

Albany Unified School District

PARENT HANDBOOK

Albany Children's Center

(Preschool 3-5 years old)



Address: 720 Jackson Street, Albany, CA, 94706

Phone: (510)559-6590 Fax: (510)559-6593

THE ALBANY CHILDREN’S CENTER

The Albany Children’s Center (ACC) is an Early Childhood program operated by the Albany Unified School District. The Center is open Monday-Friday from 7:30am to 6:00pm, year round. We enroll children into our preschool at age 2.9-5 years old, and need to be fully potty trained.

Albany Children’s Center serving preschool age is located at 720 Jackson Street in Albany, California. We have 4 classrooms with 24 children, 3 adults, and a 1 to 8 ratio. The staff at ACC is qualified, credentialed and finger printed. We are a developmentally appropriate program with curriculum that is play based and child centered. We also provide children with Creative Curriculum, Hand Writing without Tears and Reading Revolution. Our 5th classroom is our Special Day class serving about 8 children with Special needs from age 3-5 years old. We also provide services for children with special rights if you are an Albany resident. Children are accepted by the Center based on our ability to provide an appropriate program. We provide Speech and Language, Occupational and Physical Therapy on site if your child is eligible.

We have five before and after school age programs. We have one school age program serving K-3 grade at Marin Elementary school, three programs serving K-3 grade at Ocean View Elementary school and one program serving K-5th grade at Cornell Elementary school. At each site we offer a world Language after school program providing Spanish at Marin and Simplified Mandarin at Ocean View and Cornell.

All our programs at the preschool and school age are supported by State funds which are allocated by the Department of Education, Child Development Division, parent fees and sliding fee scale. We have a waiting list in which we draw from for enrollment. We also use the Central Eligibility List (CEL) that is provided country wide. Equal treatment and access to services for all children are provided without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry or religion.



ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Fill out wait list Application

You need to fill out a wait list application to begin the process of enrollment at our Main office for preschool and School age program.

The Main office is located at 720 Jackson Street in Albany, California. Telephone: (510)559-6590, Fax: (510)559-6593

The Albany Children's Center maintains a waiting list (subsidized/sliding fee scale and full cost). Openings are filled according to State priorities based on the family income and need for child care. In order to qualify for State funded preschool or school age program, you need to be working, going to school, vocation or educational training or seeking employment. Services are available for children of Albany residents who meet the requirements established by the State Child Development Division. Non-residents are accepted after all Albany residents have been served.

Complete enrollment paperwork

Once there is a space available for your child, our office will notify you to come to our main office to pick up the enrollment package, and set up the appointment for you to meet with our director.

Meet with our Director

Our Director will go over all the paperwork with you, answer your question, set up a starting day for your child. When all paperwork is complete, you will be asked to bring your child to visit the classroom teacher before starting his/her first day of school. This gives you and your child the opportunity to meet the teacher and discuss your child's development with the teacher.





First Week Transition Week

The first week you start we call this the transition week. Each first week is different for every child because it depends on how your child separates.

Monday: 9:00am – 12:00pm, A parent stays the entire morning with the child, eats lunch with the child and then leaves for the day at 12:00pm.

Tuesday: 9:00am – 12:00pm, same routine as Monday.

Wednesday: If your child seems comfortable, you can leave them in the classroom for the morning 9:00am – 12:00pm, and tell your child “I will be back at lunch”. Then you return at noon.

Thursday: If your child was completely comfortable the entire time on Wednesday, you can drop off at 9:00am and pick up at 2:30pm.

Friday: Your child can stay all day.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

The Albany Children's Center's program is based on principles of child development. Our goals are to give children a sense of self-worth and to help them develop according to their own individual styles while gaining necessary basic skills. We want children to feel confident and secure so that they can explore and grow in a stimulating educational and social environment.

We are committed to promoting and supporting all aspects of a child's growth in an atmosphere of respect. Your child is seen as an individual who is an integral member of a group, and whose uniqueness is acknowledged and celebrated by that group.

The daily activities are designed to provide age-appropriate experiences in the following early childhood development areas.



Social Development

- Getting along in groups
- Learning responsible behavior (such as sharing)
- Respecting ethnic-cultural-age-sexual differences
- Expressing feelings appropriately



Cognitive Development

- Providing experiences in math and science
- Promoting children's curiosity about the world by
- Encouraging observation, exploration, experimentation
- Building pre-reading and pre-writing skills
- Fostering imagination and creativity

Building Language Skills (listening, speaking, following directions):

Children learn to order their world through games and activities designed to give meaning to concepts such as number, relational concepts (beside/under/or big/small), and classification skills that lead to problem solving.

