



Family Handbook

2021-2022

Trinity College Community Child Center · 300 Summit Street

Hartford, CT · 06106

Phone 860.297.2530 · Fax 860.297.5268

www.tc4.org





Welcome!

Dear TC4 Family,

When you enroll your child at TC4, you enroll your whole family!

Research shows and TC4 knows firsthand that you and your family plays a *tremendously* important role in your child's education. With you involved in your child's school, your child does better *and* our school is better. This handbook outlines some of the systems we've put in place to ensure a safe, healthy learning environment that works for the children, families and staff. As your child learns and grows with us, please help us maintain a strong family-school partnership. You will always find:

School staff members who are accessible. We are here as your **partners** to work together.

- Knowledgeable staff. Our teachers hold a variety of **degrees and coursework** in early childhood education. Our administrative team and Board of Directors have extensive experience and expertise in program management.
- A safe and welcoming place for you and your child. TC4 is **licensed** by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- A program striving to be the best for everyone. Our program has been a part of the Trinity College community **since 1985**.
- A program where you are welcome. Please remember that as a TC4 family, **you are welcome in the program at any time**.

Please use this handbook as a reference for our program policies. We have included useful information outlining what you can expect of us, as well as your responsibilities as part of this community. After reviewing the handbook at enrollment, please sign the *Agreement Form* on page 46 and return it to the office before your child begins initial visits. The handbook is also available on our website at www.tc4.org

On behalf of all the TC4 families, staff and Board of Directors, **we welcome your family, your input, and your involvement!**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christina Gademsky".

Christina Gademsky
Executive Director

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NOTICE: The reader should take notice that while every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided herein, the Trinity College Community Child Center reserves the right to make changes at any time without prior notice. The Center provides the information herein solely for the convenience of the reader and, to the extent permissible by law, expressly disclaims any liability which may otherwise be incurred.

SECTION A: GETTING TO KNOW TRINITY COLLEGE COMMUNITY CHILD CENTER (TC4)

OUR MISSION (WHY WE ARE HERE)

*The Trinity College Community Child Center's (TC4) **primary mission** is to serve the children and families of the surrounding Hartford community and the Trinity College community by providing high quality education in a safe and nurturing environment that celebrates the diversity of the families we serve. The Program serves children ages six weeks to five years.*

- TC4 opened in 1985 in response to a growing need for high quality care for children in and around the Trinity College neighborhood.
- TC4 is incorporated [501(c)3] separately from the College and has an independent Board of Directors. The Board is composed of members from the Greater Hartford community, Trinity College, and past and present parents of TC4 children. The Board meets once a month and stays abreast of Center functioning through reports by the Executive Director. Committees of the Board are responsible for oversight of facility, budget, fundraising, personnel, and policies. There are currently no term limits, but the Board does take into account strengths of members and diversity.

OUR SHARED VISION (WHERE WE AIM)



We envision TC4 as a place...

...Where **children** are valued and respected; where children grow and learn alongside friends of all different backgrounds; where children know they can depend upon adults to make good decisions.

...Where **teachers** take delight in their job as educators and nurturers; where we want to learn more to be the best possible teachers we can be; where families look to our educational expertise for support; where colleagues bring out the best in each of us.

...Where **families** stop to greet one another, catch up and offer to help each other; where we know we can come and seek support; where the community accepts and does not judge; where we do not worry as outsiders about our children's education but are involved as partners and have the right to ask any question; where we help make the school better.

...Where **administrators** advocate every day on behalf of children, families and early childhood professionals; where we make sound, consistent decisions based on our mission and vision; where we uphold the standards of the field.

...Where our **buildings and grounds** are beautiful worlds for young minds to explore; where we feel welcome every time we come near; whose walls and doors provide safety.

...We envision a school with the laughter of children, the comfort of grown up conversation, and the joy of learning – no matter what age!

PHILOSOPHY

At Trinity College Community Child Center, we believe that children and adults of all backgrounds do their best in learning environments where they feel safe and respected. You will notice that we firmly believe in **building relationships** as the foundation of this respect and we spend a good deal of time working at this. When solid relationships are built, taking risks and learning come more naturally.

The staff and program help in the development of the whole child from **infants through preschoolers** in an environment where learning occurs in the course of actively exploring purposeful activities and materials. You will often hear us say that children learn through play, as this is their mode of exploration. Our goal then is to nurture every aspect of development in typically and atypically developing children: **social, emotional, physical and cognitive**. We recognize children's different learning styles and individualize learning.

Safe Space Policy

This policy provides protocols for staff in case of immigration enforcement actions at Trinity College Community Child Center. These protocols are neither intended to interfere with the enforcement of federal immigration laws nor political in nature. The purpose of Trinity College Community Child Center's safe-space policy is to keep our services accessible to all families and uphold core constitutional principles of educational equity and access.

Trinity College Community Child Center is a "sensitive location" where immigration enforcement actions should not generally take place. References to Trinity College Community Child Center property as used in this policy includes the childcare buildings and playgrounds.

We recognize that having federal immigration agents on our property would discourage parents from bringing their children to childcare as well as accessing services on behalf of their children. It's our responsibility as early care and education professionals to ensure our program is safe, reliable, and accessible to every family we serve or who seeks our services.

Curriculum

To guide us in **developing meaningful curriculum experiences** for each child and **being intentional teachers**, we use *Creative Curriculum*® and the state of Connecticut's *Early Learning and Development Standards* as the basis for planning learning experiences, implementing teaching strategies, and observing and documenting child progress.

- **Infants/Toddlers:** TC4 uses *Creative Curriculum*® for *Infants, Toddlers and Twos*.
- **Preschool:** TC4 uses *Creative Curriculum* for *Preschool*.



Assessment of a Child

Building trusting, responsive relationships with children is the most important part of a teacher's work. Observation is the key to knowing a child. Purposeful observations are a part of a teacher's everyday practice. Assessments occur within the context of reciprocal communication with families and with sensitivity to the cultural context in which the children develop. Teachers plan open ended learning experiences tailored toward a learning standard and take anecdotal observation notes throughout the day for each child. Assessment results are used to benefit children by informing sound decisions about children and teaching. It is used to inform the development of our curriculum as well as the creation of individual and group instructional supports in the classroom. The assessment data is grouped and evaluated for use in program improvement. Decisions about program policies and procedures, staff professional learning plans, and a variety of other areas are influenced by the data collected.

Teachers are trained on the program's assessment process and tool upon hire and are provided the opportunity for continued learning and coaching as a part of the program's professional development plan. Families are welcome to ask questions or share concerns about how the assessment methods we utilize will meet their child's needs.

Child Assessments:

Definition: Assessment is the wide variety of methods that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, and skill acquisition of students.

Trinity College Community Child Center uses a variety of assessment tools including Connecticut's Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CT DOTS), Ages and Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ), and ASQ®:Social-Emotional.

TC4 has chosen these tools because they are valid and reliable, free of bias, sensitive to language and cultural differences, and are developmentally appropriate. Teachers may request additional assessments when further information is needed. Approval from the Program Coordinator or Executive Director is required before administering any other assessment.

TC4 uses assessment data to gather information in a variety of areas. Taking anecdotal observations assists teachers in identifying child interests and needs. Using this information, individualized educational supports as well as curricular goals for the classroom are created and incorporated into learning experience plans. Teachers are able to adapt curriculum, classroom schedules, classroom environment, and teaching strategies using assessment information.

During Family Conferences and informal daily communication, teachers are able to describe the developmental progress and learning of children which in turn supports the ongoing dialogue with family members regarding their child. Program Administration analyzes assessment data to determine areas in the program which require improvement. The data is also used to create both individual teacher and programmatic staff development plans. Teachers and Program Administration use the ASQ and ASQ:SE, two norm-referenced standardized tests, as well as informal assessment methods such as running records, anecdotal notes, and time sample data sheets when seeking information on eligibility for special services and when indicated, referral for diagnostic assessment. Families are asked to complete a copy of the ASQ and ASQ:SE along with their enrollment paperwork to assist the program in getting to know the child. The program will complete an ASQ and ASQ:SE after 30 days of enrollment.

TC4's Assessment Timetables and Reporting Periods

The reporting periods for the center are determined by the center and Hartford Office for Families, Youth, Children and Recreation. The specific dates are shared with TC4 in August for the upcoming year. They occur in the Fall, Spring and Summer. Assessment data is collected on a weekly basis.

Family Conferences:

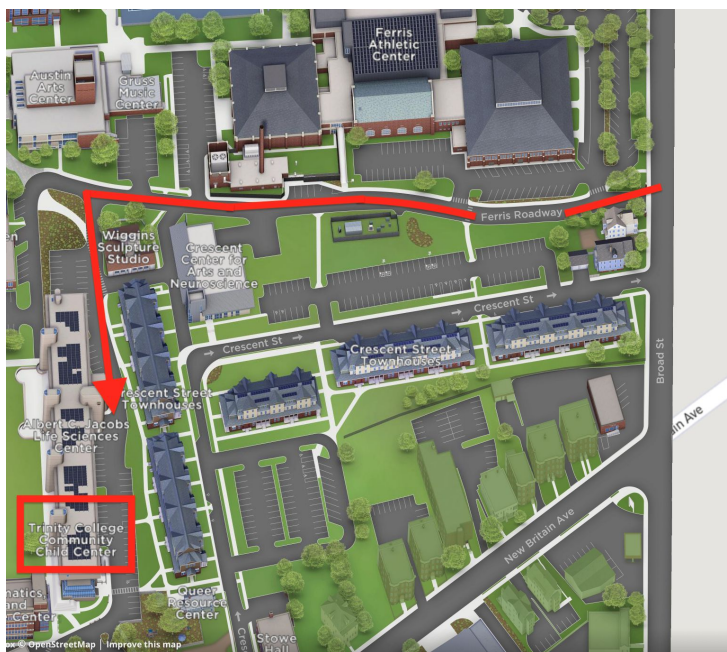
Throughout the year, we encourage **continual communication between families and the staff**. Families are welcome at any time to arrange a meeting with their child's teacher. Family Conferences occur twice a year in fall and spring. During this conference, a written summary of the child's development and learning is provided to the family. Jointly, the teachers and family members will plan goals and next steps for child growth and progress. If a family is unable to attend a conference, a phone conference is offered to the family and the report will be sent home to be reviewed. A signed copy of the Family Conference form is added to the child's file.

Individualized professional development plans help our staff stay current within the early childhood education field and become trained in assessment tools. Each teacher is trained to observe children and make note of both typical and potentially delayed development. Teachers share their concerns with families and, if needed, discuss the need for outside assessment or intervention to ensure that the child's needs are addressed. The staff will work with the family to coordinate services, when needed.

TC4 is committed to providing a wide variety of activities for families and children to grow. **Positive family involvement is essential** for the best outcomes for children, and we at TC4 believe in developing children who are independent thinkers with respect for the rights and feelings of others.

WHERE TO FIND US

- TC4 has two sites. The Infant and Toddler classrooms are located on the lower level of the Albert C. Jacobs Life Sciences Center (the red rectangle on the map below). The Preschool classrooms are located on the lower level of the Clemens Dormitory, across the parking area. Both buildings are accessible to cars via the parking lot behind the Life Sciences Building. You can also visit www.TC4.org for directions.



HOW TO CONTACT US

Main TC4 Phone 860-297-2530
TC4 Fax 860-297-5268
TC4 Emergency Contact Line 860-297-5299

(If you are unable to reach the staff of your child's classroom and have an emergency to relay to the teachers, please call the emergency contact number and a TC4 staffer will answer. You CANNOT leave messages on this line.)

