are established in advance and created in accordance with the USDA food guidelines.

Mealtime is an integral part of our daily learning environment. Mealtime is an excellent opportunity to facilitate responsibility and social development. To promote this development each classroom participates in family-style dining.

Prior to each meal, children and adults jointly participate in the preparation of the eating areas. For example, setting the table is a math activity as children learn one-to-one correspondence. After the children are seated, they practice decision making opportunities as they serve themselves. The adults and children eat together and have conversations about items of interest, which promotes social interaction. After the children are finished, they help clean the area to teach individual responsibility.

Meal Times (times may vary during the year to meet the needs of each group. Please consult your child's classroom schedule for specific meal times)

Breakfast: 8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Afternoon Snack: 3:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

- ✓ In order for all children to benefit from the learning experience, parents are not allowed to bring in outside foods for mealtime.
 - With a Doctors note citing a medical condition, parents may provide the child's food. Food provided should be nutritious (chips, candy, and/or fast food are not allowed). All lunch boxes should be dropped off daily at the front desk.
 - The Center can, in some cases, accommodate vegetarian requests and allergy needs.
- ✓ Food is a key part of celebrations. Any food provided for classroom celebrations must be from a commercial bakery and be prepackaged items that are labeled to verify its contents and ingredients. This is to protect children and staff with food allergies. Prior to purchasing any food item for your child's class, please check the food items ingredient label to make sure there are no nut related ingredients listed. Staff will check all food items brought into the Center for nut ingredients. The item will not be served if any type of nut is listed on the ingredient label.

- ✓ Menus for the week are posted in the classroom for review and e-mailed to all parents. Menus are also available at the front desk if you would like one to take home.
- ✓ If you would like your child to have breakfast at the Center, please be sure to arrive by specified meal time. Food will not be available after meal times.
- ✓ Families of infants need to bring prepared bottles of milk/formula and jar food to the center until the child begins to eat the table foods provided.
 - Bottles must be brought to the center daily and be clearly labeled with the child's name and the current date. Bottles will be rinsed and sent home each day.
 - All baby food should be labeled with your child's name. It will be kept and served to only your child.
 - When the children move on to whole milk and table food, the Center will provide all meals.
 - Please provide the Center with back-up, prepared can(s) (not powder) of formula. This will be used in the event that the child needs extra formula.
 - When children are being breast fed, it is recommended that the parent begin to introduce a bottle to their child prior to their start at the Center. This will help ease the difficulty of one aspect of the stress involved in leaving your infant in the care of others.

Health Policies

Any time large numbers of children are in one place, certain health policies have to be in effect to protect the group. These policies are for the specific purpose of establishing the environment to be one that promotes the well being of the individual and the group as a whole.

Parents should not bring a child or sibling to the Hudgens Center that is ill or showing signs of illness. Any person (parent, child, staff, visitor, and student) who is ill should not enter the Center.

Upon arrival each day, the health status of your child will be determined. Signs of illness will constitute a formal evaluation by Center staff and an administrator. Children who show signs of illness will not be accepted.

The following is a general guideline of signs of illness that will prohibit your child from being able to attend the Hudgens Center. If the child develops these symptoms during the day he or she will be removed from the classroom and you will be notified to come and get your child. Please do so promptly so that your child can begin to receive the medical treatment he or she needs and to protect the other children from exposure. **Children should be picked up within an hour of when the parent is notified.** Children may be disenrolled if they are left at the Center for longer than one hour after their parents have been notified that the child must be picked up.

Elevated temperature

- ✓ A parent will be notified if a child has a temperature of 100.0°F orally or 99.0°F axillary.
 - If there are no other signs of illness, the parent may choose whether or not to remove the child.
- ✓ If the child's temperature is 101.0°F or above orally or 100.0°F or above axillary, the child must be removed from the Center.
- ✓ A child will not be allowed to attend/remain at the Center if he or she has a temperature of 100.0°F orally or 99.0°F axillary and he/she has one or more of the following: runny nose, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, sore throat, swollen glands, red and runny eyes, consistent coughing or sneezing, or is lethargic and not participating in regular activities.

Vomiting

- ✓ If a child vomits twice in 24 hours (with no other symptoms) or once in 24 hours when accompanied by any other symptoms, the parents will be notified to come and get the child.

Diarrhea

- ✓ If the child has one loose bowel, the parents will be notified.
- ✓ Parents must come and get their child:
 - If the child has diarrhea twice in one hour or three times in two hours.
 - If the child has diarrhea with any other symptoms.