Physical Development

- Developing large and small muscle skills
- Increasing body awareness
- Improving eye-hand coordination and perceptual skills

- Exploring rhythm and movement



Emotional Development

- Promoting positive self-image
- Fostering cooperation
- Developing independence, initiative and trust



The Daily Schedule

The daily schedule is designed to meet our stated goals. In order to provide the consistency which encourage a child's security and confidence, our daily schedule is similar each day. It must also be **flexible** enough to provide for special situations (like rainy days), to encourage your child to make choices, and to allow for his/her individual needs.

We strive to make each day **balanced** by alternating

- Teacher organized/child initiated activities
- Indoor/outdoor experiences
- Active/quiet periods
- Group/individual play

Most importantly, all activities are **integrated** (play, projects, clean-up, eating, dressing, chatting with teacher) and each is integral to the learning day.

Play is the Work of a Child

Our program follows the early childhood education principle that children learn through play. By carefully preparing a classroom environment with equipment, supplies, toys and materials that encourage children's participation, the child is playing in an atmosphere planned to teach. Through the child's play activities, he/she is learning all the language, cognitive, social, physical and emotional "lessons" we want to teach. We do not "teach" academic skills but children do gain knowledge, acquire skills, and become proficient by learning through play.



Child Care Guide



CHILD GUIDANCE

Our child guidance philosophy is based on the idea that children develop internal self-control and discipline when surrounded by consistent behavioral expectations. Children's behavior is guided by a combination of care, concern and orderliness. Discipline policies at ACC reflect the attitudes respect for others and the property of others. The safety and well-being of all children is of utmost

concern when rules policies are formulated. Each classroom has a set of rules that are clearly communicated to children and parents. Children are helped to understand the reasons for rules as well as the consequences for not following the rules. Consequences will vary according to the behavior of the child but in general will range from verbal reminders to redirection from an activity to another activity. More specific details on child guidance policies and practices can be discussed with staff in each classroom.

The staff of ACC considers parents to be responsible partners in helping to provide a safe and nurturing environment. Children are expected to follow rules that are appropriate for their age, physical skill, social and intellectual development, and the particular environment of each classroom and play yard. Staff will confer with parents of children who persistently cause harm to other children or adults, or whose behavior disrupts the classroom program thereby denying the benefits of the program to other children. If such behavior continues, the family will be referred for professional assistance, suspended or dropped from the Center.

The ACC Staff

The Albany Children’s Center is staffed by teachers who hold appropriate California credentials and Lead Para-educators. Staff members work as a team to bring a wide variety of abilities and experiences to the children. The name of staff in each child’s classroom is given to parents at the time of enrollment.



OTHER SERVICES

Referrals

The Director, teachers and office staff will be happy to assist in referring you to the appropriate agency or person in case you find a need for additional services. We keep lists of professional services, family related services and other persons and/ or agencies concerned with parents' and children's needs.

Assessments

The staff at Albany Children's Center strives to work closely with parents towards the goal of providing each child with a successful and happy preschool/ child care experience. Each month several staff members meet with selected parents to discuss concerns related to their child's adjustment at ACC. These **Student Study Teams (SST)** consist of the parents, classroom teachers, director, and as necessary, speech therapist and/or district psychologist. Our purpose is to share information and generate plans for ensuring that all children are successful in all areas. Our discussions may include: behavioral difficulties; social/emotional well-being; speech/language delays; and kindergarten readiness. Parent referrals are accepted at any time. Careful attention is given to maintain the confidentiality of all information at every step of the process.

Special Education

The Albany Unified School District operates their Special Education Preschool Program in the Albany Children's Center to accommodate the needs of young special needs children. Special education children primarily have severe speech and language delays, developmental handicaps, or orthopedic problems. These children receive special education because it has been determined, according to specific criteria established by the State Department of Education, that they receive a preschool program with special intervention.

The special education speech therapist screens children at the Center for possible delays in language development, at parent request, and works with parents to bring services to these children. The special education teacher serves as a consultant to all staff and parents at the Albany Children's Center.



