

"Balancing education and play for today's healthy child"



We promise to *never* take the fun out of childhood.

PARENT HANDBOOK

Home of "Enlightened Discipline" ©

The Safe, Kind & Clean Philosophy



www.caringconnectionchildrenscenter.com

Photographs compliments of Desiree Espinoza,
Julie Jenkins Sathe, Linda Luck and
Skoshi Blamey of Sitting Pretty Photography

Updated February 2012



MISSION STATEMENT

- ◆ At Caring Connection Children's Center we commit to provide a welcoming, family oriented environment for children and their parents.
- ◆ We promise to work in cooperation with parents treating them with respect, warmth and understanding.
- ◆ We honor our clients by being professionals who believe that children should be treated with love, concern and patience. We will make the child our 1st priority by implementing a program that follows their needs.
- ◆ We commit to offer a program that gives children the opportunity to live and practice the trials of life in a safe place.
- ◆ We will focus on "human skills" and recognize that being safe, kind and clean are the basics of our teaching.
- ◆ As teachers we will constantly seek to become better at our profession. We will work as a team with one another to continue providing an exciting curriculum and new ideas.
- ◆ We promise to never take the magic out of childhood!





THE FACILITY

Days: Monday - Friday
Hours: 7am-6pm

Caring Connection Children's Center is licensed by the State Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing. We are housed in an annex building on the property of First United Methodist Church at 2100 J Street in midtown Sacramento. This location has served Sacramento for over 35 years, originally it was Sacramento City College student training site.

In 2013 Julie Jenkins Sathe added this midtown location Caring Connection's West Sacramento campus, developing the outdoor classroom or natural playscape for extended learning. The children's play area is completely secured behind a privacy fence with restricted, coded entrance gate. Parking for parents and staff is easily available in the parking lot. The entrance to the school is fitted with a coded security entrance that enrolled parents can use with ease. Visitors may ring the bell and be greeted by our staff.

Caring Connection Children's Center is a center-based program, licensed for 30 preschoolers 2 years to 6 years.

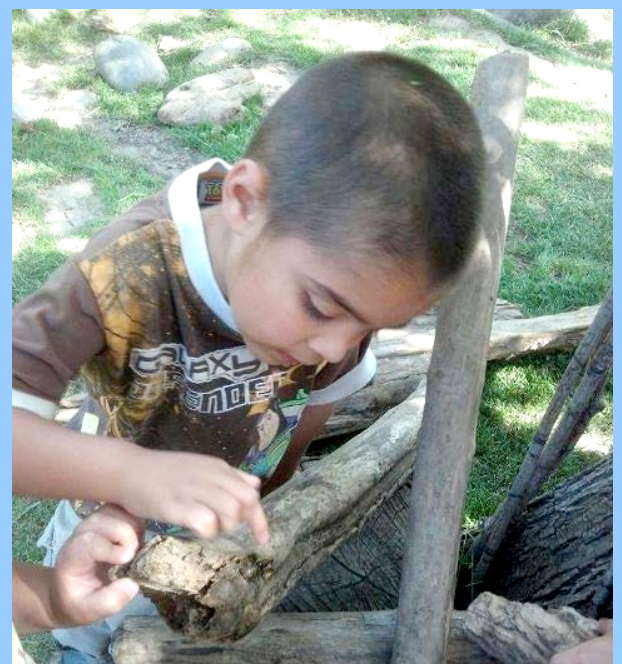
Community Care Licensing Division of Department of Social Services will regularly visit to ensure we are in compliance with licensing standards and note any recommendations. These visits will be posted on the front exit for the following 30 days for parent viewing.

Facility Number: 343647412

OUR NATURAL PLAYSCAPE



Caring Connection Children's Center has embraced the creative style of Natural Playscapes. We have a play structure and a nature play area that might remind you of a fabulous camping environment. We incorporate gardening, bird feeding, sand and mud kitchen, herb and sensory gardens, a banging post and a fabulous dry creek bed. We will continue to develop the various areas to change with seasons, the interests of children but always keeping nature in mind.



DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 Open (Table Activities)
8:00 Breakfast
8:30 Outdoor Play
9:00 Morning Greeting
9:05 Circle Time
9:30 Focus/ Outdoor Play
10:00 Snack
10:15 Social Play and Art
11:15 Outdoor Play
11:45 Music
12:00 Lunch
12:30 Nap Time
2:30 Wake Up/Toileting
3:00 Snack
3:30 Creative Discovery &
Outdoor Play
4:30 Story Break
5:00 Snack
5:30 Table Activities
6:00 Group Games....Close

Above is a listing a *sample* of our scheduled daily routine. Each class group follows a varied schedule for the shared use of classroom and outdoor space and time segments are adjusted for the developmental needs of specific class.

* **Bolded area is a.m. Preschool Program**



PROGRAM

Our program offers the best in balance with a structured schedule in a warm and friendly environment. We operate within the confines of what is developmentally appropriate for young children, while affirming progress through various learning styles; visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Our program focuses on creating a well-rounded curriculum filled with language concepts, pre-science, pre-math and healthy physical fitness. Our number one goal is always the development of strong social skills in an emotionally safe environment.

Children in our preschool program are divided into individual classes: the Pals, the Friends and the Partners. These class groups meet in small groups for Circle Time, Focus and Outdoor play and overlap with one class for Art and Social play. All children join together for Morning Greeting and for Music Time.



Social Play is our terminology for group 'choice' play. Our environment has several centers for specific types of play including: blocks, fine motor manipulatives, dress-ups, coloring table/writing center, books, puzzles, practical life activities. These centers change and evolve throughout the year.

Indoor Social Play and **Outdoor Social Play** are opportunities offered throughout the course of the day, in balance with other program times. We limit each outdoor play time to about 20-30 minutes to better align our program with young children's attention span.

In the warm weather months we will include various water activities; water play, splash pools and so forth. Children should be prepared for getting clothing wet and have a change of clothes or swim wear. We allow barefootin' during these months and use it as another opportunity for understanding our bodies and the world...like, "the cement is hot and may be slippery."



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS



Art is a mixed bag of fun. It is hands-on and creative expression. At CCCC art activities are separate from crafts. Art is an opportunity to use a variety of tools and textures, various media for open ended creation. Crafts are sometimes offered during our **Focus Time**.

Circle Time is our language and vocabulary class time. Each class will greet, read and discuss the weekly theme and whatever words and concepts the children may bring to their teacher's attention.

Focus is a program time developed so that teachers can clearly focus on a specific set of skills that are crucial.

Focus, therefore varies widely from group games, following directions, memory to writing, cooking or fine motor skills. Focus activities will feel like games and projects but will teach: listening skills, pre-math, pre-reading large motor development and more.



PHILOSOPHY

SAFE, KIND & CLEAN

Our philosophy of *behavioral education* or Enlightened Discipline is very unique and extremely successful. We teach children to use their own mind and the laws of the planet. Laws such as gravity and logic are recognized and applied to children's behavior.

Natural and logical consequences are supported by our motto of teaching "Safe, Kind and Clean". These very core values teach children the basics in human skills. These core values apply to all behavior from childhood through adulthood.

Our teachers work with children to remind them of being Safe, Kind and Clean throughout their day. When children work and play outside of these core values, CCCC staff will remind them or assist them in correcting their behavior.

For instance, *"It isn't safe to run inside, it isn't kind to call another child names, it isn't clean to leave your plate on the table."*

Enlightened Discipline employs the three core concepts of Safe, Kind and Clean with the use of Logical and Natural Consequences. We use verbal cues and conversation to teach children the best method to correct behavior. We will not use Time Outs or rewards for expected behavior. We teach children compassion through working through amends rather than teaching a child to apologize. We have a Limited Tolerance policy that shows step by step methods to communicate and work toward correction of significant behavioral issues, should they occur which include telephone conference, face to face conference.

LIMITED TOLERANCE

Our goal is to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children. Not all children are suited for group care. If we determine this is the case for your child, we will work with you to find alternate care but we reserve the right to expel your child and return unused tuition or give notice for time paid. We have a long history of working well with parents to retain children in our care if at all feasible, for continuity and their well being.



SAFE



KIND



CLEAN



MEALS AND SNACKS

Provided within each day is a hot breakfast, lunch and three snacks; prepared or jarred infant foods, milk and real juice.