A parent will be required to come and get their child who has:

- ✓ Sore throat and swollen glands.
- ✓ Red and draining eyes.
- ✓ Undiagnosed skin eruptions.

Common Infectious Illnesses

Communicable Disease Recommendations

Adapted from Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Child Care Licensing Forms
Georgia Department of Human Resources and Children's Health Care of Atlanta

The following exclusionary policies apply:

Disease, Illness, Organism	How is it spread?	When is it most contagious?	Return to School?
Chicken Pox ** (Varicella)	Airborne or direct contact with droplets from nose, mouth, and skin lesions of infected individuals.	From 2 days before rash, until all lesions are dry and crusted.	When all lesions have crusted (usually 7-8 days).
Cold Sore (Herpes Simplex)	Direct contact with infected oral lesions or secretions.	While lesions are present.	After lesions are scabbed over.
Common Cold (upper respiratory infection)	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth; virus can live in environment 24 hours.	Variable-from day before symptoms until symptoms resolve.	No exclusion, unless fever, or child too ill to attend.
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye) (may be viral, bacterial or allergic)	Contact with secretions from eyes, or contaminated surfaces.	Variable-(allergic conjunctivitis is not contagious).	When cleared by physician, after 24 hours treatment, if bacterial.
Croup (viral respiratory infection causes "barky" cough)	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth.	Variable-usually from day before symptoms and for 3 days of illness.	When breathing comfortably, cough improved, and no fever for 24 hours.
Diphtheria	Contact with discharge from nose, eyes, mouth, or skin lesions.	Onset of sore throat until 4 days after treatment begins.	After 2 negative cultures are obtained.
Ear Infection (Otitis media) Sinusitis	Not Contagious.	Not Contagious.	No exclusion unless child too sick to attend.

Disease, Illness, Organism	How is it spread?	When is it most contagious?	Return to School?
Fever (100.0°F orally or 99.0°F axillary and has other symptoms. 101.0°F orally or 100.0°F axillary regardless of symptoms)	Unknown until illness identified, safe to assume it may be spread by contact with any secretions.	Unknown, assume child is contagious while fever is present.	After 24 hours without fever, without the use of fever reducing medication, and child behaving normally.
Fifth Disease # (Parvovirus) "Slapped cheek" appearance and lacy rash	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth.	During the week before the rash develops.	No need to restrict once rash has appeared.
Gastroenteritis, bacterial (E.coli, Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter, Yersinia) usually have vomiting/diarrhea	Contact with stool from infected individual; from contaminated food, beverages or water (especially raw eggs or improperly cooked meats).	When diarrhea is present.	When diarrhea is resolved-E coli and Shigella require negative stool cultures.
Gastroenteritis, viral (Adenovirus, rotavirus, Norwalk virus)	Contact with stool, saliva, or vomit from infected individual; directly or from contaminated surfaces.	From 2 days before illness, until vomiting and diarrhea improve.	When no fever or vomiting for 24 hours, and stool returns to normal.
German measles (Rubella) *##	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of infected person; may be transmitted to fetus across the placenta.	From 5 days before until 7 days after rash appears.	7 days after rash appears.
Giardia (a parasite which causes diarrhea)	Contact with infected stool; consuming contaminated water or food.	When diarrhea is present.	When stools are normal.
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus) (causes sores in these areas)	Contact with stool, oral or respiratory secretions.	May be contagious for several weeks after infection.	When no fever for 24 hours, and child is behaving normally.
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	Close contact with infested individuals and sharing combs, brushes, hats, or bedding.	When there are live insects on the head.	After treatment, if crawling lice are gone. Remove nits; however nits alone are not reason for exclusion.

Disease, Illness, Organism	How is it spread?	When is it most contagious?	Return to School?
Hepatitis A	Eating contaminated food/water; close contact with infected individuals; contact with infected stool.	From 2 weeks before the illness until 1 week after jaundice (yellow skin) has begun.	After 1 week from the onset of jaundice (yellow discoloration of skin).
Hepatitis B *#	From contaminated needles, blood, bloody secretions, ear piercing, tattooing, sexual activity.	Virus can be spread at any time, with the listed contact.	After cleared by physician.
Impetigo (Staphylococcus or streptococcus) skin infection	Person-to person skin contact (especially nasal discharge or hands).	Until active lesions are gone, or after 24 hours on antibiotics.	After at least 24 hours of topical or oral antibiotics.
Influenza	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of infected person.	Variable, from the day before, until the first 5 days of illness.	After 24 hours without fever and symptoms are improving.
Measles (Rubella)*	Airborne or direct contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of infected persons.	From 4 days before the rash begins until 4 days after the rash appears.	At least 5 days after the appearance of the rash.
Meningitis, bacterial (Infection of the fluid lining the brain and spinal cord, causing fever, headache, neck stiffness, rash)	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of infected person.	Unknown, probably from several days before symptoms until at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.	After at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment, including antibiotics to eliminate carrier state.
Meningitis, viral (Enterovirus)	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, mouth, or stool of infected person.	From the day before the illness until fever has resolved.	After 24 hours without fever and child is behaving normally.
Mononucleosis (Mono) Epstein-Barr virus	Close personal contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of infected person.	Probably several days before the illness until the fever has stopped.	After 24 hours without fever, unless too sick to attend.
Mumps*	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of an infected person.	Peak infectious time begins 2 days before swelling, but may range from 7 days before to 9 days after.	9 days after parotid gland swelling begins.