ACC PARENT PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

This program has been designed as a way for parents to participate, and be involved in the school. The goals of the program are:

- To build community
- To increase and maintain parent involvement
- To support the school and staff
- To enrich the environment for the children

How it works

Families are expected to contribute 15 hours per year/per adult, regardless of the number of children enrolled at Albany Children's Center. Parents or guardians agree to the following:

Participate at least 15 hours/year in one or more of the following activities:

- Attend 8 parent Meetings a year.
- Attend or participate in 4 hour of fundraising efforts or event.
- Work or volunteer in the classrooms as a room parent 3 hours, or (See attached)



You may choose to participate or buy out your 15 hours. Our hope is that you will participate. If you do choose to buy-out, the money is deposited into our fundraising fund. You also can combine participation and buy out hours. If you buy out your parent participation hours the rate is \$15 an hour. Another option is combining the participation hours and the buy-out hours.

The minimum requirement is 15 hours per year, or \$225 per adult. Your hours can be compiled in a day, a week, a month, or spread out over the year. A parent can contribute more participation than the other parent as long as a two-parent family combined total is 30 hours per year.



Buy Out Option

If this level of participation is not suitable for your family, you may choose to buy out some or all of your hours at a rate of \$15 per hour. If you choose to buy out for the full year, your payment of \$225 per adult is due by August, of that year, thereby fulfilling your school year commitment.

Reporting

Each time you participate in a qualifying activity, you will record your hours on the Parent Participation note cards in the box located outside Susan's office.

Ways to Participate

There are many ways for parents to participate in the ACC experience. Some of the countless qualifying participation activities are listed below: if you would like to offer a different activity or a specialized, please speak to Susan.

Attending parent meetings

- Planning school events (organizing, recruiting, attending meetings)
- Participating in a school event

- Composting, recycling, green support
- Reading to children/work in the classroom
- Supervising an activity (cooking, wood working, gardening, etc.)
- Organizing and leading an activity
- Making repairs
- Building (shelves, tables, etc.)
- Painting
- Yard work
- Sewing
- Carpet cleaning
- Washing windows
- Vacuuming
- Sweeping the outside area daily
- Washing cubbies
- Library maintenance
- Providing meals/goodies to appreciate staff
- Providing professional assistance to the school (consulting)
- Donating items (hallway plants, couch, etc.)
- Volunteering for an Open House
- Videotaping or otherwise documenting
- Photography
- Organizing Earthquake kits
- Computer tech support

- Writing a newsletter

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

While we realize the limited amount of time you have to become involved in your child's life at school, we want to emphasize that your communication and/or participation is important. Parent involvement enhances the partnership between home and school necessary for the successful education of young children. We want to work with you to provide learning opportunities, both at home and at school, which will match your child's own learning pace and style.

Please share any concerns you have with us. For example, changes that occur in your family such as grandmother's visit, a new baby, or a family separation may affect your child's behavior. We will also share our concerns with you. Feel welcome to spend time in your child's classroom. We look forward to getting to know each family. Since children are often with us for four years, we see ourselves as an extension of your family. While we are here for you when you need to be away from your child, please remember your child loves and needs to spend time with you. Keep these needs in mind as you plan your daily schedule.

We hope that you will take time to talk to your child's teacher by scheduling a time that is mutually convenient to you and to you and to the teacher. If you have any questions related to our policies, or don't agree with how we handle a situation, please get together with us promptly, so that we can discuss it. Also, please take advantage of the formal conference periods held in the fall and spring. These conferences are a time to learn about your child's progress, growth, and development and for us to learn more about your child in his/her home setting.

We always welcome your ideas, comments, suggestions and participation. Please be supportive of the school and staff and demonstrate your support to your child. This will greatly enhance your child's comfort and adjustment to the program. It is our firm belief that good childcare is based upon mutual trust and communication between staff and parents.



CHILDCARE IS A PARTNERSHIP



Our Responsibilities:

- A safe, nurturing and educational program
- Frequent, consistent, responsive, supportive communication with parents
- Formal progress conferences
- Appropriate adult behavior as a positive role model for children
- Written information regarding school/classroom events and activities
- Dependable care
- A healthful environment with nutritious lunch and snacks
- Supervision and safety throughout the day
- Immediate contact if your child is sick or injured

Your Responsibilities

- Support of our program and staff
- Frequent, consistent, responsive communication with staff

- Time to take advantage of the opportunity for a formal, personal conference with the teacher
- Appropriate adult behavior as a positive role model for children
- Attention to notes and posters from classroom and office and response as necessary
- Your child's consistent attendance and your prompt communication with the Center about absences
- Alternate care when your child is ill
- Signing your child in and out every day
- Current day time phone numbers and emergency contacts

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Illness

Children should be kept at home when ill. The school has no facilities to care for sick children. Should your child become ill during the school day, we will call you or your emergency numbers so your child can be taken home immediately. Children sent home from the Children's Center with a temperature above normal, because of vomiting or with diarrhea **must** be kept home until the temperature has been normal for 24 hours. Vomiting and diarrhea must also be gone for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Any child with a fresh, heavy cold should be at home; in the beginning stages of a cold, children need the restfulness of a quiet place.