We have a planned menu available to parents that offers a variety of tastes and textures, whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables with little added sugar or salt. We avoid highly processed foods.

We balance red and white meats with vegetarian options. Daily, we balance dairy and fruits with whole grains and vegetables. We serve fresh fruits in lieu of desserts, at lunch and frequently for snacks.

We offer an evening snack, just to tide-over children yet not spoil their dinner.

Breakfast is offered to any child who arrives by 8:00 and before 8:30. All children including our am preschool program are welcome to stay for lunch. Parents are also welcome to drop in and have lunch with their child, whenever it's convenient.

Meals are a wonderful time for learning and trying new things. Children will learn to pour, pass, scoop and more. They will be taught manners but in a casual atmosphere that promotes sharing and conversation in a family-style setting. At Caring Connection meals are one of our most recognized teaching opportunities.



CARING CONNECTION CHILDREN'S CENTER SAMPLE MENU

Breakfast

Snack

Lunch

Snack

Snack

**M
O
N**

Oatmeal
W/ apples &
Cinnamon, toast
Milk

Graham Crackers
& Peanut butter
& Milk

Rigatoni w/
Vegetarian red sauce,
salad, milk and fruit

Yogurt
& Vanilla
Wafers

Bread
Sticks

**T
U
E**

Mixed egg-potato
Scramble
Fruit and milk

Herbs in Cottage
Cheese & carrot
sticks

Stir Fry Chicken w/
Veggies over rice
Milk and Fruit

Melon slices &
Milk

Pretzels

**W
E
D**

Pancakes and
Powdered sugar,
Juice

Apple chunks
& cheese
Squares

Tortilla Casserole
Green Beans
Fruit, Milk

Fig Newton's
Milk

Cottage
Cheese
Cups

**T
H
U**

Quesadillas,
Fruit Juice

Vanilla Wafers
and Milk

Chicken Pasta with
Pesto, French bread,
Sliced cucumbers,
Milk and Fruit

Celery &
Cream
Cheese

Trail
Mix

**F
R
I**

Hot Applesauce
English Muffins
Milk

Cheese-It Crackers
Apples & Milk

Sandwich Day!
PBJ and Egg Salad
Chips, fruit, milk

Saltines
& Tuna
Salad & juice

Fresh
Fruit





INFANTS AND TODDLERS: West Sac

Our infant and toddler program is available only at our West Sacramento location.

No matter where your toddler has been, we value Infancy as a crucial time for parents and their young children. Our West Sacramento infant program balances nurturing with expanding independence. Our teachers work in a 1:4 ratio. We are licensed for 11 infants and toddlers, birth to age 24 months. Infant programs will vary depending upon each child's development and interests but include opportunities for language, sensory exploration and movement while assuring personal care.

Our teachers use vocal teaching in everything they do, diapering, prepping bottles, etc. Babies acquire language by listening, long before speech. We know opportunities for their vocabulary rely on us. Language also creates a stable emotional connection with infants. Our toddlers respond very well to our basic philosophy of Safe, Kind and Clean as they learn the limits of their own bodies and begin to develop awareness of others. Daily activities range from story telling to music, dancing with scarves, finger-painting with pudding....to fine motor activities and so much more!

Infants nap in cribs until they become mobile. At that time they will transition to mats for complete freedom. We do not prevent children from moving at Caring Connection. This translates to 'floor time'; helping babies adjust from being held to learning independence and mobility that comes from experience and gradually becoming independent. We encourage children to feed themselves and use "gravity" cups as soon as they are ready. Bottles are used only on personal space and never while mobile or sleeping. We discourage the use of pacifiers and replace them with comfort or activity, whichever is needed more.

If you are interested in our infant program, in West Sacramento location directly at 916 371-3301.



INDEPENDENT TOILETING

Toilet training or Independent Toileting? We believe strongly in allowing children to develop this skill *at their own pace*. We recognize that all the muscles that are required to “let go” and “hold on” to urine and BMs do not always develop simultaneously. We also recognize that maturity and judgment are required for a child to determine how long it will take to make it to the bathroom.

We will provide diapers for children who are not yet toileting (not Pull-ups) and encourage a transition to underwear when a child is ready to begin this practice toileting in earnest.