Christy Gademsky, Executive Director	860-297-5374	Christina.Gademsky@tc4.org
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Amy Collin, Administrative Assistant	860-297-5208	Info@tc4.org
Sarah Witkiewicz, Program Coordinator	860-297-5370	Sarah.Witkiewicz@tc4.org
Chickadees/Hummingbirds (Infants)	860-297-5287	chickadees@tc4.org hummingbirds@tc4.org
Penguins (Toddlers)	860-297-5289	penguins@tc4.org
Kookaburras/Puffins (Toddlers)	860-297-5288	kookaburras@tc4.org puffins@tc4.org
Condors/Eagles (Preschool)	860-297-5207	condors@tc4.org eagles@tc4.org



ENROLLMENT

Following our mission, TC4 provides high quality education in a safe and nurturing environment that celebrates the diversity of the families we serve. TC4 admits children regardless of race, color, nationality, religious background, socioeconomic status, or identified special need. Our goal with each family is to determine the best possible “fit” between child/family and program to ensure success. An administrative staff member meets with each family prior to enrollment.

1. Though finding the right school for your child can feel overwhelming, this is a great opportunity to make an informed decision. The NAEYC website www.rightchoiceforkids.org provides helpful information. We strongly encourage families to ask questions as they tour our program and to contact us with additional thoughts. There is also a great deal of information in this handbook that should help you decide if the TC4 community is right for your family. ***While we value and respect our families, families that express an interest and preference in a particular classroom will not be guaranteed the space. TC4 will ultimately determine which classroom the child will be enrolled in based on a variety of factors, including age of peers, classroom make-up etc...***
2. Once you have decided to enroll your child, please contact the Administrative Assistant to determine space availability. If there is no current space, you will be placed on the waiting list.
3. When space is available, you will complete an **enrollment packet**

The enrollment packet asks for the following information from you:

- Family information including contact numbers, languages spoken, goals for your child, home traditions and important family dates, and cultural information to be woven into your child’s education.
- Child information including developmental milestones, sleeping habits, eating habits, allergies, fears, and interests.

- Developmental concerns or delays, behavior or adjustment problems, or other concerns previously identified by the parent, pediatrician, former caregivers, or other professionals who have worked with your child.
- Emergency contacts (names and phone numbers of adults over 18 years of age) in case of an emergency if parents/guardians cannot be reached (Please make sure you keep us updated as numbers change!), and emergency treatment form.
- CT Office of Early Childhood Department of Public Health Early Childhood Health Assessment form (including immunization history) signed by your child's healthcare provider and Individualized health care plan for children with special health care needs.
- Program permission forms.

4. Enrollment fees:

We collect a \$30 **registration fee** in advance of enrollment. Once the registration fee is received, you will receive your enrollment packet. This fee will be credited to your account once your child is enrolled in the program.

We collect a **security deposit**, equal to 2 weeks tuition, which is used for the child's last weeks of care, provided that the Executive Director or Administrative Assistant receives written notification of withdrawal at least two weeks prior to the withdrawal date. If less than two weeks' notice is given, the deposit is kept by the Center to offset the unexpected loss of your slot income. This includes less than two weeks' notice of withdrawal before your scheduled enrollment date.

5. After the enrollment paperwork has been reviewed, the Administrative Assistant will contact the family to set up a visiting schedule and an official start date. There are usually two 2-hour visits: one with parent and child and one with the child alone. During the first visit, you will meet with an administrator to review some general program policies. You will also meet with your child's teachers so that they can learn about your child and your thoughts on transitioning them to school. This meeting will also help you learn about your child's new classroom.

6. Please note that the state-required health and immunization form, as well as medication authorization forms and health care plans must be reviewed by our nurse consultant **prior to your child's first visit without you**. We recommend bringing them with your completed enrollment packet, at least a week before your child's start date. Children will not be allowed to attend until all documentation has been received and reviewed.

PLEASE NOTE, TC4 DOES NOT OFFER A PROVISIONAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD.

A note about **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**: All child information files are confidential (including their enrollment, health, and immunization forms) and will be kept in a locked room. Access to children's files is limited to designated parents and/or guardians, TC4 staff, TC4 consultants, the TC4 Board President, the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health and Department of Children and Families, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (accreditation assessor). For children in our School Readiness Program, The City of Hartford Department of Children, Families, Youth and Recreation may also access files. All other individuals can only have access if a written authorization is provided by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE AND SECURITY: TC4 property and the Trinity College Campus is under video surveillance. Due to confidentiality reasons, TC4 does not release video footage to anyone outside of the employ of Trinity College Community Child Center.

For everyone's security, the doors to our center are locked at all times. Families will receive key fobs at enrollment that will allow them to access our center. Be sure to keep it in a safe place. We ask that all family members who regularly pick up and drop off your child have a key fob, as teachers are not able to leave their classrooms to open the door. If you need additional key fobs, please speak with the Administrative Assistant. Please note there is a \$20 fee to replace a lost key fob. When your child leaves the program, please return your key fobs by your child's last day. There will be a charge of \$20 for each key fob that is not returned.

PROGRAM HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

TC4 is open year round **from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday**. Calendars are given out at enrollment and each spring. The calendar can also be found on our website www.tc4.org. The Center is closed on the following holidays:

Labor Day	New Year's Day
Thanksgiving	Memorial Day
Day after Thanksgiving	Independence Day
Christmas Day	

The Center is closed for 2 to 3 days at the end of August to allow for building maintenance, program set up, and professional development, as well as two additional days during the year for professional development. These dates will be announced as far in advance as possible each year.

The center is closed between Christmas and New Year's Day. Please see our TC4 program calendar for other specific dates we will be closed.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS



Occasionally, inclement weather makes traveling unsafe for families and staff. Our practice is to keep the Center open as much as possible. We urge families to use discretion and consider the safety of your child while traveling to the Center.

All program closures and delayed openings will be announced via Channel 3 WFSB, 30 NBC and FoxCT and notifications will be sent to families via Remind. In addition, an outgoing voicemail message will be left on the Executive Director's number, 860-297-5374 by 6:00 a.m. The classroom voicemails will not be updated. Unexpected early closings due to emergency situations will be announced via phone calls to families. If staff members are unable to reach you, emergency contacts will be notified. Please make sure TC4 has up-to-date telephone numbers to assist us in reaching you promptly.

EMERGENCIES

TC4 has detailed policies and procedures in place and on file for emergency situations and natural disasters. ****Please see our detailed Emergency Evacuation Procedures that are posted on the bulletin board in each building entryway.**

Please note the following:

In the event of a **Medical Emergency**, calls are made in this order and staff trained in first aid and CPR will remain with the child at all times:

1. 911
2. Campus Safety
3. Parent or guardian

For medical emergencies, children will be transported to Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC).

In the event of an **Evacuation**, TC4 has access to several evacuation sites on or near campus. Campus Safety will assist the Center in determining an evacuation site in the event of an emergency. Parents/guardians will be notified by telephone of the pick-up location. TC4 is also registered with 211 Infoline and families may call 211 for pick-up locations.

In the event of a **Shelter-in-Place situation** (such as a natural disaster), children and staff will seek temporary, immediate shelter inside the building. TC4 has storage of food and supplies for emergency situations.

In the event of a **Lockdown**:

1. Children and staff will remain inside the building
2. Building windows and doors are locked. *The "Locknetics" door lock system will be activated so no one except Trinity College Campus Safety and emergency personnel (police, firefighters) will be allowed access to the building.*
3. Children will not be released to their parents or guardians until police give an "all clear."

TC4 staff has regular training in Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Planning and the Center coordinates plans with Trinity College's Emergency Management Team. The children participate in regular Emergency Preparedness drills. *No one, except law enforcement, is allowed onto the Trinity Campus or in Trinity buildings, including the childcare center, carrying a weapon or firearm.*



CHILD'S SCHEDULE

TC4 **opens** promptly at 7:30 am and **closes** at 5:30 pm. Our school runs best when we stay on track and children function best when on a schedule! We ask your help in keeping a schedule for your child in sync with our policies and staffing:

- TC4 offers **full day** spaces; half day options are not available (please see below for information on our part time scheduling options).
- Please let teaching staff know if there may be a **change to your child's typical daily schedule** so that we can best meet your child's needs (i.e. if an extra bottle is needed, change in drop off or pick up time).
- **Drop Off:** *Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, TC4 requires all adults to follow the current CDC guidelines on 6 feet of social distancing and a cloth face covering for anyone over the age of 3 years old. Please keep this in mind when you are dropping off your child. Increased handwashing and health exclusions will remain in place until further notice. The following items will remain in place until the pandemic is over:*
- Children in our preschool program are required to wear a mask in the classroom. Please provide 1-2 masks for your child to wear during the day. We will support your child in the transition to mask wear.
- Do not bring unnecessary items into the program. This includes the storage of car seats and strollers.
- Only enter the program if all members of the household are healthy and symptom free with no known exposure to COVID-19.
- In order to practice proper social distancing while on program premises, you may need to wait to enter the program until other families have left the classroom/hallway

- Your child will need to be screened for signs of illness daily at drop off. Please budget extra time for this.
- Fever reducers will not be given to children on any day of attendance, regardless of reason.
- Thoroughly wash your own as well as your child's hands for at least 20 seconds when entering the classroom at drop off and pick up, and as soon as possible when you return home.
- If your child shows signs of illness during care, you, or another authorized person will retrieve your child as soon as possible and within 60 minutes of being notified.
- Only one guardian/family member is allowed in the center at drop off/pick up
- Call ahead to your child's classroom when picking up your child so your child will be ready when you arrive, in order to reduce contact with other families and staff members.
- This situation is fluid and subject to change per state, other local authority and program needs.
- Failure to follow these new safety guidelines may result in termination.
- In order to provide a predictable learning routine and to ensure that staff are able to greet you and your child each day according to our philosophy, children should be dropped off by 9:15 am. We understand that late drop-offs are necessary at times to accommodate a change in schedule, such as a doctor or WIC appointment. In this circumstance, a child may be dropped off no later than 11 a.m. Please speak with your child's teacher **ahead of time** to discuss this arrangement so we may support your child's transition into the classroom. In addition, please note that TC4 permits only one drop off per day. Families that have 6 late arrivals within a 6 month period will be required to meet with the Executive Director.
- Arrangements must be made with the Teacher or Executive Director in advance if a child will be dropped off later than 9:15 a.m. or picked up from the Center before 3:30 p.m.
- **Sign In / Sign Out:** Per Office of Early Childhood licensing regulations,, children must be signed in and signed out each day on the form kept for this purpose in each classroom. The full name must be signed (no initials or "Dad").
- **Authorized person to pick up:** Your child will be sent home with a parent/legal guardian. Please notify staff in writing or by phone during the day, if someone from the emergency contact list is picking up your child. A written note must be provided to teachers if your child will be picked up by someone not listed on the Emergency Contact list. We take your child's safety very seriously. Please make sure the adult picking up your child knows that **we require a picture ID** (such as a Driver's License). Your child will not be released into the care of anyone under the age of 18 years. This includes siblings. **Please call your child's classroom before picking up, so the teachers can have your child ready to leave and limit contact with other adults in the center.**
- Vehicles must be parked in a designated parking space during drop off and pick up.
- Children (including siblings) under the age of 12 cannot be left unattended in cars at any time.
- TC4 has an anti-idling policy. Vehicles should not idle in the parking areas at any time, including during drop-off and pick-up.
- Parking in the Handicapped parking space is only for those with a valid permit. The permit must be on display while occupying the space. This is the law according to the State of Connecticut.
- Children must be placed in age and size appropriate car seats when coming to or leaving TC4.