In order for children to get the most out of the school day, they need to be in good health. Therefore, do not bring your child to school if she/he cannot participate fully in both indoor and outdoor projects. We are not staffed to accommodate requests "to keep my child indoors and quiet". Children who are just not feeling well (parents and staff easily recognize the signs) need to be in a quiet place with special attention. (See below for a good resource for sick childcare)

If your child (K-3) does not attend elementary school because of illness, she/he may not attend the Children's Center on that day.



Medication

The staff of the Albany Children's Center does not routinely administer medication to children. The Center will administer medication to a child **ONLY** if it absolutely impossible for the parent to arrange to give the medication or in an emergency and **ONLY** with a written statement from the doctor. The following procedure **MUST** be followed.

We can administer medicine if the following steps are taken:

- Medicine must be in the original Container labeled by a pharmacist with dosage and time of administration.
- We must have a written statement from the doctor giving the name of the medication, the method, the amount and the time to be given. The RX on the container is not enough. The doctor's office can FAX us this information.
- We also need a written statement of permission from the parent giving us permission to administer the medication.

Allergies

Please make certain that the Center Office and the classroom teachers are fully informed about your child's allergies. Accurate lists of foods or substances should be kept posted in the classroom.

In cases where children have severe allergies to common foods, we may ask you to bring suitable food for your child's lunch and snack.



NUTRITION

Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are offered to the children. The menus are prepared in accordance with State Department of Education Childcare Food Program nutrition guidelines. An experienced staff prepares the food at the Center. Meals are served family style in each classroom. Children are encouraged to try new foods and to serve themselves.

The overwhelming majority of parents prefer a no or low sweet and low fat diet for their children. We serve very few sweet desserts or baked goods; fresh or canned fruit is served along with the other foods at meal times. We ask that you **NOT SEND IN SWEET TREATS** for children. Exceptions are sometimes birthdays and holidays but even then we give high points to parents who bring in celebration foods that are not sugar loaded. If you do bring a birthday cake, think very small; children eat very small portions.

In cases where there are allergies or family reasons for the child not to participate in the food program, parents should inform the Director, and together we will work out a suitable dietary plan for your child. It is most important that you notify our staff of any known or suspected food allergies that your child might have so that we can make the appropriate substitutions.

In extreme cases, when our menu is totally unsuitable for your child's needs, you will be asked to send a snack and lunch with your child. We do not have available resources to completely individualized the menu. We will, however, make every effort to provide simple substitutions.

A lunch menu is distributed monthly. You can find it in the front hall (outside the Director's office) of the main building.

All children will be offered the same meals with no physical segregation or other discrimination because of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap.



CLOTHING

CHILDREN SHOULD WEAR CLOTHES ON WHICH PAINT AND MUD LOOK ATTRACTIVE!!!

- Children should be dressed in comfortable old clothing while at school. Play and learning at the Center often involve materials such as paint, water, clay and glue which an ultimately end up on children's clothing.
- Long dresses, bare legs and feet, and wobbly footwear often cause a child unnecessary injury. Please dress your child in clothing that allows him/her to go to the toilet without assistance. Oshkosh style overalls and leotards cause children problems. Elastic waist pants are best.
- Mark all clothing with permanent markers or labels; this includes underwear, socks, sweaters, jackets, hats, shoes, and mittens. We believe that an important part of each child's learning experience is to care for his/her own clothes. We are unable to take responsibility for unmarked clothing lost at school. Please have rain boots which a child can put on and take off.
- Keep one extra set of clothing, **including underwear**, in your child's locker at all times. This will ensure that your child will be in dry clothes in case he/she wets accidentally or gets wet through water play.
- If your child wears school clothing home, wash and return it as soon as possible.
- Occasionally, your child may wear someone else's clothing or shoes home. If this occurs, please call the school immediately. A parent or teacher may be searching for that item. Be sure to return it to a teacher the following day.