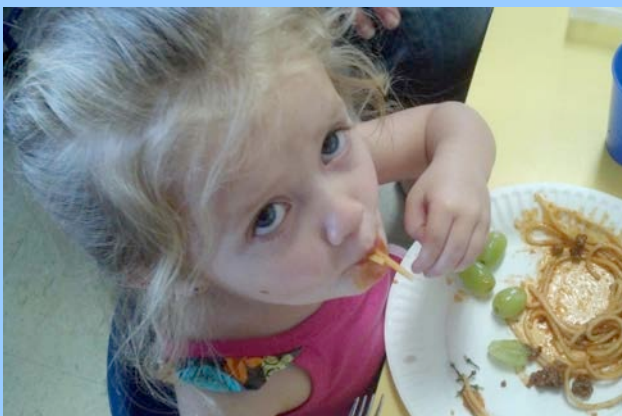
Parents should dress their toileting child in easy-to-operate clothes. Avoid one piece shirts, overalls, zippers or snaps at the crotch. Instead please select skirts, elastic waist band shorts or pants. And most of all bring several clothing changes to school. We encourage the use of regular underwear or training underpants so that children can feel the wet or stickiness on their body. These are the signs that help them learn.

We are firm believers that toileting independently is a 24 hour success....or it just isn't successful. Of course accidents will happen and we create a safe environment for trying.



We do not accommodate take half-measures. Children will not be in underpants while awake, and then changed into a diaper for naptime. This sends mixed messages to children and encourages them to turn off their senses while sleeping. We want the child to wake up and go to the bathroom during nap as well as at night time at home. We will encourage children to use the toilet when they show interest and are developmentally ready. Parent's commitment at home to toileting their child is crucial.

Children will be actively involved in changing wet/soiled clothes, wiping their own bodies and cleaning any area where they have had an accident. This is aligned with our philosophy of teaching logical consequences.



PARENT EVENTS

Each year we have a number of holiday or seasonal events for parents and extended family members. These events may include: Our “Winter Holiday Christmas” Program, Mother’s Day Tea, Halloween Party, Thanksgiving Feast and Summer Luau and regular Family Nights and work parties.

We recognize and honor the diversity of families. We welcome your unique family into ours!

These events will be varied in their format and the level of participation requested. We may occasionally have preschool work parties to spruce up the school property and help keep tuition costs affordable.

Each year, the complex community of Caring Connection is considered when planning. We look forward to whatever participation level suits you and your family.



FIELD TRIPS and VISITORS



A few times each year, we may plan field trips with our preschool children. We encourage and need parent involvement as drivers and/or chaperones. These excursions may include outings such as: the pumpkin patch, the railroad museum, a local grocery store, community library, postal office or the zoo.

In addition to going out of the school to expand our learning and enjoyment into the real world, we will also invite guests to come into our school. Parents are welcome to join us for these visitors. We make every attempt to post a message so that they can talk to their child about the day's event. We also will take and display photos from these special events.

Emergency procedures and proper ratios will be maintained at all times during off site events. Parents will be required to sign permission slips which will include medical and emergency contacts. A low 1:6 ratio will be maintained for field trips including parents and a qualified teacher will be in each vehicle.



COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

We will communicate in writing in as many ways as we can. After all, communication is the key. We may leave notes on the front door, the sign in binder and some will be personalized. Some specific forms to look for are:



Sign-In Sheets: Parents must sign their child in and out every day, using a full signature. Please ask if you need help locating the sign in area. Children's names will be listed on the sign in sheet in alphabetical order. When you first enroll, please handwrite your child's name in until we update our master copy.

Tuition: Tuition is due on the 1st day of the week, typically Monday in advance for weekly payments. Monthly or other arrangements can be made to best meet your family's needs. You may make your check or money order payable to: Caring Connection and hand deliver to a teacher or place in the tuition mailbox located on the sign out counter. Cash is accepted. Ask for receipt.

Emergency Sheets: Upon enrollment and continually thereafter parents are obliged to keep this sheet up to date. This is how we communicate in case of an emergency. In case of emergency we will contact the 1st parent listed on this sheet unless 9-1-1 is required, then the parent will be notified, secondly. Please make sure 2 alternate adults are listed in case neither parent is available. We will have emergency sheet updates to make sure this information is up to date.