ABSENCE

If your child is going to be absent from school. We ask that you contact your child's classroom by 9:30 a.m. with the reason why your child will not be at school. *Please notify the center immediately if you, your child or someone in your household is showing signs of COVID-19 (fever over 100.4, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell*

This list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea)

When a child is absent without contact from the family, the staff will follow this process:

- *Step 1*- Reach out to the family on Remind (between 9:30-10 but no later than 10) and email the parent/guardian
- *Step 2*-Call work phone number and other parent/guardian at naptime
- *Step 3*-Notify the Executive Director or Administrative Assistant by 2:00 p.m. if no contact has been established so they can follow-up with the family
- *Step 4*- If no contact by second day, call emergency contacts

Please note - As weekly fees are based on annualized tuition rates, our program and licensing regulations require us to engage staff based on the number of children enrolled. TC4 cannot give fee refunds for days, weeks, or extended periods of time your child is absent.

PART TIME SCHEDULING OPTION

- There are a limited number of full-day part-week options available. The options are Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday. Please notify the Executive Director or Administrative Assistant if that schedule interests your family. In order for this option to be available, there must be an offset (ex. MWF slot needs a T/TR offset) to make the space full time.
- Be sure that your part time schedule fits your needs. The days approved for part time agreements are **not interchangeable**. Since family schedules are set, and out of respect for children and teachers, we do not allow temporary schedule changes, swapping of days, or drop off care.
- There is no reduction in tuition should you not use your agreed upon days.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY



TC4 closes at 5:30 p.m. Please be respectful of our staff and their commitments outside of work.

Arrive by 5:15 to talk with your teacher about your child's day and to smoothly transition your child out of the program by 5:30 p.m.

We ask that families notify the Center when late arrival for pick up is unavoidable. Please make every effort for another adult to pick up your child if you cannot be on time. Families arriving after closing (5:30) will be charged \$15 for the first 15 minutes that they are late or any portion thereof; and \$30 for each additional 15 minute period or any portion thereof. Fees will be as follows:

Family arrives between 5:30-5:45 - \$15

Family arrives between 5:46-6:00 - \$45

Family arrives between 6:01 - 6:15 - \$75, etc.

This charge is to cover overtime, administrative costs, and staff licensing requirements. Fees will be recorded and families will be billed for payment immediately. Our outer doors are on the Trinity College locknetics system and are set to lock at 5:30. If the doors are locked when you arrive at the center, you are considered late.

Late fees also apply on visitation days and when the Center closes early for training, holidays, emergencies, or for inclement weather if the child is not picked up by the early closing time.

If a child has not been picked up and if staff cannot reach the parent or emergency contacts by 6:00 p.m., staff is required to contact the Department of Children and Families and the Hartford Police Department, and place the child with the police filing an abandoned child report. The HPD will then continue to contact the family.

Continual lateness (6 or more times within a 6 month period) is cause for dismissal.

BABY SITTING

In order to maintain a professional relationship with families at all times, TC4 prohibits staff from babysitting for enrolled families. We would be happy to share Trinity student worker contact information with families looking for a babysitter.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PUBLICITY

Photographs or videos of the children participating at TC4 may be taken from time to time by TC4 staff and others approved by the Executive Director. These may be used for classroom purposes and/or appear in TC4 publicity materials. A permission form for photographs to be used without compensation is given to families to sign upon enrollment. TC4 families may photograph **ONLY their own child** participating in the classroom or TC4 activities. Photographs will be taken at center-wide family events. We include photos of our centerwide events on our social media platforms such as our website and Facebook. Since you are responsible for your children at such events, it is your responsibility to notify TC4 if you do not wish to have your child included in these photographs.

SECTION B: TUITION AND SUBSIDY INFORMATION

TUITION



Each year, the TC4 Board of Directors approves the annual budget and any subsequent tuition increases. These are announced each spring for the upcoming year. Please refer to our fee schedule for current weekly rates. Tuition is due each Monday, which covers the cost of care for that week. Locked payment boxes are located in each building. Tuition accounts are to be paid in full prior to the child exiting the program.

Arrangements may be made with our Administrative Assistant to create a payment schedule that fits your family's needs. If you want to pay on a monthly basis, payment is due at the beginning of the month. **The family member /guardian who enrolls the child is responsible for all tuition payments and late fees unless other arrangements are made in advance.**

Please note: Your weekly tuition payment is based on annual cost of care expenses spread out over 52 weeks. Fees remain the same regardless of holidays, professional development days, inclement weather, maintenance, family vacations, child absences, and closures deemed necessary by the Board of Directors and/or Executive Director. You must pay your child's tuition weekly or as pre-arranged with our Administrative Assistant in order to maintain your child's space at TC4.

*TC4 requires families to pay a **security deposit** equal to 2 weeks tuition upon enrollment. The deposit is used for the child's last weeks of childcare, provided that the Executive Director or Administrative Assistant receives written or email notification of withdrawal at least two weeks prior to the withdrawal date. If less than two weeks' notice is given, the security deposit is kept by the Center to offset the unexpected loss of your slot income. This includes less than two weeks' notice of withdrawal before your scheduled enrollment date.*

Please discuss financial concerns with the Executive Director or Administrative Assistant. Discussions will be kept confidential.

TC4 RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY CARE DUE TO UNPAID TUITION BALANCES.

CONTINUED LATE PAYMENTS ARE GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM.

FORM OF PAYMENT

- We accept payment in the form of cash, check, money order, and automatic payments through Tuition Express.
- Checks or money orders must be made payable to TRINITY COLLEGE COMMUNITY CHILD CENTER.
- We cannot accept third party checks or post-dated checks. We charge a fee of \$15.00 for each returned check.
- Locked payment boxes for tuition payments are conveniently located outside the Executive Director's office and above the Condor preschool room sign in.
- Cash payments should be made directly to the Administrative Assistant, Executive Director, or Program Coordinator. You will be given a receipt for cash payments. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE CASH PAYMENTS IN THE PAYMENT BOXES OR WITH THE TEACHING STAFF. TC4 is not responsible for cash payments left in the lock box.
- To sign up for automatic payments through Tuition Express, complete the Tuition Express enrollment form and provide a voided check. Once enrolled, your weekly tuition will be transferred from your bank account to TC4's through EFT.
- The Administrative Assistant will provide a statement at the end of each month for tax and/or reimbursement purposes.

TAX STATEMENT

Each family is eligible for a tax credit for fees if childcare is provided while the parent/guardian is working or seeking employment. As a courtesy we provide a statement indicating actual tuition paid for the year (excluding deposit and late fees). To receive this written statement by January 31st, families should request a copy from the Administrative Assistant by January 5th.

SCHOLARSHIP AND SUBSIDIZED SLOT INFORMATION

TC4 offers a variety of opportunities for subsidized tuition. Families must meet the eligibility requirements for each program and be in (and maintain) good standing with tuition to qualify.



Care 4 Kids (State of CT child care assistance for working families)

TC4 accepts payments from Care 4 Kids for families who are currently enrolled in the Care 4 Kids program. Families are responsible for completing redetermination paperwork. TC4 will complete a Parent-Provider Agreement for newly enrolled families with Care 4 Kids funding and at redetermination. Please speak with the Administrative Assistant if you need assistance with forms.

The fee families are charged is the TC4 weekly rate minus what Care 4 Kids will pay per week. *If for any reason Care 4 Kids does not pay or stops payment, the family is responsible for the full weekly tuition.* Care 4 Kids notifies TC4 in

writing regarding any changes in account status. What is noted on the written notification, regardless of phone conversations between family and Care 4 Kids, is what we use to determine tuition changes. Therefore, if Care 4 Kids cancels a certificate but a caseworker tells you otherwise, the family is still responsible for the full tuition payment until TC4 receives written notice from Care 4Kids. Families are responsible for following all Care 4 Kids policies and procedures. Redeterminations are completed by Care4Kids each year. Families are responsible for submitting any required paperwork to Care 4 Kids.

For more information on the Care 4 Kids program, go to www.ctcare4kids.com.



SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM (State Funded Preschool)

TC4 has 25 School Readiness Program spaces through The City of Hartford Department of Children, Families, Youth and Recreation. School Readiness is the state-funded sliding fee based program available to three and four year old children.

Certain policies and procedures of our program pertain only to these funded spaces.

Children who occupy a slot in our School Readiness Program must arrive at school no later than 9:15 am and leave no earlier than 3:30 pm to maintain their subsidy. Children also must maintain consistent, daily attendance of 80% or higher. Families who do not meet this requirement will be required to meet with the Executive Director to strategize solutions.

Families seeking participation in this program must provide the following for consideration:

- A copy of their IRS tax return or four weeks of their most recent pay stubs, as proof of income
- A recent household utility bill or lease agreement as proof of residency.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate.

The family income and size are looked at in relation to the current OEC School Readiness sliding fee scale to determine the family's weekly fee. When a family receives Care 4 Kids funding in addition to School Readiness funding, the weekly fee is the family fee as stated on the Care 4 Kids certificate.

This fee calculation process is reviewed with the family and a Tuition Agreement form will be signed and a copy sent home. TC4 will review family income and residency at least once a year. At this time the family must once again provide 4 weeks of most recent pay stubs and verification of residency. If there is a change in family income or residency at any point, it is the family's responsibility to notify TC4 and provide updated documentation.

Hardship Policy for families receiving School Readiness funding: In the case of a financial hardship, such as loss of employment, the family should notify TC4 administration as soon as possible, and provide any necessary documentation, so that tuition fees may be adjusted accordingly. This measure is temporary and a review of the fee agreement will occur after 3 months. At this time, the family is required to provide the necessary documentation to determine a new fee rate.

DSS/CDC FUNDED SLOTS

TC4 has 21 DSS Child Day Care spaces through The City of Hartford Department of Children, Families, Youth and Recreation, for working families living in Hartford. Families may qualify for this funding if they are earning income through employment and their income is less than 75% of the state median income.

Certain policies and procedures of our program pertain only to these funded spaces.

Children who occupy a slot in our DSS Program must arrive at school no later than 9:15 am and leave no earlier than 3:30 pm to maintain their subsidy. Children also must maintain consistent, daily attendance of 80% or higher and remain a HARTFORD RESIDENT to retain the funding. Families who do not meet this requirement will be required to meet with the Executive Director to strategize solutions.

Families seeking participation in this program must provide the following for consideration:

- A copy of their IRS tax return or four weeks of their most recent pay stubs, as proof of income
- A recent household bill to prove Hartford residency.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate.

Family income and size are reviewed in relation to the current OEC sliding fee scale to determine the family's weekly fee. If a family has Care 4 Kids, the weekly tuition is the family fee as stated on the Care 4 Kids certificate. Once the fee calculation process is reviewed with the family, a Tuition Agreement form will be signed and a copy sent home. TC4 will review family income and Hartford residency at least once a year. At this time the family must once again provide 4 weeks of most recent pay stubs and verification of residency. If there is a change in family income or residency at any point, it is the family's responsibility to notify TC4 and provide updated documentation.

Hardship Policy for families receiving Child Day Care funding: In the case of a financial hardship, such as loss of employment, the family should notify TC4 administration as soon as possible, and provide any necessary documentation, so that tuition fees may be adjusted accordingly. This measure is temporary and a review of the fee agreement will occur after 3 months. At this time, the family is required to provide the necessary documentation to determine a new fee rate.

