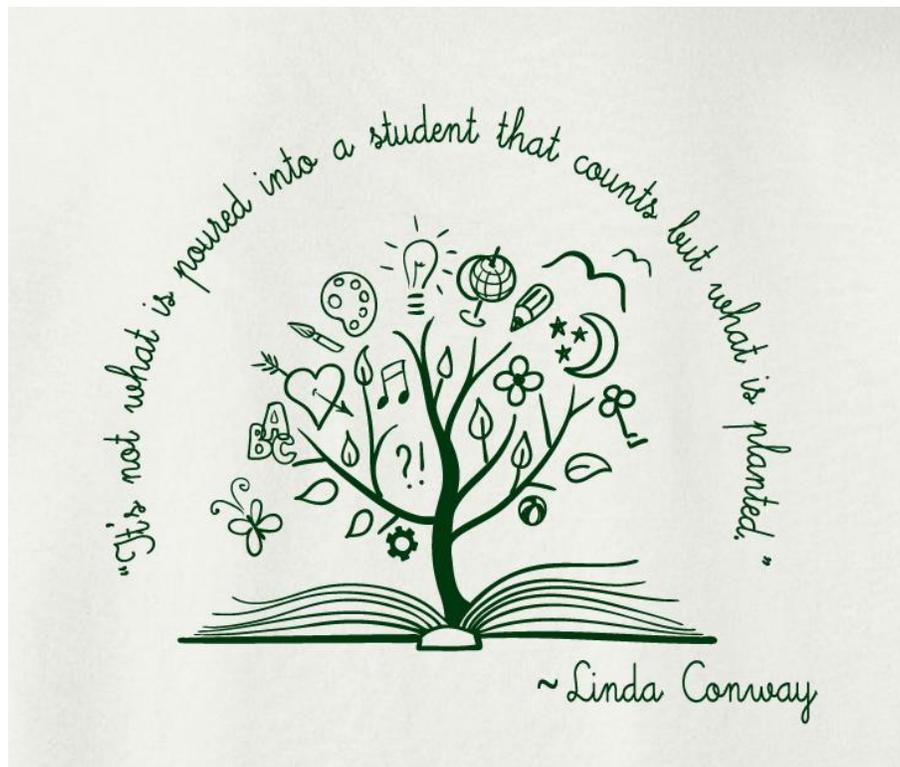




# Parent Handbook

## 2016-2017



4605 N. La Cholla Boulevard  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
520.696.8909

**DIRECTOR  
EMILY MESCHTER EARLY LEARNING CENTER  
& EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES**

Dr. Susan Shinn



**FLOWING WELLS GOVERNING BOARD**

Jeretta Douglas President  
Gerald Long, Clerk  
James Love, Member  
Kevin Daily, Member  
Thomas Jacobs, Member



**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. David Baker, Superintendent  
Dr. Kevin Stoltzfus, Associate Superintendent  
Dr. René Ground, Assistant Superintendent  
Stacy Trueblood, Chief Financial Officer

**Emily Meschter Early Learning Center Phone Numbers**

520-696-8909 - Front Office & Attendance  
520-696-8910 - School Nurse & Attendance

## STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to the education of the whole child by providing learning activities that are developmentally appropriate in a stimulating, challenging and creative environment. During the first few years of a child's life the brain is growing and developing at an amazing rate. Exposure to a variety of quality experiences is crucial to early childhood development.

Our center offers a "hands-on" approach to learning which is designed to foster creativity and expanded self-expression...as a child's work is play! Emily Meschter Early Learning Center teachers show their respect for children by encouraging them to think for themselves, make decisions, and resolve their problems independently, as well as express their own ideas and feelings.