Referral Slips: these little slips document your child's symptoms of illness while at school, and clearly state what steps we require for their return to school.

Outside Referrals for special needs and resources.

Late Penalty Form: Caring Connection will charge a late fee for any child who is not picked up by 6:00. This fee is very high at \$2.00 for every minute (per child). It is due at the time of pick up. We will accept checks. We charge this fee to discourage any late pick ups.

Band-Aid Bulletin: We use this form to notify parents of any injury that is minor and does not require medical attention, but that we discern parents should be made aware of.

Tuition: Our tuition may change from year to year. We make every attempt to keep our tuition affordable. Tuition notice will be given 30 days in advance of changes.

Bulletin Boards: Throughout the center you will see bulletin boards to display children's art, photos and announcing upcoming events. Give yourself and your child of the gift of time to read and browse these.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

JAN NY's Day, MLK Day

FEB President's Day

MAR Staff In-Service Day
(Actual date/month will vary)

APRIL Caesar Chavez Day

MAY Memorial Day

JUNE

JULY Independence Day

AUG Staff In-Service Day
(Date varies from Aug-Oct)

SEPT Labor Day

OCT or Staff Conference

NOV Veteran's, Thanksgiving
(Thursday and Friday)

DEC Christmas Eve/Day,
New Year's Eve

From time-to-time you may see a sign up sheet for days when we anticipate particularly low attendance. On holidays that we do not observe or days before or after a scheduled holiday, we may ask that you sign up your child for care on those days. This allows us to staff enough teachers, yet offer days off to those teachers who work





STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Our teachers must first understand and agree to operate within the philosophy of our program. We encourage and support new individuals who are just entering the field as they acquire the college units and experience to become fully qualified. Our staff qualifications will range from entry level to pursuing their degrees in Early Childhood Education.

All staff are cleared through FBI fingerprints, background checks and physical fitness. In addition at least one person at all times on duty will have current CPR and First Aide certification; usually all of our staff have it!

Twice, annually we provide two full day in-service trainings for our teachers. Sometimes we will have a full day workshop, other times we will attend outside conferences or tour local schools to collaborate with our colleagues. We strive to always improve our standards and our strengths as we evolve as individuals and as a preschool.



WELLNESS

We are a group care environment. The more people that a child is in contact with, the greater the likelihood of contagious illness. Most children build resistance to illnesses and have few problems. To limit sick children's contact with other children in care, (and unlike most adult's workplace rules), we require a **24 hour wellness policy**. Our goal is well children and staff.

24 hours *after the last symptom* is required to ensure that your child is no longer ill. Sometimes when a child begins to feel better, their symptoms decrease. But they have not fully recovered from their illness.

What determines illness? We determine that illness is obvious with one or more of the following symptoms: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, cold symptoms (green mucous, heavy coughing) or lethargy. We will also look for signs of pink-eye, ear or toothaches, head lice and so forth. Children with unidentified rashes will be removed from care.

If your child has an unusual series of symptoms, we may ask for a physician's note to clarify.



Although we are not physicians, we have had a wealth of experience with the symptoms of childhood illness. We want all of our children to be well.

Sometimes parents can seek medical advice and treatment and return within the 24 hours, special circumstances. This always must be cleared by the Director. Just give us a call.

Medications will only be given according to label instructions and with prescription in your child's name. Over-the-counter medications are rarely given, as they mask symptoms.

Please communicate with us if your child has symptoms. This way we can ensure that we are all equally informed. We may be able to provide assistance and support to you. Remember, we are family. Call the center if your child is ill or absent, so we don't worry.



CLOTHING & WHAT TO BRING

All children should have at least one change of clothes in their cubby at all times. Include: socks, shoes, underwear. Children who are learning to toilet independently should have several changes. Our staff will assist your child in placing wet clothes in a plastic bag and store them in their cubby. Take clothes home daily for laundering.

Children should not bring: toys, food, candy or gum, over the counter medications, cough drops or sore throat lozenges.

In addition, please remove all jewelry from children. If you have a child with pierced ears, make sure they are the smallest studs possible.