THINGS TO LEAVE AT HOME

Check with the teacher in your child's classroom for their special requests concerning what your child should leave at home. In general, candy, gum, fragile toys, money, balloons, swords and toy guns should be left at home by all children. Costumes and umbrellas have caused problems in some rooms. Children should understand that anything brought to school will be shared or left in their individual lockers.

School-age children should use backpacks to keep school books, notes, etc. all together. We have no bike racks, so we cannot assure the safety of bikes ridden to school.



BIRTHDAYS

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please make arrangements with your child's teacher at least one day in advance. A VERY small piece of cake and just a bit of ice cream is more than enough. Some parents choose to have a non-sweet party. Anything different or festive can create a party. Some successful ideas:

- Different fresh fruit for the children to cut up for a fruit salad
- Materials to make individual muffin pizza
- A big watermelon
- Muffins (less sugar) rather than cupcakes
- A new game or toy for the class (ask teacher for suggestions)

- PLEASE NO BALLOONS!!!



IMPORTANT:

When you plan to have a birthday party for your child at home, remember, some young children can feel left out if not invited. Please do not use lockers to distribute invitations. The teachers can help distribute them.

ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION

SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE

How you get and retain childcare is based on State guidelines and is directly related to the status of parents in the following categories: Albany residency; employment; training or school; and the family's gross monthly income.

Recertification is based on the enrollment date of your child and done yearly. At the time eligibility and fee status are reviewed. **It is the parent's responsibility to report any changes that occur during the year between annual recertification dates.**

- **Documentation of student status DUE EVERY SEMESTER with the transcripts from the previous semester or a letter from your**

Department Chair if you are not enrolled in classes. It is the parent's responsibility to pick up the training verification form from the office.

- **Documentation of employment and income is required at the time of enrollment or at any time there is a CHANGE in income. Appropriate documentation includes:**

- **1 month's worth of current pay stubs or,**
- **Letter from employer (on employer's letterhead) indicating days and hours of employment and gross (hourly, weekly or monthly) wage**

Completion of all documentation is essential for getting and keeping childcare; it is how you "buy" childcare credits from the State of California.

REMEMBER! Eligibility is based on income and need. The State defines "need" as both parents working and /or in school full time.



SUBSIDIZED FEES

Fees for subsidized families are on a sliding scale based on a family's gross monthly income. Gross monthly income includes: salary, Veteran' pensions or other pensions or annuities, child support payments, unemployment, self-employment, Social Security and pensions or interest payments.

Fees range anywhere from no fee to \$10.50 per day for full time care (a full time day is 6 ½ hours or more) as stipulated by the State fee Schedule.

It is your responsibility to report income changes when they occur, whether it is an increase or a decrease. **REPORT ANY CHANGES IN FAMILY INCOME TO THE OFFICE STAFF.**

If you have more than one child attending the Albany Children's Center, fees are paid only for the child using the most hours. If you have work related childcare expenses for siblings, such as baby-sitter or other childcare, those expenses can be deducted from your fees at ACC. These expenses must be verified with a receipt and will be credited to your current month fee.

If you have sick child care expenses for the child enrolled at ACC, you may also deduct those expenses (verified by a receipt) from your monthly fee.

Fees are paid for **ALL SERVICE DAYS** within the one-year certification period, regardless of whether or not your child is here every day. The State requires that fees be paid. There are no reductions for absences, excused or unexcused, including vacations.



FULL COST CHILD CARE

Families whose income or need status does not fit within State Eligibility Guidelines are considered to be **Full Cost**.

Full Cost fees are adjusted yearly. Each child in the family will be charged a fee. There is no reduction for other childcare expenses, including sick childcare. There is no credit for vacation, sick days, or other time off.

When school is out, we bill you for full days assuming that your child needs full time care. Please contact the office if you do not want full time care during vacation and we will bill you at your normal rate.

WHEN AND WHERE TO PAY YOUR FEES

Fees are assessed monthly, and the office will bill you by attaching your fee notice to your child's locker or the sign-in/out book. Fees are due on the first of each month, delinquent after the second Friday of each month. Delinquent fees will be cause for termination of childcare services.

Payments can be made with cash (exact amount), personal check or money order. Any checks returned by the bank are subject to a charge of \$25.00 and will need to be paid by money order or cash ONLY.