TC4 SCHOLARSHIPS

TC4 Scholarship funding is provided to some families receiving School Readiness or Child Day Care funding. These funds are used to offset the difference between TC4's regular weekly fee, and the family fee, as determined by the sliding fee scales provided by the Office of Early Childhood. The amount of scholarship provided to each family is automatically calculated upon enrollment and is indicated on the family's Tuition Agreement Form.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

For families who have more than one child enrolled in the program, and who are receiving no other form of tuition assistance, TC4 offers a 10% sibling discount. This discount is applied to the oldest child/ren's weekly fee.

SECTION C: OUR PROGRAM

STAFFING – WHO WE ARE

As noted with our mission, TC4 is governed by a **Board of Directors**, to whom the Executive Director reports.

The **Executive Director, (Christy Gademsky)**, is responsible for the day to day management of the program; the program's compliance with regulatory agencies, funders, and NAEYC Accreditation; and all aspects of policy and personnel.

The **Program Coordinator, (Sarah Witkiewicz)**, supports the Executive Director in day to day management in her absence and supports the teaching teams with curriculum, lesson planning, and strengthening their classroom instructional practices.

Our **Administrative Assistant, (Amy Collin)**, ensures the inner workings of the program by coordinating classroom enrollment and using best business practices for key tasks such as ordering, billing, and record keeping.

TC4 teaching staff members, (your child’s teachers) are responsible for the classroom operations, from planning appropriate learning experiences to implementing and assessing. The TC4 Board of Directors has approved high standards for core staff . Teacher qualifications:

TC4 Position	TC4 Minimum Qualifications
Teacher	Bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field OR Minimum of an Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education or related field and must be enrolled in a Bachelor’s Degree program in Early Childhood Education or related field with degree completion by July 1, 2020. At least one year experience working with young children; specialized training in supervision, curriculum, assessment, family partnerships; and meet the CT Head Teacher qualifications
Assistant Teacher	Associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field; OR a current Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential
As a requirement of the CT Office of Early Childhood,, NAEYC Accreditation and the TC4 Board, all TC4 staff are required to attend annual professional development training and/or formal coursework to advance their skills based on their individual professional development plans.	

Sometimes you will see other faces in our classrooms. We are fortunate to serve as a practicum site for student teachers from area colleges and universities, as well as to employ student help from Trinity College and other institutions. Screened volunteers may also assist in classrooms but never count in ratio (per licensing). Please note:

- You will notice that these faces may change with the college semesters. Each room posts a staffing schedule.
- A permanent TC4 staff member always supervises students or other auxiliary staff.
- The teaching staff in each room will keep you posted on who is supporting your child but your child’s TC4 teacher is still your primary point of contact.

CLASSROOM STAFFING RATIOS

The chart below details classroom age ranges and ratios. We regularly staff more teachers than required by the state mandated ratios. Groupings are noted as typical ranges rather than absolute ages because we are sensitive to the developmental needs of children and space availability in rooms. **Please note that due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the maximum preschool group size is 16 children per classroom.**

Classrooms	Typical Approximate Age Range	State Required Teacher:Child Ratio	Typical TC4 Teacher: Child Ratio

Hummingbirds/Chickadees	6 weeks to 18 months	1:4	1:2.7
Penguins/Kookaburras/ Puffins	18 months to 3 years	1:4	1:2.7
Eagles/Condors	3 to 5 years	1:10	1:6

IMPORTANT PROGRAM FEATURES
INFANT SAFE SLEEP POLICIES



We are committed to a “safe-sleep” environment for our infants. Per the Department of Public Health regulations, NAEYC Accreditation criteria and Safe Sleep research:

- All infants under the age of 12 months will be placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface in cribs that meet the standards of the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, **unless an alternate sleep position is required for medical reasons and written documentation from the infant’s health care professional is provided.**
- Soft materials such as bumpers, pillows, quilts, comforters, blankets, sheepskins, stuffed toys and loose bedding will NOT be allowed in the infant’s sleep environment.
- Blankets, pillows or wedges will not be placed under the crib mattress to elevate the head of the crib unless written documentation from the infant's health care provider is provided.
- A “sleep sack” or blanket sleeper may be used instead if desired.
- Infants will not be “swaddled”.
- Infant’s head will remain uncovered during sleep.
- Families will be encouraged to dress infants appropriately for the environment, with no more than one layer more that an adult would wear to be comfortable in that environment.
- Infants will not be allowed to sleep in an infant seat, car seat or swing. Upon entrance into the program, any child sleeping in a car seat should be removed by the parent and transferred to the child’s assigned cot or crib. If an infant falls asleep somewhere other than a crib the infant will be removed immediately and placed into their crib.
- Infant pacifiers will be offered to the child when placed in the crib to sleep and as needed for comfort.
- Sleeping infants will remain in view and under supervision of staff.
- After being placed on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.
- Infants will not share cribs with other children except for emergency evacuation purposes.
- Infants will not be put to sleep with bottles.
- Supervised "tummy time" will be observed while infants are awake.

BREASTFEEDING

TC4 encourages breastfeeding and supports parents who wish to continue breastfeeding their child at the Center. We provide privacy for quiet nursing if a parent's schedule allows them to visit during the day.

TEETHING

TC4 follows the AAP recommendations for treating teething discomfort:

- Use a teething ring chilled in the refrigerator (not frozen).
- Gently rub or massage the child's gums with your finger to relieve the symptoms.

Based on FDA concerns, over the counter (OTC) and prescription topical medications for teething pain will not be administered due to potential harmful effects.

INFANT SHOELESS ENVIRONMENT

Our infants spend much of the day on the floor, exploring the world around them. Everyone entering the classroom is required to either cover their shoes with shoe covers supplied near the door, remove their shoes provided they are wearing socks (***no bare feet, please***) or keep an extra pair of shoes or slippers at the Center for use in the Infant classroom.

DIAPERS

TC4 prefers commercially available disposable diapers be used; however, if an infant requires cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining that is completely covered with an outer waterproof layer that has a waist closure (i.e., not pull-on waterproof pants). The absorbent inner lining must completely contain and prevent the escape of feces and urine. The cloth diaper and waterproof layer is changed at the same time. Clothes should be worn over diapers while the child is at the Center. When diapers or children's clothing become soiled with feces or urine, TC4 will place them in a plastic bag without rinsing and send them home daily to be laundered. Soiled cloth diapers are stored in a labeled container with a tight-fitting lid provided by an accredited commercial diaper service, or in a sealed plastic bag for removal from the facility by an individual child's family, stored in a location inaccessible to children, and given directly to the parent/guardian daily at pick-up time.

Families can provide their own diapers and wipes or the Center will provide them for an additional monthly fee:

5 days.....	\$35.00
3 days.....	\$21.00
2 days.....	\$14.00

If a child runs out of their own diapers during the day, the Center will provide diapers and baby wipes for the child at a charge of \$1.75 per day to cover the cost of these items.

TOILET TRAINING

- When the teacher or the family believes a child is showing signs for being ready for toilet training (stays dry for 2 hours, is able to pull their pants up and down, sits on the toilet and produces) TC4 will work with the family to develop a collaborative plan for toilet training to be carried out at the Center and at home. As this is an important step in your child's development, please be sure to discuss the plan prior to implementing potty training.
- Children entering our toddler or preschool program who are already toilet trained may begin to have accidents. This is normal. At TC4 we work to keep the child in underwear and not revert back to diapers or

pull-ups. If accidents persist, a meeting is set up with the teacher and family to discuss strategies to help keep the child on target.

- Children are not required to be toilet trained before entering the preschool program. However, we believe it is a reasonable goal for most children to work towards being toilet trained. We will support your child in this process and take the child to the bathroom frequently. They are changed standing up when diapers, pull-ups or underwear become soiled. Families must provide flushable wipes during this time. The child is asked to help put on clean clothing to practice self-help skills. Soiled clothing is sent home daily to be laundered.

CLOTHING



- Please send in 2-3 extra sets of clothing to be kept at the center for your child to use in case of messy play or a toileting accident (pants, shirts, socks, underwear, and an extra pair of shoes).
- Please send in 1-2 face masks in a labelled bag for your child. These will be sent home daily to be washed. The center does have extra masks as needed.
- The children will be actively playing with paint, glue, sand and dirt in the classroom and on the playground. We value messy play at TC4. Please dress your child in clothing and shoes that are comfortable, easy to put on or take off, washable, and can get dirty. Clothing with Velcro and elastic closures is recommended for building independence.
- For health and safety reasons, **children's entire feet need to be covered.** *Open-toed sandals, Crocs, 'flip-flops', and 'slides' are not safe for active play.* Sneakers are recommended for outdoor play. Water shoes may be worn during water activities. During the snowy and rainy season, children may store their boots at school and wear shoes in the classroom.
- Children are required to wear appropriate footwear. Shoes must not come off while running and must provide support when climbing. Sneakers are recommended for outdoor play. Closed-toe sandals with an ankle strap are also allowed. All other sandals including flip-flops are not safe for active play. Water shoes or Crocs may be worn during water activities.
- "There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing." - Alfred Wainwright Remember that we go outside daily. A general rule is that we go outside when the temperature is 25 degrees Fahrenheit or above. During summer months, we monitor the weather reports and do not play outdoors during Heat Index Warnings. It's common for our classrooms to go outside on warm, rainy days. Please bring your child prepared with a waterproof coat and footwear. As the winter approaches, please bring labeled mittens, hats, boots, and snow pants. We value outdoor play in all types of weather. The program keeps a limited amount of these items as spares. Please let a member of the Administrative staff know should this presents an undue hardship to provide these items.
- During the summer, you are encouraged to bring in a labeled (with your child's name) tube or bottle of *non-aerosol* sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater, which will be stored out of the children's reach, sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection, and a wide brimmed hat for your child. Please apply sunscreen prior to your child coming to school. We will apply it again prior to morning outdoor play after 9:30 and in the afternoon. An authorization form will need to be filled out for sunscreen. Please see your child's teacher or the TC4 Admin team for the form.
- Donations of gently used, clean clothing and shoes are welcome.

SAFE ATTIRE

- Child masks for preschoolers will be kept in a paper bag or hung up when not in use (mealtimes, toileting, rest time and outdoors)
- Child masks will be sent home to be washed and dried daily
- Necklaces may not be worn by infants and toddlers at the Center.
- Necklaces may not be worn by preschoolers on the playground or at naptime. It is recommended that preschoolers leave necklaces at home to avoid losing or breaking jewelry in the process of removal.
- Jackets or sweatshirts with a drawstring hood, mittens connected by strings through the arms, or other upper body clothing with strings, pompoms or drawstrings are not allowed.
- Scarves must be tucked securely inside the coat.
- Earrings worn by children should be small posts. Dangle or hoop earrings will not be allowed.
- Jewelry that is deemed by TC4 staff to be unsafe will be removed and sent home with the child.
- Closed-toe, sturdy shoes, preferably sneakers, are required for play. Flip-flops, open-toe sandals are not allowed on the playground due to the increased risk of tripping, splinters from the mulch and falls from the equipment.
- Dangling zipper pulls are not allowed.

TOOTH BRUSHING Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are not currently brushing teeth. Instead we will offer children age 6 months and older a cup of water to drink for oral health.