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center strongly believes that families are vital to a child's development. Families are encouraged to participate in various preschool activities including celebrations, caregiver-child evening events and volunteering in/out of the classroom. Our program is designed to promote a positive attitude toward self and school.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Each child progresses at a unique rate, has an individual learning style and possesses diverse abilities.
- Young children learn through active exploration of their environment where there is a balance between self-discovery and adult initiated/selected activities.
- A child's learning is based on prior knowledge and experiences that are constructed through play, social interactions with other children, and consistent experiences guided by nurturing adults.
- Optimal learning occurs in environments where the adult is respectful of the child, the family, the language, the culture, and the community.
- A child's progress is best understood through observable behavioral change using ongoing observation, anecdotal recordkeeping, and collection of the child's work.
- Children develop a sense of empowerment by having many opportunities to make choices within their daily routines.
- Children learn best when their health and nutritional needs are met.
- Families are the primary caregivers and educators of young children.
- Young children are capable and competent regardless of their backgrounds, their experiences and their varying abilities.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center has three different programs at its site.

**The Preschool Income-Based program (PIP)** is for children who reside in the Flowing Wells School District. The children must be three to five years old, and meet income eligibility requirements. One of the programs is a three hours a day, four days a week program, which provides transportation. The second PIP classroom is for four year olds and is six hours per day. This program does not provide transportation. This program is funded through the ADE Preschool Development Grant and First Things First Grant.

**LINKS (Learning, Intervention and Kid Supports)** is a program for children three to five years old who have been assessed with a special education need. The children attend school three hours a day, four days a week and the program is funded through IDEA.

**STEP (Staff Tuition and Enrichment Program)** is for children who have a relative that works in the Flowing Wells School District. The STEP program is five days a week program.

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Program believes in including children with special needs. Whenever appropriate, students with differing abilities are integrated with children of their own age. Staff encourages and support families to make decisions about the services that their child may need, and they encourage families to advocate obtaining needed services. Diversity is valued and encouraged.

During the preschool day, the children participate in a rich variety of activities where they experience many opportunities for learning. Each day the children participate in circle time, small group activities, independent activity time, movement activities, and snack. The children are given opportunities to make choices about activities. Learning experiences are provided in the following areas:

This is an accredited program through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and you can expect to see:

- Planned learning activities and materials appropriate to children's age and sensitive to their individual characteristics,
- Frequent, positive, and warm interactions among adults and children,
- A healthy and safe environment for children and staff,
- Enough adults to respond to individual children,
- Regular communication with parents,
- Nutritious snacks and meals,
- A nurturing environment that supports each child's growth.

## DAILY SCHEDULES

The following are some of the activities that may occur throughout your preschooler's day.

### Free Exploration

Providing children with opportunities to play is an event that supports all areas of development. Research has shown that as children play they exercise their skills and this is how they learn best. In play-based classrooms, children "learn how to learn" through their environment.

### Circle Time

Circle time is a planned time during the children's daily schedule. This is a time when children come together with each other and an adult. It encourages community, communication and develops a variety of skills.

### Fine Motor

Fine motor activities involve using the small muscles in a child's fingers. These activities may include writing, beading or using pincer fingers to grasp an object.

### Gross Motor

Gross motor activities involve the large muscles in your child's body. These activities may include running, jumping or crawling.

### Snack

This is a time to learn about healthy foods, food textures and table manners. This time is also used to develop language skills, fine motor skills, and appropriate social interactions.

### Clean Up

Clean up entails children learning how to pick up their toys, problem solve and learn cooperation.

### Movement and Music

Most children love this part of the day. Rhythm and rhyme are learned through the use of finger plays, musical games and songs with motions.

### Story

Story time gives children a chance to relax and develop language and listening skills.



## **ASSESSMENT/PROGRESS MONITORING**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to promoting and ensuring school readiness. We work closely with the Arizona Department of Education Early Childhood Division, Arizona Department of Health Services, First Things First, and are accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Childhood. We believe that all progress monitoring needs to recognize all children as individuals with their own unique strengths and challenges. Families and teachers need to know how children are progressing, and if there are any difficulties that they may encounter with learning. This information will support good decisions, and develop programming that facilitates developmentally appropriate skills for each child. Our curriculum goals and objectives align with our assessment of child progress and develop programming to facilitate developmentally appropriate skills for each child. If there any concerns arise about the child's development, the family will be notified and a Comprehensive Developmental Assessment will be implemented.