LATE FEES

Late pick up cause staff and children much anxiety. It is best to plan on picking your child up before 6:00pm to allow for traffic delays and emergencies.

Children picked up late are charged a late fee of \$10.00 for the first 15 minutes or any portion thereof and \$1.00 for each additional minute. Late fees are due 7 days from when incurred. Termination of childcare services may occur after 4 late pickups.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information given to the Center remains confidential. Use of information maintained in family files is limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of the program. No other use of information will be made without a parent's written consent.



WITHDRAWAL OR CHANGE NOTICE

All subsidized and full cost families must notify the ACC office in writing and your child's teacher with a 30 day (1 month) notice prior to the child's withdrawal. This allows time for the child to say goodbye and also allows the office to find a replacement from our wait list. Full cost parents are charged for the two weeks without prior notice. The days your child attends will be prorated by the day, which is at hirer rate than the monthly fee.

We reserve the right to request that you withdraw your child from our program or postpone his/her enrollment to our program if:

- The experience is too stressful on your child.
- Fees are not paid.
- Your child is not signed in or out on a daily bases.
- Your child is pickup late, after 6:00pm over 4 times a year.
- Non-compliance to our health and safety policies.
- Your child's behavior is having an adverse affect on other children, staff or program.
- Discipline or behavior problems requiring excessive staff time or added staff to give a child one on one attention for more than two continuous weeks.
- Excessive absences – where the space you are taking could be given to another family who really needs care.

CENTER ATTENDANCE – ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

SIGNING IN AND OUT

Parents are required by State regulations to sign children in and out of the program each day; this includes times in and out and signatures on the sign-in/out sheet, which is in each classroom. Please write legibly and be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. The sign-in/out sheets are used in calculating usage data and to account for all children.

Teachers will only release a child to the parent, or someone authorized by the parent, through phone call, written note or as listed on the child's emergency card. Please notify the Office by phone call, or by stopping in, if your child will be picked up by someone other than the regular person. Authorized pick-up persons must be **over** 16 years of age.

EXCEPTIONS: Children enrolled in first and second grade may leave by themselves during daylight hours. In this case, the teacher will sign the child out. If a child is to leave the Center by him/herself, parents must establish, in writing, with the room teacher, and the office, a regular, daily time for the child to leave. The office cannot be expected to handle calls from parents wishing their children to be sent home.

WE DO NOT ALLOW CHILDREN TO WALK HOME ALONE IN THE DARK!!!



IMPORTANT: Preschool children must be brought into the classroom and checked out by parents, or the parent's designee.

If a child stays home from elementary school due to illness he/she may not attend the Children's Center on that day. If a child is sent home from elementary school for disciplinary reasons, he/she, also, may not attend the Children's Center.

All subsidized children must be in the Center by 9:30am unless prior arrangements have been made. The office must be notified by 10:00am if a child is going to be absent or late. Teachers and the cook need to know this information in order to plan your child's day.

LET's BEGIN AND END ON A POSITIVE NOTE!

The way a parent leaves a child at school is very important. Starting the day in a positive way will assure a good day for you, your child, and the teacher. Take time to bring your child into the classroom, and spend a few quiet minutes with your child before you leave. At pickup time, take a few minutes to look over your child's work and talk about his/her school day.



ABSENCES

Attendance procedures require verification of all absences. Please notify the office DAILY of the specific excuse for any absence (doctor's appointment, sore throat, cold, flu, etc). Also be sure to note the reason for absence on the sign-in/out sheet when your child returns to school.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Illness or quarantine of child or parent

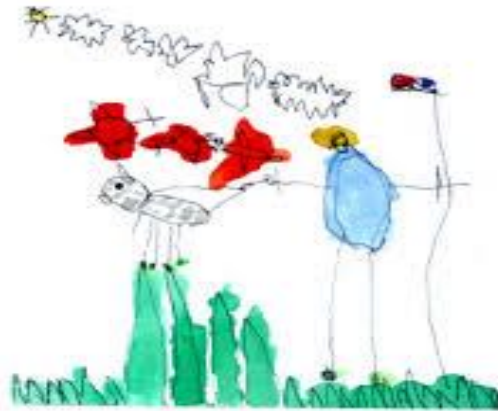
- Absence due to illness for more than 5 days may require a doctor's note for re-admittance to the Center

Family emergency

- Medical emergency or a death in close family; travel for emergency situation or other family/home crisis
- Family emergency absences for more than 5 days require a prior written request for absence and approval from the Director.
- Court required visitation with other parent or relation-Documentation must be on file in the office.