Infant gums will be wiped with a soft cloth after feedings. Toddlers and preschoolers participate in tooth brushing after lunch. Each child is provided with a toothbrush which is replaced every three months or as needed. Only preschool children use toothpaste, provided by TC4. Staff closely monitors tooth brushing to ensure proper health and safety practices. Toothbrushes are stored in a hygienic holder which is sanitized weekly in the dishwasher. Nutrition and oral health care presentations are scheduled annually for the preschool children.

BIRTHDAYS

TC4 respects the diversity of the families and children we serve. In addition, we provide a “food safe” environment for children with allergies. Please know that allergies are not strictly related to food and can be present in playdough, etc. We respect the fact that birthdays are a special time for children and are a family centered event. To provide a food safe environment and ensure the safety of all of the children, no outside food can be brought into the center on birthdays. Please speak with your child’s teachers about the non-food related celebrations that happen in their classroom. Families are welcome to come in and assist in the classroom! Families can talk with staff if you have questions or ideas.

ITEMS TO BRING FROM HOME

- **Appropriate books and music** to share with everyone are always welcome. Your child’s teacher can help you evaluate items if needed.
- For older infants, toddlers and preschoolers on a cot, a **cuddly toy** for naptime is permissible. If pillows are used by toddlers and older children, pillows should be small in size and have removable cases that can be laundered, and only used by the individual child.
- Gum, candy, junk food (for example: donuts, chips, fast food) and money are **prohibited** at TC4.
- For infants, please supply the center with extra breast milk or formula in case of an emergency.
- Plastic bottles only (no glass allowed in classrooms).
- **Please LABEL your child’s food and belongings with their name!**

- Pacifiers need to be labeled with the child's initials and have a protective cover for when not in use. No pacifier strings or clips are permitted.
- Please avoid bringing toys from home unless your child's class has a planned Show-and-Tell, or you have **an item related to what is being studied** in class. We understand that some children need comfort items from home, such as a blanket or toy, in order to help them transition into the program at morning drop off time. However, once a child has settled in, teachers will help the child put their item away in their cubby for safekeeping, until the end of the day. TC4 is not responsible for the damage or loss of any items, toys, or books brought to the Center.

AS A REMINDER, IF YOUR CHILD REQUIRES CHAPSTICK OR LIP GLOSS, PLEASE SEE YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER FOR THE APPROPRIATE NON-PRESCRIPTION TOPICAL MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips (both in-house and out) and nature walks extend our educational program. There will be additional adult supervision for field trips away from the campus. Permission slips will be signed by families for such outings, and we will ask parents/guardians to accompany the group. All classroom staff attend our field trips, therefore all children attending school on designated field trip days must attend the trip. TC4 reserves the right to require adult family accompaniment for a child if the teacher determines the child requires additional support. If the parent/guardian cannot participate, the child may not attend the program that day.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM (DISCIPLINE POLICY)

The primary goal of Trinity College Community Child Center (TC4) is to help all children develop in a healthy, successful manner. We support all children to help them learn how to solve problems, express their feelings, and work together in a positive manner. We provide all children an environment that helps them to learn without being harmed or to harm others. TC4 strictly prohibits physical restraint, unless such restraint is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or other people. This policy complies with federal and state civil rights law. In addition, all School Readiness funded programs are required to follow this policy as well.

Sometimes children have a difficult time adjusting to a new classroom or other children. We will work closely with each parent/guardian to ensure that each child feels safe and comfortable, while teaching them developmentally appropriate behaviors.

Sometimes, a child's behavior can present a risk to the safety of the child, teachers, or other children in the classroom. Examples of challenging behaviors that present a safety risk in a classroom may be: biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, physical aggression or other destructive behaviors.

If problems arise, we will work closely with each parent/guardian to develop a mutual plan to help the child be successful in the program. It is important that we all work together to help each child. It is the expectation of TC4 that we will mutually partner with parents/guardians to implement strategies. The goal of our discipline and behavior management policies is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary measures. If comprehensive behavioral supports are determined to be unsuccessful by the TC4 team, the program may discuss other programming options and support the family in finding other child care.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Behavior is a means of communication. Negative behavior is often the consequence of an unmet need (e.g., example: hunger, fatigue, boredom, frustration, feeling ill) or a lack of fit (e.g.: too stimulating an environment or an identified / unidentified special need not being addressed). Our curriculum is designed to challenge, not frustrate, children and to incorporate the consistency they need to understand boundaries so they can master **self-control**. Our staff implements our curriculum with a keen eye on each child's developmental level and temperament. Staff **set clear limits** and provide the **supervision** necessary to **allow the child to gain a sense of independence**. We help children learn positive behavior by **teaching social skills** (including **problem solving skills**) and, when necessary, use **redirection strategies**.

TC4 **strictly prohibits** the use of abusive, neglectful, physical, corporal, humiliating, coercive, or intimidating treatment or punishment of children.

When behaviors include safety concerns: When a child exhibits behavior that creates management and safety issues for staff and other children, TC4 will work closely with the child's parents and, when warranted, outside professionals to determine the appropriateness of whether TC4 is able to meet the developmental needs of the child. Teachers may maintain a log (record of observations outlining when the behavior or condition is demonstrated, how it is manifested, and the steps that the staff takes to help the child) to assist both the staff and the parents in more precisely describing the areas of concern as well as assess the function of the behavior. An individualized plan will be developed to address the behavior including positive behavior support strategies.

TRANSITIONS FROM ONE ROOM TO THE NEXT

At TC4, transitions are timed to allow for children's positive development. As children progress and space becomes available in the next age group/classroom, we begin to plan for children who may be ready to move up. We look at the following factors to determine the appropriate time to move a child:

- 1) The developmental level of the child (e.g., mobility, language, social development, independence, self-control);
- 2) The composition and ages of the children in the new room;
- 3) The number of peers who are ready to move at the same time; and
- 4) Space availability.

Before a child transitions to the next classroom, the teachers will create a transition schedule that will allow the child to become acquainted with the new room and teachers. Families are notified of the upcoming transition and the new classroom teacher will meet with the family to go over the classroom Welcome Packet. Whenever possible, we prefer to move several children at a time to facilitate the adjustment process and to keep existing social bonds intact. Other factors affecting a room change may also be applicable in individual cases. ***While we respect and value our families, families that express an interest in a particular classroom will not be guaranteed the space and TC4 will ultimately determine which classroom the child will transition into based on a variety of factors including age of peers and classroom makeup.*** Each family is welcome to discuss transitions with teachers and the Executive Director.

CHILDREN WITH IDENTIFIED SPECIAL NEEDS

TC4 is committed to serving all children – (those with typical, as well as atypical development). Our program supports a climate that respects diversity, celebrates differences and creates a sense of belonging. TC4's curriculum supports individualizing activities for all children to grow, develop and learn at their own pace. In addition, TC4 core staff members receive annual training in serving children with special needs, and are supported in pursuing additional training. We will make realistic special adaptations and accommodations to meet the needs

of children with disabilities. No child shall be denied access to TC4 in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

TC4 staff will attend Birth to Three meetings and Pupil Placement Team (PPT) meetings with the parent/guardians invitation whenever possible to remain informed about a child's progress and to provide a voice in the child's education. If at any time we are unable to meet the needs of a child, TC4 will assist the family in advocating for the needs of their child and will assist in locating an appropriate placement or program for the child and provide support throughout the transition period.

Enrolling a child with identified special needs: When enrolling a child with an identified special health, developmental, or educational need, the family will meet with the Executive Director, a designated teaching staff member, nurse consultant and specialist (if applicable) to review the child's most recent Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) (child under three years) or Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) (child 3 years and older) prior to the child's first visit in the program. In order to provide the best possible programming to meet your child's individual needs, it is essential to establish and maintain three way communication between the family, all relevant service providers, and TC4.

As a licensed childcare program, the following is required: Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Childcare Licensing Regulations, (p.15) 19a-79-5a. Record keeping (E) information regarding disabilities or special health care needs such as, allergies, special dietary needs, dental problems, hearing or visual impairments, chronic illness, developmental variations or history of contagious disease, and an individual plan of care for a child with special health care needs or disabilities, developed with the child's parent(s) and health care provider and updated, as necessary. Such a plan shall include appropriate care of the child in the event of a medical or other emergency and shall be signed by the parent(s) and staff responsible for the care of the child. They will develop an education and health care plan for the children while in attendance at TC4. This plan will include adaptations or accommodations to the physical environment, curriculum, teaching strategies, care needs and needs of teaching staff to ensure child participation and engagement with classmates. It is essential for all parties to maintain open communication and regular team meetings will be scheduled. ***All relevant documentation must be provided to TC4 in order to maintain continuity of care. Examples include but are not limited to copies of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), health screenings, developmental reports and testing results. This documentation must be provided by the family within 2 weeks of testing, screening, etc.. to be included in the child's confidential health record.***

Identifying a child's special needs: Teachers routinely collect information on each child's development. If concerns arise, a teacher will communicate this to the family and discuss ongoing strategies to deal with those concerns. Should the TC4 staff feel at any time that the child needs further assessment or guidance from outside specialists, the teacher and an administrator will then meet with the family to discuss the plan. If the child is under 3 years of age, TC4 and the family can work with the state's Birth to Three system. If the child is three or older, TC4 and the family will work with the special education professionals of the town in which the child resides. Payment for specialists hired by the family is the responsibility of the family. While TC4 respects the family's choice in whether or not to move forward with referrals to Birth to Three or the public school, the needs of the child, classroom and program as a whole will be considered in all discussions and decisions.

TRANSITIONING CHILDREN WITH IDENTIFIED SPECIAL NEEDS

Infants with identified special needs (via the state's Birth to Three system) will be transitioned from infant to toddler rooms in accord with the transition plan set by the child's education team, and in keeping with the IFSP

goals. This team is typically made up of the child's parents / guardians, a Birth to Three specialist, the current TC4 teacher, the TC4 teacher from the room the child will transition into, and the Executive Director.

Children with identified special needs will transition to the preschool with a team approach as well. Whether the child is transitioning from a TC4 toddler room with an IFSP or newly enrolling in TC4's preschool (with either an IFSP or IEP), team meetings will ensure continuity of the child's progress of the goals and ongoing communication among all parties throughout the transition period. The transition will be followed up with meetings between B-3 specialists; preschool teacher, parents and the City of Hartford's Preschool Assessment Team or special education representative from the town in which the child resides.

When the child is approaching Kindergarten age, team meetings will be scheduled to develop both short and long term goals. These meetings can be held at TC4 at times convenient for all relevant parties to attend.

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

As children approach Kindergarten, we assist families toward a smooth transition. We hold a "Getting Ready for Kindergarten" orientation meeting, during which we talk about family options for schooling, curriculum, procedures for enrolling children, and making a good match for your child's educational needs. In preparation for this meeting, staff collaborates with Kindergarten teachers, The City of Hartford Department of Children, Families, Youth and Recreation and the Hartford Public School administration, and other area towns represented by the graduating preschoolers to provide you with relevant information. Throughout the year, activities prepare children for Kindergarten to ease their transition.

In addition, we can assist families in the Kindergarten registration process by connecting them with the proper personnel. TC4 will also transfer your child's developmental records to the receiving school with parent/guardian permission. See the Executive Director or Administrative Assistant for a permission form. Please note that your request may take up to two week to process.

Children moving on to Kindergarten are welcome to stay at the Center through late August to allow closure on their preschool experience and help them to prepare emotionally for both leaving TC4 and transitioning to Kindergarten.