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center believes that all progress monitoring needs to recognize children as individuals with their own unique strengths and challenges. By understanding this, we have determined that Teaching Strategies GOLD is an assessment tool that will fulfill this belief. Three times per year, (September, February, and May); you will receive an update of your child's progress. Our center will also continue to use a developmental checklist to determine progress of readiness skills at the beginning and the end of the school year.

### **Guidelines for Assessment Procedures and Purpose**

#### Purposes of Assessment

- Program Planning
- Progress Monitoring
- Program Evaluation
- Identifying a child's interest and needs.
- Developmental Screening
- Eligibility Determination for Special Education Services
- Identifying a child's strengths/weakness

Formative assessment activities will be used to inform individualized instruction and program improvement and will include:

- Observations and anecdotal notes;
- Collecting work samples; and
- Gathering family input.

## CHILD SCREENINGS

Early identification of children with special needs ensures that young children receive the services and supports necessary to maximize their opportunities for healthy development and learning. School districts are required by statute to "...identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their geographic boundaries who are in need of special education and related services" (§300.111 Child Find). Screening activities are a first step in the identification process. Therefore it is imperative that a screening procedure be in place to ensure children are identified and receive the supports they need.

All children participating will receive a *sensory (hearing and vision) screening* within the first 45 calendar days of the first day of attendance in the program. Hearing and vision screening performed on children must be conducted by those who have been trained to administer screening instruments. If no such person is available at the program, outside resources must be contracted with to conduct these screenings.

The developmental screening should:

- Take place in the context of the children's daily activities and routines
- Incorporate parental input
- Follow up referrals and activities that are initiated to secure appropriate services will be documented and tracked to ensure that families receive the information and/or services necessary. Community partners will work in partnership with the LEA to ensure coordinated and seamless efforts are maintained.

If you do not wish for your child to be screened for vision and hearing, please call the health office at 696-8910.

## HOME VISITATION/CONFERENCES

Our center believes that having conversations with parents is an important way to support a young child's growth and development. **Two** times during the school year, families will have the opportunity to visit with their teacher to discuss their child's development. These visits can take place at school or in the home. Of course, all families are encouraged to contact their child's teacher anytime during the year.



## **DRESS CODE**

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is suitable for an active and “messy” activity. Our staff is dedicated to providing your child with positive experiences throughout his/her preschool day. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your child’s teacher or the program director.

## **MESSY, MESSY, MESSY**

Preschoolers learn by playing and exploring, therefore plan on sending your child to school wearing clothes that can get dirty without you getting upset about it! We play in the water table, finger paint, dig in muddy sand, and play in “obleck” (cornstarch & water). We have a LIMITED supply of clothing for emergency use, such as “accidents” or torn seams. If your child should come home wearing an item provided by his/her teacher, please wash and return them to school. Thanks!

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Please let us know if your child has special concerns that we may not know about, such as strong likes or dislikes, fears, allergies etc. It is best to put these things in writing so that we can easily refer to them. Also, it is important for us to know of family changes or any other significant changes that occur. These things greatly affect a preschooler’s behavior and knowing about them helps us to better care for your child’s needs. This information can be told to us in confidence.

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD AT HOME**

Talk about school as a pleasant and happy experience.

Reassure your child by telling him/her what he/she will be doing and what it will be like to be at school.

Help your child learn his/her teachers’ names and refer to them by name, instead of “your teacher.”

Display your child’s work and creations in your home.

Encourage the use of common manners: i.e., please, thank you, I’m sorry, excuse me.

Encourage your child to share his/her preschool experiences, but do not be alarmed if your child cannot answer, “tell me about your day?” immediately following school. You can use the Daily Report your child brings home to encourage discussion about his/her day at school.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Parents must complete a registration packet prior to their child's attendance in preschool. The Emily Meschter Early Learning Program (696-8909) may be contacted for general information or to obtain a packet. In addition to the packet, parents will need to provide:

- The original or certified copy of their child's birth certificate.
- Proof of residency.
- Proof of their child's immunizations.
- Verification of income for some of our programs.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Parents may withdraw their child (ren) from the preschool program at any time but are encouraged to notify the staff when the child will be leaving.

**Children who are absent from their class for ten (10) consecutive days will be dropped from the program.** Every attempt will be made to contact parents before such action is taken.