Best interest of the child (vacation)

- **Limited by State regulations to 10 days per year** includes family trips, “mental health” days, visits from out of town guests, religious and/or cultural holidays or other vacation days.



UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absence for any reason other than those listed is unexcused

- No more than 5 unexcused absences will be allowed in a one year period
- Unexcused absences result in a deduction from the Center’s state apportionment (translation: ACC loses money!)

NOTE: All parents must notify the office and the child’s classroom when a child is absent.



TERMINATION OF CHILDCARE SERVICES

Your childcare services may be terminated at the Albany Children's Center for the following reasons:

- Failure to maintain eligibility and/or need
- Failure to document eligibility and/or need
- Failure to pay childcare fees
- Four (4) late pick-up or late arrivals
- Non-toilet trained child (after reasonable attempts to accomplish)
- Absence of more than 10 days without notifying the Albany Children's Center office (abandonment of position)
- Verbal or physically aggressive behavior by parents or children towards staff or other children

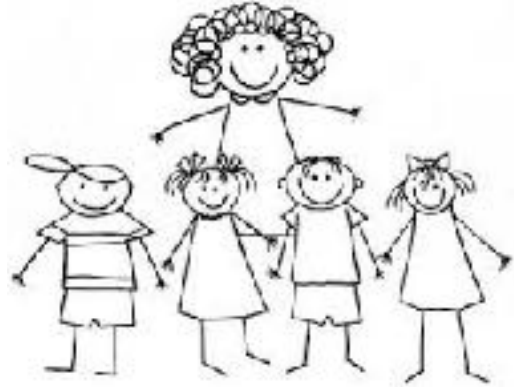
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Evacuation Plan

In case of fire or other disaster, a teacher will pull on the alarm or an alarm will go off automatically. On the signal, the children and staff will stop what they are doing and exit the school. Each classroom will be checked and completely evacuated by the director. Staff will accompany the children to large play structure at the east side of the playground until further instructions are given. Roll will be taken once everyone is outside. All staff will have an emergency back pack with them that will hold all the emergency telephone number of parents.

If we need to evacuate the area our temporary relocation sites would be either Albany High School or Albany Middle School.

We have established an emergency phone contact outside California who could be accessed if phone lines were down. Charles and Patricia Stevenson (Susan's parents) were kind enough to be our contact. Their phone number in Montana is 406-482-6356.



Fire Drill – Earthquake Procedure

We practice our fire/earthquake drill once every other month.

One staff person sets off the fire alarm that signifies the beginning of a drill. All the teacher brings both sign-in sheets with them for roll call and their emergency back pack, which holds all the families emergency telephone numbers, once outside. All children and teachers exit out the nearest door. The director in the building does a sweep of the school. Everyone moves quickly and quietly to the large structure in the east part of the yard. Roll call is taken and teachers talk with children about the emergency drill. The director times the drill and records the event in our fire drill log. The secretary will assist room 1 in the case of fire, earthquake and evacuation.

For earthquake drills no alarm is sounded. The teachers practice with the children in the classroom once a month. Teachers clap or shout out “earthquake”, than the children are instructed to, “tuck and duck” or go under a table. The children are taught to squat down and cover the back of their neck for tuck and duck. Once the drill is over, the children and teachers file outside to the large structure in the east side of the play yard and the teachers take roll. If the earthquake is very bad, we have extra water and blanket in the shed directly behind the kitchen at the back of the school.



ALBANY CHILDREN’S CENTER GRIEVANCE POLICY

As a parent at ACC you have several options to resolve any grievance, you may have by following any of the steps below relevant to your issue:

1. You can schedule a parent/teacher meeting with your child’s teachers.
2. Meet with the Director to discuss your issues, ideas, and/or grievance.
3. Put your grievance in writing and submit it to the Director.
4. Put your grievance in writing and submit it to the Superintendent.
5. Schedule a meeting with Superintendent.
6. Attend a AUSD board meeting or submit your grievance to the school board.

ACC EMPLOYEE DISCLAIMER

Please be advised that the Albany Children’s Center takes no responsibility for any outside employment of members of the staff. This means any time anyone employs or befriends an ACC Employee to perform outside childcare activities, take children home from ACC and/or to baby-sit for you when they are at your home, their home or otherwise not attending an ACC supervised childcare program, ACC and AUSD takes no responsibility.