SECTION D: FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

TC4 values strong family-school partnerships. Strong partnerships lead to academic and socio-emotional success for children. TC4 aims to include families in our program as much as possible. Please remember our **OPEN DOOR POLICY**: Parents and guardians are always welcome to visit TC4 at any time. The cornerstone of partnerships is respect. We ask that families refrain from cell phone conversations when entering the classroom/playground so you can give the staff and your child your full attention. For all other visitors, please see our policy posted at the entrance door. All visitors are required to sign in prior to entering the building.

Please observe our **TC4 FAMILY CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY**: At TC4, we strive to keep an atmosphere where children, families, staff, and students feel safe and respected. All of our staff members abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. In turn, we ask that each family member commit to **respecting the rights** of each child, family and staff member; that your behavior and language exemplify the **role models** you are; and that you **work in constructive ways** to improve the TC4 program. All language and discussions will be appropriate and respectful with staff, children, TC4 families and Trinity staff. The Administrative Team will be involved in discussions as

needed as a resource and support. Any person violating this policy will be asked to leave immediately and, if necessary, escorted from the premises by the Trinity College Campus Safety; your child's enrollment will also be terminated. Please maintain respectful behavior at all times, as it is key to your child's success. The use of profanity and bullying is not allowed by adults/guardians and is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.

NON-DISCRIMINATION / ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

TC4 does not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on race, religious creed, color, age, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, learning disability, mental disorder or history thereof, veteran's status, genetic information, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and marital status, or any other status protected by applicable law. Any parent/guardian who engages in such conduct at TC4 is subject to termination from the program. TC4 is a safe space intended to be free of bias, conflict, criticism, or potentially threatening actions, ideas, or conversations.

Gender is complex and unique to each of us. Involving more than just girls versus boys, we affirm youth of all genders. We are not "gender neutral" or "gender blind"; rather we seek to acknowledge the individual journey of every student as they explore their own gender. We're working towards a world that recognizes and celebrates the unique gender of every member of our community. At TC4, we do not believe that clothing, toys, interests, or colors have gender. We allow children to explore their world without limitations.

Additionally we seek to show support to the LGBTQ+ community by eliminating the use of honorifics in our program. Examples of honorifics are Mrs, Miss, Ms, Mr, & Mx. (gender neutral and can be used regardless of age, gender, and marital status). We ask that you address our teachers and administrative team by their preferred first name only. We feel it's an important step in supporting gender creative children as well as LGBTQ+ families, Trinity students and staff. We realize that as a societal norm that it can be used as a sign of respect but the administrative team feels that the ultimate sign of respect is to honor one's personal agency.

We offer a wide variety of activities to involve families. Our partnerships are defined in 6 categories and include the following:



1. **PARENTING:** A parent is their child's first teacher. Through daily conversations between staff and family members, and providing workshops for families, TC4 supports families' home environments. Workshop topics may include parenting skills, home management skills (e.g., budgeting, shopping for nutrition), health and safety, early childhood curriculum, and child development. **Family Literacy** (i.e., the way families explore written and spoken language) is of particular importance. Reading books together at bedtime and school drop off/pick up, writing grocery lists, or talking about the day are all powerful. TC4 recognizes the connection between family literacy and children's academic success, and helps to build these skills. If a member of your family could use help feeling more comfortable reading and writing, and/or learning English, please ask the Executive Director or Program Coordinator for information on resources that can assist this goal.

2. **COMMUNICATING:** TC4 teachers speak with families on a daily basis to establish a sense of trust and a communicative relationship. Families are encouraged to ask questions, express ideas or concerns about their child's growth and development. In addition, an open house occurs once a year, in the fall, allowing families and teachers to become better acquainted. Formal family-teacher conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring. However, a family can request a meeting with their child's teacher (and vice versa) whenever necessary.

Newsletters, flyers, notices, phone calls, emails (see page 7 for the list by classroom) and postings on our community resource bulletin boards and Facebook page are other ways we communicate with families. If you need assistance to communicate with other TC4 families, please see the Executive Director. Open house, TC4 events and classroom involvement are all great ways to get to know the families of children in the center.

3. **INVOLVEMENT:** Families are always welcome at any time of the day and are encouraged to visit and/or participate as often as their schedules permit. Involvement can take place within or outside program hours, and can include such things as:

- a. Welcoming new or prospective families
- b. Participating directly in the classroom by sharing a talent, hobby, or profession
- c. Translating TC4 materials into a family's home language
- d. Donating "usable junk" for art; clothing; second-hand toys, books and other needed items
- e. Participating on the Interview Committee to hire staff
- f. Joining a playground clean-up day
- g. Assist on field trips as additional supervision for the children
- h. Sponsoring /attending parenting skills classes and other workshops
- i. Testifying before the state legislature on matters concerning quality child care
- j. Organizing pot-luck dinners and other get-togethers
- k. Fundraising for special projects and needs of TC4
- l. Participate on the Family Advisory Committee
- m. Serving on the Board of Directors



****Please note that due to COVID-19 group size restrictions, the center is not currently holding any events.**

A note about TC4 fundraising: In an effort to be as sensitive as possible to everyone's time and resources, our fundraising is typically limited to two events per year (in late fall and early spring), open to the community, and managed by the Board of Directors. Information is passed out via the class mailboxes, and posted on our website. If you would like to help support this effort, please see the Executive Director.

4. **LEARNING AT HOME:** As your child's education partner, we will suggest simple learning opportunities to do at home with your child. Staff provides families with literacy, math, science, social studies, creative expression and appreciation, technology, and health and safety experiences and activities for families to participate in at home. For example, you may receive song lyrics or play dough recipes, or get a handout on how your child can do math by setting the table, or be given a flyer for a public library event in your neighborhood.

5. **INFORMING DECISION MAKING:** Family members are an important voice at The Center. Every day, we depend upon family feedback and involvement to help the program be its best. Our administration and classrooms use rating scales and other assessments to measure our quality and ensure we are meeting our goals and keeping with our philosophy. In addition, families, staff members and other stakeholders are also asked to complete formal questionnaires regarding program quality (based on NAEYC Accreditation, School Readiness evaluation measures and other program quality measures). In this way, families help inform the decision making process for program improvement. Results of surveys and related work are shared with families.

6. COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY: TC4 is a "community center" committed to the development of a partnership between staff and families. We believe this partnership provides for the exchange of valuable information about the child and his or her family, and allows us to help connect families to support. We maintain a list of community services to support families – everything from who to contact for help paying for fuel oil to obtaining health insurance or crisis intervention. You can find listings on the community bulletin boards in each building (along with announcements of community events), local community events will be posted on our Facebook page, as well as by asking the Executive Director.

We also maintain active collaborations with the following: social services, mental health, and public health services, health centers, recreation departments, the public libraries, adult education programs, Birth to Three program, employment and job training centers, the Hartford Preschool Assessment Team and Husky Insurance Outreach programs. TC4 conducts a yearly review of all community collaborations and utilizes feedback from stakeholders including families to determine if collaborations should remain active for the following year.

All referrals made on behalf of TC4 families will be made in agreement with the family and kept confidential.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION POLICY

In any group, individual differences and misunderstandings may arise. Successful resolution of differences depends on the willingness of the principal parties involved to communicate with one another. Under the Problem Resolution Policy, TC4 family members are free to seek information or advice from their child's teacher on any aspect of the child or family's individual relationship with TC4, or to call attention to any condition that may appear to be operating to the child or family's disadvantage. A key principle in the policy is that a matter brought to a teacher or to the Executive Director will go no further without the approval of the parent who initiated the contact. A family's standing with TC4 will not be prejudiced. If a concern arises, the program will request a meeting which needs to occur within one week at a mutually agreed upon time.

It is our intention to resolve matters in a positive manner in order to achieve mutual family and program satisfaction.

TC4 believes that most differences can and should be resolved informally and that it is beneficial to resolve them in that manner, but TC4 does allow for formal resolution of differences and complaints. If issues cannot be resolved informally, it is the Center's policy to provide an orderly and formal procedure to deal promptly and fairly with any serious difference of opinion, or complaint, which causes a family to believe they have been dealt with unjustly. A family may initiate an inquiry or formal complaint on any staff-related matter.

Step One: Family addresses the matter directly with the staff member.

Step Two: If satisfaction is not achieved, the matter is brought to the Executive Director's attention. The Executive Director will talk with relevant staff and gather facts and address any potential issues. Strategies will be developed and implemented and shared with the family.

Step Three: If the family is still not satisfied, the Executive Director will convene a meeting which will include the Board President. Both parties will be present and each position will be stated. A decision will be shared following the meeting with the family and staff.

For Child Care Licensing issues, please see the *COMPLAINT PROCEDURE* located on the main bulletin board.

Program Withdrawal/Termination:

A child's enrollment at TC4 may be terminated under the following:

- When a child is withdrawn by the parent/guardian
- When a child has not attended the center for one week and the family has not contacted the program with the reason for the absence.
- The family has not responded to staff attempts to reach out by email, Remind or phone.
- When 3 or more instances of the established tuition or fee has not been paid by Friday of each week
- When there is a failure by either the child/parent/guardian to comply with Center policies, regulations and requirements
- TC4 is unable to meet a child's educational needs such as when a child requires extensive one-on-one care or a child requires special education and training beyond what TC4 staff are trained or equipped to provide.

Parents/Guardians will be notified that the childcare arrangements have been terminated with or without notice.

SECTION E: HEALTH

In a group environment there are many germs to share! TC4 contracts with a **Pediatric Nurse Practitioner** who conducts weekly classroom visits, is available for consultation on health and safety issues, and is responsible for reviewing children's health assessments and immunization records, and overall compliance with the Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT). We also have a **Dental Consultant** who is available for consultation on oral hygiene and a **Registered Dietician** who consults on nutrition issues, including assisting us in serving snacks that meet guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and meeting children's nutritional needs. By working together and following policies, we can have a healthy school.



First, please wash your hands and your child's hands for twenty (20) seconds upon entry into the classroom each day. You will find that hand washing is a routine part of our strategy to stay healthy – we wash hands upon arrival; before eating; after outside time; before and after using the water table; after toileting; before brushing teeth; after handling visiting animals; etc.

Second, please follow our policies as outlined below.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND IMMUNIZATIONS

- The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood requires that each child enrolled in TC4 be examined by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant and have a **signed ED 191 health assessment indicating the date of the exam and up-to-date immunizations.** If your child cannot receive an immunization because of medical contraindications, the health care provider must submit a signed note stating that the immunization is medically contraindicated. In cases of religious exemption, a notarized waiver must be signed by the family and kept in the child's file.
- Health assessments are available at the TC4 Office. An updated health assessment needs to be submitted at least annually and more frequently for children under the age of three. Our nurse will notify families of upcoming renewal dates. Updated forms must be submitted promptly. Children may not attend if their physical is expired. If there is difficulty in getting an appointment, a child may attend IF the family/guardian provides an appointment card from the primary care provider with the date of the scheduled appointment.

- For families in need of medical insurance or a medical or dental home, immunizations, ongoing well-child care, health, dental or nutritional screenings, TC4 can provide you with information and assistance on accessing these services.
- **All health records are kept confidential** in a separate file which includes: health exams, immunizations, and screenings in pursuant of the EPSDT, accident reports, special care plans, and administration of medication forms.