Disease, Illness, Organism	How is it spread?	When is it most contagious?	Return to School?
Pinworms	Pinworms cause rectal itching. Microscopic eggs found on hands of infected children may contaminate surfaces. Infections spread through ingestion of eggs.	Eggs may survive up to 2 weeks after treatment, and after rectal itching stops. Reinfection is common.	No exclusion, but treatment should be given to reduce spread.
Pneumonia (viral or bacterial) lower respiratory infection	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes and mouth of infected persons. Some viruses can live on surfaces up to 24 hours.	Variable, from the day before through the first 3 days of the illness.	No exclusion needed unless there is a fever, or child is too ill to attend.
Poison Ivy (not infectious) Reaction to sap on leaves of poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac.	Child is not contagious, only direct contact with sap may cause rash.	Sap may be on clothes or skin for 12- 24 hours after contact with leaves or until child bathes.	No exclusion.
Ringworm (Tinea capitis, corporis, pedis) Fungal infection of scalp, body, or feet	Direct skin contact with infected people or animals or with surfaces contaminated with fungus; scalp lesions from contact with barber clippers or shared brushes.	From onset of lesions until treatment begins.	After treatment begins scalp infection usually requires medication by mouth, other may be treated topically.
Scabies (mites which burrow under the skin, causing severe itching)	Skin contact with infested individuals; contact with bedding or clothes of infested person.	From up to 8 weeks before skin rash appears until it has been treated.	The day after adequate treatment begins.
Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever (Group A Streptococcus) Scarlet fever is a strep throat infections with a rash)	Contact with droplets from nose and mouth.	From onset of symptoms until 24 hours after treatment begins.	After at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication).
Tuberculosis	Airborne or contact with droplets from nose and mouth of infected person (children usually contract TB from close contact with an infected adult).	Children with TB usually are not infectious to others.	Only when Health Department gives permission.

Disease, Illness, Organism	How is it spread?	When is it most contagious?	Return to School?
Whooping Cough* (Pertussis)	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth of infected person.	Most infectious before cough onset (with onset of runny nose), continuing until child is on antibiotics for 5 days-is infectious for 3 weeks after cough begins, if not treated.	After antibiotic treatment for 5 days.

** These diseases should have been vaccinated against if immunizations are up to date. Chicken pox may still occur, usually a milder form.*

These diseases may be of concern to women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. Follow up with obstetric health care provider is recommended after known or suspected contact.

Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta & Georgia Association of School Nurses. 2004 Georgia School Health Resource Manual- Chapter 4 Communicable Diseases and Infection Control

Contagious Disease Notification

In the event that your child is exposed to a contagious disease, you will receive notification in the following ways:

- A written notice will be placed in your child's take home materials.
- The notification will be posted at the sign-out podium.

Should your child contract a contagious disease while not at the Center, please notify the Center immediately. Often, the contagious period is prior to the appearance of symptoms.

Return Policy

Your child can return as soon as it is medically safe for him or her and his classmates to do so. Any child who attends the Center must be well enough to participate in ALL program activities, both inside and outside. Therefore, please follow these specific guidelines:

- ✓ If a child is on antibiotics, the child must have taken this medication for at least 24 hours before returning to the Center.
- ✓ In extreme circumstances, a signed physician's note stating that the child is not contagious and is healthy enough to return to the Center will allow a child to return within the 24 hours.
 - In the case of exclusion due to diarrhea, a child may only return with diarrhea if they have a doctors note stating the exact reason the child may still have diarrhea (example: due to antibiotic) and that they are not contagious.