If any accidents, employment disputes, or other problems arise during these outside activities, ACC disclaims any responsibility. The persons involved in these

outside activities should not look to ACC, its management, or to our insurance to cover such problems. Those problems are private matters between the staff members engaged in those outside activities and the persons who hired them.

There are no exceptions to this disclaimer of responsibility. It should be further noted that ACC does not endorse or recommend such outside employment of any ACC staff.



LATE PICK-UP OF CHILDREN

It is very important that each child be picked up before 6:00pm when the Center closes. The staff has their own commitments after 6:00pm and is not paid for overtime care. Being picked up late is also a traumatic experience for the child. Try to imagine how your child feels when you are late: the building is quiet, his or her teacher has gone and it is nighttime. This can be a frightening or unnerving experience for a child.

If you are going to be late, please phone the Center immediately. You and the staff can arrange for a friend, neighbor or relative to pick up your child. It is imperative that you have a number of people (in the area) that can help you out in case of an emergency or when you are late. Therefore, we urge you to become acquainted with other parents in the Center program in order that you can assist each other. **Also, please remember to keep your emergency numbers updated.**

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU PICK YOUR CHILD UP AFTER 6:00PM

- Staff will try to locate someone on your emergency list to pick up your child.
- A sign will be left on the front door telling you who picked up your child.
- If no one is available to pick up your child, staff will stay with him/her until you arrive. (you will be charged a late fee)

AFTER 4 (FOUR) LATE PICK UPS IN ONE YEAR (July 1 – June 30) YOUR CHILD WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE CHILDREN’S CENTER PROGRAM.



MESSAGES FROM YOUR CHILD

- Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all that I ask for. I am only testing you.
- Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it, it makes me feel more secure.
- Don't let me form a lot of bad habits. I have to rely on you to detect them early.
- Don't correct me in front of people if you can help it. I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.
- Don't protect me from consequences. I need to learn the painful way sometimes.
- Don't nag. If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appear deaf.
- Don't forget that I cannot explain myself as well as I should like. This is why I'm not always very accurate.
- Don't give me choices when there are none. I don't have to like it, but I will do it if I have to.
- Don't tax my honesty too much. I am easily frightened into telling lies.
- Don't be inconsistent. This completely confuses me and makes me lose faith in you.
- Don't tell me my fears are silly. There are terribly real, and you can do much to reassure me if you try to understand.
- Don't put me off when I ask questions. If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere.
- Don't ever think it is beneath you dignity to apologize to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm toward you.
- Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of understanding love, but I don't need to tell you, do I.

YOUR RIGHTS

As a Parent in the Children's Center Program

As a parent concerned with your child's well-being and education, we encourage you to bring your questions and concerns about our program to the teacher or supervisor whenever they occur. You have the right to visit the classroom at any time. We are trying to build a partnership with you; therefore, we encourage you to be in close and frequent communication with us.

YOUR RIGHTS

As Mandated by the Office of Community Care Licensing Department of Social Services

Albany Children's Center is committed to providing a safe environment in which children grow and learn. The Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division monitors and licenses our facility to ensure that the program and facility meets children's physical and emotional needs.

Any concerns that you have over these issues may be reported to:

Community Care Licensing Division
Bay Area District Office
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1102
Oakland, CA 94612-1413
(510)622-2602

YOUR RIGHTS

As Mandated by the Child Development Division-State Department of Education

You have a right to due process procedures in regards to any action taken by the program that affects your childcare services, and is communicated to you via the form entitled "Notice of Action" (CD7617). Parents' rights and hearing request procedures are detailed on the back of the "Notice of Action" form.

State regulations are available for review in the Albany Children's Center Office.



CHILD ABUSE

As professionals working in the field of childcare, the staffs at ACC are mandated by law to report any known or suspected child abuse, neglect, or child sexual assault. We may question a parent about how a child received a bruise or other injury or if the child seems particularly upset or withdrawn. If you feel uncomfortable with these questions, remember intervention for the prevention of abuse is our legal responsibility and that we ask because we care about children.





IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBER

Director

Anna Mansker

amansker@ausdk12.org

510-559-6592

Office

510-559-6590 Fax 510-559-6593

Classrooms

Room 1

Jamie Shepherd 510-559-6597

Room 8

Virginia Plott 510-559-6595

Room 10

Kari Shepherd 510-559-6594

Room 11

Partibha Chhaya 510-528-6405