In addition, we ask that children be dressed appropriately for preschool. Play clothes!! Safe shoes that fit are a vital. If you have an after school event, please come prepared with a change of clothes.

Be prepared that ponytail holders, barrettes and socks are items that go to the *great beyond* at preschool.

We appreciate your extra clothes when cleaning out your closets. Ask what we need. Then in case of a mishap, children have a back up supply.





THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Jenkins Sathe is the Executive Director of Caring Connection Children's Center. Julie has been an Early Childhood Educator since 1979. Julie has worked as a teacher, director and eventually was granted the prestigious contract for the McClatchy Newspapers' employer-sponsored facility in Sacramento in the late 1980's and mid 90's. In 1996, with the support of her husband David, Julie opened a new center in the growing West Sacramento community. Julie earned her National Administrator's Credential in 1996 and continues expanding her education and experience.

Julie is a published author, accomplished public speaker and retreat leader. Julie has broadened her expertise of children to include school age and teens. Julie has begun expanding her work and has been featured on local radio and television, a speaker and trainer for early childhood programs throughout northern and southern California and keynote speaker in Europe. Julie is a private and group parenting coach.

Julie's book details our successful philosophy: "Enlightened Discipline"

www.EnlightenedDiscipline.com

Julie also has a workbook for teens,
"TEENS! CHANGE IS YOUR CHOICE
Solutions From Within"

www.TeensChangelsYourChoice.com



ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Now that you are ready to enroll, read on for our admission policies. Caring Connection Children's Center is granted on a first-come, first-served basis; however siblings of currently enrolled children and children of staff members may have priority. Enrollment is limited to licensed capacity and the space in class groups, based on development. Students must be at least 2 years old on their first day of school, but they do *not* have to be potty-trained. Admission forms can be obtained on our website for your review, but do not guarantee a child's enrollment. www.CaringConnectionChildrensCenter.com

To apply for admission of your child you must:

- Schedule an appointment with the school Director.
- Tour the school with your child.
- Read and sign enrollment agreement for admission and read our parent handbook.
- Be prepared to meet all California State health requirements.
- Pay a non-refundable enrollment fee.

By enrolling children at Caring Connection Children's Center, families permit, authorize and recognize that children will be taught according to principles of Enlightened Discipline, using three core principles of: safe, kind and clean as described in the Center's documentation and website. Parents agree to honor school policies and to assist and support the staff in implementing and enforcing the same. *Note: corporal punishment is against the law. There will be no violation of personal rights of a child; furthermore Caring Connection does not use rewards or time outs as discipline techniques.*

Before the first day of enrollment, Caring Connection our administrative staff will:

- Determine that Caring Connection Children's Center's is an appropriate environment for the specific needs of your child and your family.
- We will meet with the parent or parent/guardian in one or more personal interviews, explaining our program and understanding the parent's needs and desires and tour the facility.
- By meeting with parent and child, this evaluation will allow us to understand the state of the child's health and physical and emotional development, and to assess whether our environment can meet your child's needs.
- We will provide you with information about the center, answer any questions that have arisen and go over in detail the center's admission policies and procedures, activities, services, regulations, hours and days of operation, fees, procedures to be followed should the child become ill or injured while at the center, and procedures for conducting inspections for illness.
- A file will be created which will include a signed enrollment agreement, a parent's report and history, emergency contact information including doctor, dentist and insurance information and alternate adults who may be permitted to remove your child from our care.
- In addition, a physical exam and signed form and current immunization record will be required within 30 days of enrollment. Other required forms: parent's rights, children's rights and licensing right to enter and inspect form will be explained and signed by both parties.

We will explain our licensing agency's right to enter and inspect the center in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 1596.857 and we will explain a parent's right to enter and inspect the facility without advance notice during the normal operating hours of the facility. Parents are to be respectful of the children's routines and programmed activities. No child day care facility shall discriminate or retaliate against any child or parent or guardian on the basis or for the reason that the parent or guardian has exercised his or her right under this section to inspect the facility or has lodged a complaint with the department against a facility. It should be understood that the director or person who is in charge of a Caring Connection may deny access to an adult whose behavior presents a risk to children present in the facility and may deny access to non-custodial parents or guardians if so requested by the responsible parent or legal guardian.