- The child may be sent home again, even with a doctor's excuse, if the diarrhea is so bad that it can not be contained in a diaper or, in the case of an older child, continually soils themselves. Loose stools can easily contaminate the classroom environment.
- ✓ **All children must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medication.** Please do not give your child any fever reducing medication that will mask the symptoms of illness, including fever. This allows the child to attend for part of the day, but also exposes all the other children to the illness.
- ✓ **Children can never return to the Center while still running a fever.**

When a child is removed from the Center, the parent will be informed of the return policy based on the child's illness if known, but it is the parent's responsibility to be familiar with these policies before returning their child to the Hudgens Center.

Administration of Medicine

To enable the Center to partner with you effectively in the process of safely administering medication, the following policies and procedures are in place.

- Medications are **only** given at 11:00am and 3:00pm daily. Medication will only be given with a parent's written consent by filling out the **Medication Authorization** form completely. This form can be found at the front desk in our Medication Log.
- Please note that the Hudgens Center **does not administer over the counter medication** without a case specific written medical authorization from the child's physician stating a diagnosis, date the child was seen, name of medication, duration to be given and dosage. The physician's statement must also show that the child is not contagious and may participate in group care.
- In the event that over the counter medication is administered it must come to the Hudgens Center in its original packaging labeled with the child's first and last name and given to a member of the front office staff upon entering the building. The medication will be locked in the medication storage box.
- Prescription medication must have the original pharmacy/prescription label on it containing the following information: name of physician, date prescribed, child's first and last name, expiration date of medication, name and strength of medication, instructions how to administer and store it.
- Medication will only be stored in our locked medication storage box for the duration it is to be administered. Parents are responsible to removing medication from the center once it is no longer being administered.
- Medications that are prescribed **twice daily will NOT be given** at the Hudgens Center.

**Medication will not be mixed directly in with food or drink for any reason. Any medication in a cup, bottle, or food will be sent with the parent when they leave. Mixing medication with food or drink is harmful to the child taking the medication because they may not get the full dose needed. It is also potentially dangerous to the other children who may inadvertently ingest the medicine. Such dangerous actions would be grounds for dismissal from the Center.*

Procedures for prescribed or over the counter medications are as follows:

- All medication will be dropped at the front desk.
- After presenting medication to the front desk, an administrative staff member will fill out the Authorization to Administer Medication form. After completion, the parent is required to read and approve the information. At this point, both the parent and staff member will sign the form rendering it active.
- Administrative staff will give out all medication to children and document the time the medication was given. Staff will note child's reactions/response and inform parent of any problems.
- Parents are responsible for signing out medication from the front desk at the end of the day.

The administrative staff at the Hudgens Center is only allowed to administer medication that meets the following conditions:

- Has not expired.
- Is prescribed for the child (not a sibling).
- Is in the original container from the pharmacy which has been properly labeled with the child's full name, name of medication, the date the prescription was filled, the prescription number, the name of the provider who wrote the prescription, the expiration date, administration and disposal instructions. If medication comes in a box with a prescription label, the box must be presented with the medication.
- Nonprescription medicine must be labeled with the name and date that the medication was brought to the Center. Over the counter medication will be administered according to the medical authorization provided by the child's physician.

Administrative staff will only give medications left at the front desk and for whom the proper authorization is completed. For safety purposes, DO NOT leave any medication in the child's book bag or cubby.

The parent/guardian of the child must assume full responsibility for informing the staff of any change in the child's health or change of medication.

Emergency Medical Procedures

In the case of emergencies (illness or accident) involving a child, the Lead Teacher will contact a member of the Administrative team. The Lead Teacher will then contact the parents or designated emergency contact person.

If the emergency appears life threatening, an Administrator in charge will call 911 and the Campus Police to begin emergency transport to Gwinnett Medical Center. Depending on the severity of the emergency, transport will be made by Campus Police or by ambulance.

Emergency treatment may be provided in accordance to the wishes of the parents as expressed in the Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment form. If time is of the essence, the Lead Teacher, or a person familiar to the child, will accompany the child for emergency treatment. Parents will be notified at all points so that they can meet the child at the emergency room as soon as possible.

Staff is certified in CPR and First Aid Training.

Insurance

Parents are responsible to maintain health and accident insurance that would cover any sickness or accident the child might incur while attending the Hudgens EEC.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

As your child's first and most important teacher, you have essential knowledge of your child's skills, interests, and needs. Thus, communication with Center staff is an important component to providing the best learning environment for your child. Your involvement in Center activities gives your child a strong, positive message of acceptance and support. All children enjoy parental visits and help in the classroom. Involvement opportunities are numerous and varied.