## FEE FOR SERVICE

The Preschool Income-based Program is four days a week. The student must reside in Flowing Wells School District and meet the income eligibility guidelines.

The STEP program has a fee of eighteen dollars per day for a full day, five days a week program. In order to enroll, a student must have a family member who is employed in the school district.

The Refund policy is as follows: There are NO refunds. We will only provide a refund if the family has paid the five dollar registration fee and then chooses to withdraw from the program before it begins.

## SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

Parents must sign a form at school each day indicating what time their child arrives to and departs from the center. Students who ride the bus will be signed in/out by preschool staff.



## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Positive discipline encourages good behavior and helps build a child's self esteem. This includes statements noticing good/desired behavior, as well as encouraging and praising a child for his/her work and effort. If a behavior continues, the teaching staff will assess the *function* of the child's behavior.

Discipline is consistent among the staff and is considerate of the child's age, his/her stage of development, and the immediate situation. After warnings, common methods for dealing with problems include:

- The child is redirected to something more appropriate.
- The problem and alternative solutions are discussed with the child and then he/she is "guided" through an appropriate behavior.
- If a child needs time to settle down and regain control before redirection or discussion can take place, he/she is provided a safe environment to gain control.
- For children with persistent, serious, challenging behavior, teachers, families, and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success in the preschool environment.



## **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is available for all students who live within the Flowing Wells district boundaries. Students utilizing district transportation must fill out the appropriate paperwork at the time of registration. Once service begins, each student is to be met on time by an adult as the bus arrives and departs. The children are escorted from the bus by authorized school staff members. Transportation is only provided within district boundaries. The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center has the right to discontinue transportation services if procedures are not adhered to.

## **CHILD ACCESS**

Schools are responsible for ensuring the safety of all children attending that school. For their own protection, children will only be released to their legal guardians or to another person with the guardian's written permission. Names of people permitted to pick up a child must be listed on the child's registration form.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

If your child requires special accommodations, please contact the Program Director.

## **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

In compliance with state regulations, The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center maintains current liability insurance. Evidence of this insurance policy is on file in the director's office.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center operates Monday through Friday from 7:15 am to 4:15 pm. Most of our students attend a half day session, four days a week, depending on their age and/or special education needs. The morning session is from 8:30 am to 11:30 am and the afternoon session is from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm. EMELC also has a full day program for four-year-old students. The session is from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

The preschool will observe all school holidays in accordance with the school district calendar which is in this handbook and posted on the district website. During the school year, there are also several early release days, based on the elementary school calendar.

## **CLASSROOM VISITATION**

Parents are always a welcome addition to the classroom. On days when parents are coming to observe or participate, we ask that the parents sign in at the classroom first. The classroom teacher will be present during all parent visitations.

Please keep in mind that the staff will be actively involved with the children and their activities, which may make it difficult to carry on lengthy conversations with the visitors. If necessary, the staff would be happy to talk and answer questions when the class time is over.

Parents who are interested in volunteering to work in the classroom on a regular basis must be fingerprinted; please contact your child's teacher for further information.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

To protect the privacy of children and their families, we follow strict confidentiality laws. We do not release the names, ages, disabilities, or other personal information without written permission. Parents are expected to adhere to this policy. Please respect the privacy of the other families by only discussing and sharing information about your own child.

## **PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center asks for parent participation on an advisory committee which meets several times each year for approximately one hour per meeting. The role for the advisory committee is to support the program in maintaining high quality standards. This is a critical role and parent participation is very important.

The committee reviews and recommends changes in philosophy of the program. It keeps the teaching staff aware of community resources and helps to promote the program. The committee is involved in reviewing parent evaluations and making recommendations based on the evaluations. If you are interested in joining the advisory committee, please contact Susan Shinn at 696-8909 or send a note in your child's book bag.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

- Your child will need a backpack to carry things back and forth to school each day. Please make sure that the backpack is big enough for your child's folder but not too big for your child to carry on his/her back. Also choose a backpack that your child can open and close by him/herself. Zippers are the easiest for children to manipulate independently. It is also very important for you to put your child's name on the backpack.
- Please keep a change of your child's clothes for us to keep at school in case of an accident.
- If your child is wearing diapers or pull-ups please make sure to send extras in your child's backpack each day. We also need for you to send in a box of wipes so that we can leave it in our changing room area.