ILLNESS *Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, please notify the center immediately if you, your child or someone in your household is showing signs of COVID-19 (fever over 100, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell. This list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Please keep your child home if someone in your household is showing any of these signs. Due to the variety of situations that a person can contract COVID-19, TC4 cannot be held liable if a family contracts COVID-19.*

- Your child's health is important to their learning and to others in our program. Please refer to The Exclusion Policy to see when it is necessary to keep your child at home. Please call us in the morning if you will not be sending your child due to illness. In the event of a contagious illness, we will notify the other families at TC4 (maintaining family confidentiality).
- **TC4 staff conducts daily health assessments to observe any changes in behavior, signs of illness or injury, increased body temperature and complaints of not feeling well. If a child arrives at TC4 showing signs of exclusionary illness, staff will send the child home. If your child exhibits any COVID-19 type symptoms they will be excluded for 72 hours and CDC guidelines will be followed. For the health and safety of all, the program may request a doctor's note in order for your child to return.**
- **In the event your child becomes ill while at TC4** and needs to leave the program, staff will notify a family or emergency contact to pick up the child. In the meantime, the child will be provided with resting space in an isolated area and supervised until picked up. Families should arrange for emergency backup care in the event of illness. **The program requires a sick child to be picked up within one hour from the time a staff person calls to notify you of the illness to limit exposure to others. The child will be removed to an area away from the group until a designated person arrives.**
- Families must abide by the Exclusion Policy (below) when their child is sent home.
- **Staff will accept your child back at TC4 only after the noted exclusionary period.**

EXCLUSION FOR ILLNESS POLICY

TC4 acts in the best interest of all families and staff at the Center, while also maintaining compliance with licensing and accreditation standards. TC4 bases its health and safety policies on the National Health and Safety Performance Standards by the American Academy of Pediatrics. A copy of these standards is on file in the office. Please help keep your child and others healthy by following our policies as noted below.

Conditions that require exclusion from the center: ANY COVID-19 symptoms

- Any child who is ill or has symptoms of illness that prevents them from participating comfortably in program activities as determined by TC4 staff
- Any child who is too ill for outside play needs to remain at home until they are ready to resume all aspects of the program
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- An acute change in behavior or a severely ill appearance (lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, developing a rapidly spreading rash)
- When a child poses a risk of spreading harmful diseases to others

Illness/ Reason for Exclusion	May Return
<u>Abdominal pain</u> that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms of illness	May return after medical evaluation if the child appears well, can participate fully in classroom activities, and is tolerating a regular diet.
<u>Chicken Pox, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis A and Active Tuberculosis</u>	See Exclusion for Illness Policy located in the Executive Director's office.
<u>Diarrhea</u> – Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper and toilet-trained children if the diarrhea is causing "accidents". In addition, diapered children with diarrhea should be excluded if the stool frequency exceeds two stools above normal for that child during the time in the program day, or those whose stool contains blood or mucus.	Readmission after diarrhea can occur when diapered children have their stool contained by the diaper and when toilet-trained children are not having accidents, stools are returning to normal consistency and progress has been made toward a regular diet and when stool frequency is no more than 2 stools above normal for that child during the time in the program day.
<u>Fever</u> - Fever - temperature above 100°F (by any method) in infants older than 2 months of age with a behavior change such as extreme fussiness or fatigue or other signs and symptoms (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea) requires exclusion and immediate medical attention. Any infant younger than 2 months of age with a temperature above 100.4°F fever should get urgent medical attention.	72 hrs. from when the fever breaks / must be free of fever-reducing medication for 72 hours. Any COVID-19 symptoms require a 14 day exclusion per CDC guidelines.
<u>Head lice</u> (Child may remain until the end of the day)	May return after initial prescribed treatment has been given; extreme effort should be taken to be "nit-free" before returning.
<u>Impetigo</u> (Exclusion is not necessary before the end of the day as long as the lesions can be covered)	May return after treatment has been initiated.
<u>Mouth sores</u> with drooling that the child cannot control unless the child's primary care provider or local health department authority states that the child is noninfectious	May return when mouth sores resolve.
<u>Rash with a fever</u> or behavioral changes	May return when the primary care provider determines that the illness is not an infectious disease.
<u>Ringworm</u> (Ringworm treatment may be delayed until the end of the day, no exclusion is needed.)	May return after treatment has been initiated..

<u>Scabies</u> (Exclusion is not necessary before the end of the program day)	May return after initial prescribed treatment has been given
<u>Strep Throat or other streptococcal infection</u>	May return once the child has two doses of antibiotic (one may be taken the day of exclusion and the second just before returning the next day).
Uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing or wheezing	Children may attend the center when symptoms no longer interfere with their ability to participate in all program activities and they are medically cleared to do so.
<u>Vomiting</u> - more than two episodes in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-infectious condition and the child remains properly hydrated. The family will be alerted by telephone after the 1st episode.	May return 72 hours from the last episode of vomiting, child has tolerated one regular meal and is feeling well enough to participate in all program activities.
Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.	May return when the child's healthcare provider or health department official states that the child is noninfectious.

More detailed guidelines are available in the TC4 office for the illnesses as listed above and for additional, less common illnesses.

Children may return to the center when they are:

- Have been deemed by a medical provider as being COVID-19 negative or symptom free
- Able to participate comfortably in program activities, tolerate a regular diet and do not require continuous one-on-one care.
- 72 hours fever-free and 72 hours free of fever-reducing medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- No longer experiencing diarrhea or when the continuous loose stools are deemed not to be infectious by a licensed health care provider.
- 72 hours free of vomiting.
- Receiving treatment for head lice, scabies and ringworm.
- Receiving antibiotic treatment for impetigo and Strep throat.

Program staff will make the final decision about whether children who are ill may attend. The decision will be based on the program's inclusion/exclusion criteria. TC4 may require a primary health care provider's note to readmit a child to determine whether the child is a health risk to others, or if guidance is needed about any special care the child requires.

For further information, please consult:

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. 2011. Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs. 4th edition. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. Also available at <http://nckids.org>

TC4 Staff may request a child be picked up early and evaluated by the child's primary care provider if the child appears uncomfortable with an ear infection, abdominal pain, or generalized comfort.

TC4 Staff will request a note from the child's health care provider before the child returns to the center if the child has experienced a serious illness including COVID-19 or a serious injury such as a concussion or fracture.

Rashes: Rashes in children can be difficult to evaluate since a rash can be a sign of an allergy to food or medication or a sign of illness. If there is any question about the cause of a rash or whether the rash is associated with a contagious illness, the staff may request a note from the child's healthcare provider reporting on the child's health status.

TC4 will follow these steps for a potential COVID-19 case:

- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times for the potential person or child. Any person violating confidentiality may be subject to termination from the program..
- The Admin Team will be notified immediately and a member of the Admin Team will contact the nurse consultant, Milly Adorno, Hartford Department of Public Health (Liany Arroyo) and Office of Early Childhood to notify of potential case
- Board of Directors will be notified by Admin
- Trinity College will be notified by Admin- Martha O'Brien, Director of Health Center
- Adult or child will be put on a 14 day program exclusion
- Adult or child will be tested by their primary care provider and will notify the program in writing of the results
- Families will be notified by Admin of potential exposure through one of the following phone call, email or written letter (no confidential information will be shared)
- Hartford's Department of Public Health will provide additional guidance on steps to be taken by the program which may include one or all of the following:
 - Deep cleaning of the classroom
 - Closure of the exposed classroom and exclusion of all children in staff for 7-14 days
 - Closure of the building for 7-14 days for deep cleaning

A note about going OUTDOORS: Outdoor play is an integral part of our day for many reasons including but not limited to the fresh air and the gross motor outlet young children's bodies require. **If you think your child is too sick to go outside, your child is considered too sick to be at TC4.**

Outdoor Policy

- Children are within sight and sound at all times in all play areas.
- Every child is accounted for at all times by supervising staff. Attendance is taken outside before returning to the classroom.
- TC4 will provide preschool children (age 3-5) with outdoor time of at least 60 minutes of unstructured play.
- TC4 will provide 15-30 minutes of structured activity that includes, but is not limited to yoga, movement games, dancing, etc.
- TC4 will have outdoor time at least twice daily (weather and air permitting). Children will go outside when the temperature is 25 degrees Fahrenheit (including wind chill) and below 90 degrees Fahrenheit; however outdoor time is limited to 20-30 minutes when temperatures are between 25-32 degrees Fahrenheit.

TC4 is a smoke free environment and smoking is not permitted in the buildings, on the playground or in the parking lots.

Sun Protection Reminders

We'd like to remind families to label and provide the center with the following items for their child's sun protection:

- Sunscreen SPF 30 or greater with UVA and UVB protection for children ages 6 months and older (please no aerosol sprays)
- Updated Authorization form for application of sunscreen
- Lip balm with SPF
- Hat with a wide brim
- Sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection

Please apply your child's sunscreen at home before arriving at the center. The staff will re-apply it in the mid-late morning and again in the afternoon 20-30 minutes before going outside. We monitor the UV Index by checking www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html. We will avoid outdoor play time when there is increased risk of harmful exposure.

MEDICATION

- TC4 staff respects a child's need for medication to treat life threatening allergies or special health care needs and they understand that medication may improve the child's health, well-being and the ability to participate in program activities.
- Medications to treat asthma, allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, and ongoing special health care needs such as a seizure disorder or gastroesophageal reflux will be administered with the proper parent and prescriber authorizations.
- Families are responsible for administering the first dose of the day except emergency medication or as needed asthma or allergy medication.
- The following medications WILL NOT be administered: fever-reducing or pain relieving medication (unless indicated for history of febrile seizures); over the counter and prescription medications to treat common coughs and colds; antibiotics
- *Families will be notified immediately by telephone when any emergency medication has been administered.*
- Core staff members have completed a certification course in medication administration.
- Trained staff will administer medication required by a child as prescribed by a licensed healthcare provider. No medication will be administered without a completed medication authorization form. Medication authorization forms are available from your child's teacher and in the TC4 office. *Only staff trained in medication administration or parents/guardians may administer medication to a child while at the center.*
- Medications must be in their original containers. Medications are stored in accordance with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood regulations.
- TC4 staff certified in medication administration will not administer the first dose of the day of any medication unless indicated for a medical emergency such as anaphylaxis or an "as needed" medication.
- ***A child with a known life threatening allergy or a history of asthma treated with inhaled medications may not attend the program unless the medication and authorization forms are on site and up-to-date.***

- Absolutely no medication or probiotics may be put into a bottle or sippy cup at any time. Medications may not be stored in a child's backpack, pocket, lunchbox or diaper bag.
- Self-administration of medication by children **IS NOT** permitted at TC4.
- Expired medication or any medication left at the center after a child has withdrawn must be picked up by the parent/guardian within one (1) week. Medication will be properly disposed of after the one (1) week period.
- ***If a child requires doses of analgesic medication for pain or discomfort throughout the day, such as Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen, then the child is too sick to attend the program.***

Any medication to be administered in the event of an emergency will be stored in its original labeled container, out of reach of children, with quick access for staff.

Due to the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood regulations and the complex nature of processing paperwork for administering medication, TC4 requires 24 hours or a full business day to review all documents before administering medication on site. A parent or guardian may be required to administer the medication to their child until the paperwork has been approved by staff and Administration.

NON PRESCRIPTION TOPICAL MEDICATION

Non Prescription topical medications (including but not limited to “diaper creams free of antibiotic, antifungal or steroidal components; medicated powders; and lip medications per the Department of Public Health) require a parent authorization form to be completed. Please see your child’s teacher or the office for forms. Please note based on FDA concerns, over the counter (OTC) and prescription topical medications for teething pain will not be administered due to potential harmful effects.

When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET with a concentration of no more than 30% are used, and only on children over 2 months of age, no more than once per day, with parent permission. Insect repellent must be in non-aerosol containers and must be applied outdoors (not in the classroom).