Center Visitation

Parents and parent-supervised siblings are always welcome to visit the programs. Those parents who are interested in observing their children may use the observation booths located in or beside each classroom. Smoking, eating, talking, or drinking are not permitted in the booths. (Refer to the section on Observation Booths). Parents are also welcome to join their children at lunchtime. If you are planning a lunchtime visit, please make arrangements with the Lead Teacher prior to the visit.

Daily Contact

Each day your child's teachers look forward to your child's arrival and encourage you to share information about your child that you feel will be helpful. However, drop-off and pick-up times are often busy for everyone, and it is difficult for the teacher to give you his/her full attention. If you have concerns that require lengthy discussion, please schedule a parent-teacher conference.

Please check the white/bulletin board outside each classroom for daily news and events.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent conferences are scheduled twice a year for all children. Conferences with parents of children in GA Pre-K are held in December and May. During these conferences, topics of discussion may include the child's progress, developmental needs, educational program, and any other concerns and celebrations. Parents should feel free to request a conference at times other than those designated. The lead teacher should be contacted to arrange this meeting.

Confidentiality

The Center's staff will only share information about any child with that child's parents or guardian. This is to protect the confidentiality of all of our families. Please refrain from talking negatively to other parents about children, families, and staff in our program. If you have a concern about anything going on in your child's classroom, please talk to your child's teacher or a Center administrator. This helps all of us to create a caring community for the children.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special days for children. To celebrate at school, please make plans with the Lead Teacher before the special day. A book contributed to the school by the child on his/her birthday is a suggested way to celebrate this special day. This removes the "what do I get" concept that many children have about birthdays and is a nice way to share a special book with the classroom.

- Birthday celebrations at the Hudgens Center are limited to snacks. Suggestions for celebration include providing festive napkins and cups for our regular snack or bringing muffins or cupcakes (not too sweet is best). *Any food provided for classroom celebrations must be from a commercial food supplier and be prepackaged items that are labeled to verify contents and ingredients. This is to protect children and staff with food allergies. (see section on Meals) NO PEANUTS OR PEANUT PRODUCTS ARE ALLOWED.*
- We will provide milk, juice, or water for the celebration.
- The children may sing "Happy Birthday," but no other outside 'entertainment' will be allowed.
- Candles are not permitted for safety reasons.
- **Party favors are not allowed and will not be distributed at the Center. This includes gift bags.**
- Gifts will not be exchanged at the Center.
- Balloons (of any type) are not allowed (choking hazard).
- If you are planning a party outside of school and wish to invite all of the children, invitations may be given out at school. If only a few children are being included, please mail the invitations to their homes. Center staff will not distribute individual invitations.

Holidays

All children experience and celebrate holidays in different ways. As part of a developmentally appropriate early childhood experience the Center will study and celebrate a variety of holidays with the children. This will be done taking into account all of the ways each family celebrates. This is a difficult and often sensitive undertaking when many holidays are built around religious beliefs. All nonreligious aspects of each holiday will be discussed at length with the children. All parents are welcome to come in and share the ways their family celebrates different holidays. Exposing children to different holidays, in a natural way, again promotes social acceptance and a realistic view of the world.

Parent Committee

The Parent Committee consists of a group of parents that meet throughout the year to support Hudgens goals and help plan events, as well as to serve as a liaison for information to other parents in your child's classroom.

Classroom Plans

The daily schedule of activities giving the time and type of activity (e.g., free play, small groups, story time) is posted in each classroom and observation booth.

Weekly lesson plans are written by the Lead Teacher and posted for parents at the beginning of each week. Highlights of each week including the weekly theme, objectives, and activities are posted.

Newsletters

Parent newsletters are routinely distributed in each classroom at the Hudgens Early Education Center. The information in these letters includes information regarding the child's program, special guests, notices of research studies, and other announcements of interest to all parents.

Information of a general nature is posted on the bulletin board outside each classroom.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are encouraged to share special talents, their occupations, cultural heritage, and hobbies and interests with the children. Parent volunteers are encouraged to assist with special projects, art and cooking activities and story reading. Assistance with field trips is appreciated, also. A parent involvement form is completed upon enrollment to help us know how parents would like to be involved in the class.

Parent Suggestions

Suggestions, questions, and comments are always welcome. Please feel free to share ideas with the teaching staff and Center administrators.

Thank you for reading the Hudgens Center Parent Handbook! This is the first step in establishing a positive partnership with the Center. Please be sign the handbook agreement form and return it with your child's paperwork.

If you disagree or have a concern with any information in the handbook, please be sure to talk to an administrator before your child's first day of attendance.

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