ALLERGIES AND OTHER ILLNESS

To keep all children, faculty and staff healthy and safe, we maintain a “**Nut-safe** and **Peanut-safe**” environment. This means no items containing any type of nut can be brought into The Center. Due to additional apple and mango food allergies in our Infant and Toddler program, we do not allow mango or apples or products containing those fruits in that building. Please check all food labels carefully. TC4 contracts with a Registered Dietician to monitor and give feedback on food allergies and sensitivities.

If a child has a severe allergy, an emergency health care plan signed by a licensed health care provider is required and kept on file. Children with asthma must have an Asthma Care Plan completed and signed by their parent or guardian. Children with any other special health care need must have an individualized health care plan signed by their parent or guardian. All health care plans will be reviewed and signed by TC4 staff and Child Care Health Consultant. In order to best support your child’s healthy development at TC4, the Executive Director, the child's teacher, and the nurse consultant must be made aware of the condition, its symptoms and its treatment. Health care plans must be updated annually or more frequently if changes are made in the treatment plan.

As needed, this information is conveyed to TC4 staff through a meeting that may include the family, teaching staff, the health consultant, and administrators. If the condition impacts other children, the families will be informed and

educated about how TC4 is proceeding, so long as this does not break family confidentiality. For example, if a child has a wheat allergy, TC4 works with the family and health consultant to formulate a plan to include other families in understanding the use of wheat products in the classroom.

SCREENINGS

In pursuant of the Early and Periodic Screening Diagnostic Treatment (EPSDT), children are to receive dental screenings beginning at age 1, and hearing and vision screenings beginning at age 3.

- Oral health screenings are conducted annually on site by the Goodwin College Dental Hygiene Program. Community oral health screening opportunities are posted annually. A list of dental community resources is available at TC4.
- Hearing screenings should be conducted annually by the primary care provider.
- Vision screenings are conducted annually at TC4 for preschoolers by a trained vision screener

In the absence of dental or hearing screenings, TC4 will collaborate with outside agencies to assist families in arranging for these screenings.

FIRST AID AND ACCIDENTS

The TC4 staff is committed to providing a healthy, safe environment for children. Our nurse consultant regularly inspects our interior and exterior play space for cleanliness and safety. The Executive Director, Program Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and other core staff are Infant/Child First Aid and CPR certified. New core employees are required to complete this training within three months of employment.

In the event of an accident, we are authorized to cleanse with soap and water, bandage a wound, apply ice and provide warmth and rest. Staff will follow the universal precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in handling blood or other bodily fluids that might contain blood. Universal Precautions require treating all blood or blood products as potentially infectious. Parents will be notified by a written report of all minor accidents and notified by phone for anything more serious.

In the event of a serious accident, such as a concussion or fracture, TC4 will call 911 and contact Trinity College's Campus Security. If necessary, the child will be transported to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC) Emergency Room. TC4 requires that families, upon enrollment, sign an authorization form for emergency treatment by CCMC staff. The cost of emergency transportation and treatment is the responsibility of the family.

TC4 staff will handle the emergency first, and then notify the child's family. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will phone the emergency contact indicated on your enrollment form. Please make sure the center has updated contact information. A TC4 staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain with the child until the parent/guardian arrives. A family member or emergency authorized adult will need to stay with the child at the hospital through the child's release.

INJURIES

All staff are required to maintain current CPR and First Aid certification for the ages served by the Center. If a child is injured while at the Center, first aid will be administered as soon as possible. The child's family will be notified and an injury report completed. Common childhood injuries such as bumps and scrapes often occur during the normal course of a child exploring the environment or playing on the playground.

OTHER HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES

When a family member or staff member detects a health problem or behavioral change, we will work together to contact the proper agency, social worker, psychologist, health official, early childhood consultant, pediatrician, or specialist. We encourage a family-teacher relationship that allows for open, confidential discussions between family members and teaching staff.

MANDATED REPORTING

TC4 has a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of the children enrolled in the program. TC4 has a zero tolerance policy for child abuse or neglect. The State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood requires that all staff of child care institutions report to the State any and all cases in which the staff has reasonable cause to suspect or believe there is child abuse and /or neglect. TC4 is, therefore, obligated to report to the State any suspected cases of child abuse and/ or neglect.

Employees are not required to notify families or guardians of an investigation involving suspected child abuse or neglect. The reporter in consultation with DCF may decide whether the parents should be informed of the report at the time that the oral report is made to the HOTLINE.

Under no circumstance can an employee discuss with a parent any information shared or obtained by such employee from a child (including the parent's child) or any other professional/personal communication without first discussing disclosure with the Executive Director.

In the event the alleged perpetrator is an employee of TC4, the staff member accused of abuse or neglect may be immediately removed from his or her position until DCF's investigation is completed. Based on whether the allegations were substantiated or not, the employee would either be dismissed from his/her position or allowed to return to work.

Families receive a copy of the Center's Mandated Abuse and Neglect Policy at enrollment. It will be discussed during the classroom visit. A copy can be found on the Center's Licensing Board for reference.

NUTRITION



At Trinity College Community Child Center, we believe that all children should be offered the best possible nutrition and all children should have ample opportunity for physical activity throughout the day. Based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation criteria and the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self- Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) program guidelines, we have adopted the following practices. The administration and staff appreciate support from families in promoting the health of our children.

A copy of our safe food handling policy will be shared with families upon request at enrollment.

Nutrition education is an important part of the TC4 curriculum and lunchtime is a perfect time to reinforce healthy food choices. CT DPH Day Care Licensing Regulations state that meals served must consist of food from the four food groups (fruit, vegetables, protein, grains). TC4 provides milk and water at snack time and mealtime. We discourage families from sending chips and desserts in children's lunches. If these items are included in a child's lunch, TC4 staff may choose to offer only a portion of the serving. Lunchables are strongly discouraged. Candy, gum, juice, and Fast Food "Happy Meals" will not be served. Age-appropriate healthy foods and portion size

guidelines are included in each classroom's orientation packet. Feel free to discuss any dietary concerns with your child's teacher.

When sending in bottles for your infant please keep the following in mind:

- No glass bottles. Bottles should be BPA free.
- Bottles need to be labeled each day with your child's initials and date.
- Only breast milk, milk, formula should be placed into the bottles. Breastmilk will be accepted in ready to feed sanitary containers only. Freezer bags are suitable.
- No cereal, vitamins, medication, probiotics, herbal or homeopathic remedies can be added to bottles unless written authorization from an authorized health care provider is on file.

Infant Feeding Guide

- While children between the ages of 6 months to 12 months continue to receive calories and nutrients from breast milk or infant formula, we encourage families to follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' guidelines for the introduction of solid foods. Solid and pureed foods will not be offered to infants younger than four (4) months of age. Solid and pureed foods are not offered to infants younger than six months (6) of age unless the practice is recommended by the child's primary care provider and approved by the family.
- TC4 does not serve juice for meals or snacks to any age child.
- Families should begin to introduce pureed foods at six (6) months of age
- Families should introduce one new food at a time at home at least three (3) times before TC4 staff will offer it
- At eight (8) to nine (9) months families will be encouraged to start feeding table foods in addition to pouches or pureed foods
- Children 1 year and older should be on solid foods that encourage chewing (small pieces of meat, rice, mashed potatoes, pasta, fruit, cooked vegetables, etc.)
- Feeding schedules vary by child and developmental level. Infant staff are happy to share sample menus with families.

All children are expected to eat breakfast at home before coming to the Center. A light snack will be served between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m., however, this is not meant to take the place of breakfast.

When preparing your child's lunch for school please keep the following in mind:

- All items should be labeled with your child's initials and date.
- Lunches must be nutritious and include food from the five food groups (protein, dairy, grain, fruit and vegetable), as required by the CT Office of Early Childhood. We are happy to provide families with suggestions!
- Our infant/toddler classrooms are not equipped to cook food such as Easy Mac or Cup of Soup. We can only reheat food.
- Foods should be cut into bite size pieces to encourage self-feeding.
- Per NAEYC regulations, we do not serve any children under four (4) years the following: hotdogs or sausages whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas or hard pretzels, spoonfuls of sticky foods like peanut, soy or sunflower butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. It is the family's responsibility to send food to the center pre-cut.
- We serve children only milk and water at snacks and meals. Please check the menus posted for when it is offered each day.

- Pre-packaged “Lunchables” are strongly discouraged; if families provide “Lunchables” for their child, the contents must be inspected before sending to the Center and all juice drinks and candy must be removed.
- Fast food, such as McDonald’s Happy Meals will not be served.
- Candy, gum, and soda are not allowed at the Center.

TC4 will:

- Provide 2 snacks (morning and afternoon) per day and beverages will include milk, breast milk or water.
- Serve snacks that are age appropriate and safe to eat.
- Post lists of children’s food allergies, sensitivities and restrictions in each classroom and we adhere to these lists.
- Serve nutritious snacks, including fresh fruits or fruit canned in its own juices (no syrups), and fresh or frozen vegetables
- Offer high fiber, whole grain snack foods
- Avoid offering salty, sweet, or high fat snacks
- Have monthly snack menus (4 week cycle) reviewed and approved by our Nutrition Consultant (a Registered Dietician). These will be posted in your child’s classroom. Menus contain new and familiar foods that respect a variety of cultures. We also include a weekly nutrition activity.
- **Provide a “food safe” environment for children with allergies. No nuts, peanuts or products containing these are allowed at the center. In addition, no apples or mangoes are allowed in the infant/toddler program. For the infant/toddler program ALL ITEMS must be apple-free and mango-free in addition to nut free. Check labels on packaged foods (granola bars, cereal bars, pre packaged lunches, etc.). Please know that all allergies are not strictly limited to food and can be present in playdough, fragrances, lip balms and other items.**

Beverages

- We make drinking water freely available so children can serve themselves both inside and outside.
- We serve whole milk to children 12-24 months of age and 1% milk to children age 2 and older.
- *We do not serve juice in our program.*

Feeding Practices

- Our staff will offer your toddler/preschool child all of their food while eating to encourage independence and choices
- Our staff help children determine if they are full before removing their plate.
- Our staff help children determine if they are still hungry before serving additional food.
- Our staff gently and positively encourages children to try a new or less favorite food.
- Our staff does not force children to finish all food on their plate or beverage in their cup.
- We do not use food to encourage positive behavior, nor is withheld as punishment.
- Our staff will hold babies when being bottle fed.
- Our staff sit with the children at meals as this is a time for conversations

Foods Offered Outside of Regular Meals and Snacks

- We provide and enforce written guidelines for healthier food brought in and served for celebrations.
- Due to numerous child allergies and sensitivities, no outside food other than lunches/snacks will be served in the center.

Please remember, TC4 will not use food as a punishment or reward.



**Trinity College Community Child Center
Family Handbook Agreement Form**

TC4 seeks every opportunity to build a strong family-school partnership. This is a 2-way relationship. TC4 reserves the right to terminate services for any child for any reason when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the child, family, or Center.

My signature below signifies that I have discussed the policies outlined in the TC4 Family Handbook and had the opportunity to ask questions in regards to but not limited to:

- Discipline/Behavior Management Policy
- Withdrawal/Termination Policy
- Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Fee Policy
- Nutrition Policy
- Health Policy including COVID related items
- Center opening/closing time
- Family Responsibilities

I have reviewed these policies and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I agree to abide by them and do my part in maintaining a strong family-school partnership.

Please have all parents/applicable guardians sign below.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE TC4 OFFICE BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST OFFICIAL CLASSROOM VISIT.