## **PARENT LENDING LIBRARY**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center has a small library of books available for parents to check out for their child (ren). The collection consists of both Spanish and English books. Please stop by and check out a book today!

## **ATTENDANCE**

Your child's attendance is very important and we ask that your child attend school regularly and arrive and be picked up on time. When your child is unable to attend school, please call the preschool at 696-8909 and report the absence. After 5 days of continued absence, your child will no longer be enrolled from school.

Please call the Transportation office at 696-8870 if your child will not need bus service due to absence.

## ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, AND ILLNESS

Although the program makes every effort to ensure the safety of your child, from time to time minor accidents and illness may occur. In the event of a minor injury, your child will be sent to the nurse's office for treatment and the injury will be logged into a master file.

In case of a serious injury or illness, we will make every effort to contact you for instructions. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact the person you have indicated on the emergency data card to make necessary medical emergency decisions. Please keep your emergency data updated on all enrollment forms.

Your signed emergency medical release will also assist us in getting prompt medical assistance. A program employee will stay with your child until your arrival.

In the interest of maintaining a healthy school environment, please keep your child at home if he/she is ill. The following symptoms indicate the need to be kept out of school: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, elevated temperature, chills, red or inflamed eyes, cold symptoms, skin rash, headaches and other pains. Your child is to be free of fever for twenty-four (24) hours, without medication, before returning to school.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, he/she will be sent to the nurse's office and remain there until a parent or authorized adult arrives for pick-up. It is important that we have updated emergency contact information on file.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASE

It is imperative that you notify us if your child contracts a contagious disease (as defined by the Pima County Health Department). We will notify all preschool parents, in writing, of the possible exposure to a contagious disease.

## MEDICATION

The school nurse is not allowed to dispense any medication without your doctor's directions and parent approval. Student medication must be stored in the nurse's office and students needing medication must report to the nurse. Medication must be in the prescription bottle, and must include the child's name, etc. An authorization form must be completed by the parent prior to dispensation of medication.



## **FIELD TRIPS**

In the event of a scheduled field trip, notices and permission slips will be sent home in advance. The daily roster, signed permission slips, and emergency cards are taken on all field trips. A plan indicating the time, route, destination, expected time of return, and a telephone number will be left at the main office. Each child must have an identification tag with his/her name, the school, and telephone number.

Students will always be accompanied and supervised by program staff members.

## **WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSURES:**

If Flowing Wells School District is closed due to emergency and/or weather conditions, the preschool will also be closed.

## **REGULATING AGENCY**

The Arizona Department of Health Services, Office of Child Care Licensure regulates this facility. Information from this agency may be obtained by writing to:

Arizona Department of Health Services  
Office of Child Care Licensure  
400 West Congress, Suite 100  
Tucson, Arizona 85701  
or by calling: (520) 628-6540.

## **REFERRALS TO CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

Child abuse and neglect are against the law. We are **REQUIRED** by state law to report any and all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect.

## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICE**

Department of Health Services licensure reports are kept on file and available upon request.

## **TELEPHONE AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE**

In the event that a parent requests the release of his/her child to a designated individual via telephone, the following procedure will be used:

- Parent will identify him/herself by name and unique child identification.
- Parent will inform the designated individual that a picture identification will be required prior to student release.
- Program staff will verify identification of designated individual.
- Designated individual will be listed on the child's registration form.

## **Transitions from Home to School**

EMELC is committed to developmentally appropriate practice. Children are especially susceptible to changes in routine, new environments and to separation from their parents or guardians. It is particularly difficult for children to be placed into the care of someone with whom they are not familiar.

Entering a new situation (e.g., a new classroom and a new teacher) can be a stressful time and some points of transition can be especially hard due to a variety of circumstances. Rapid change can lead to insecurity and stress. Children under stress may become withdrawn and unresponsive or demonstrate inappropriate behavior. Both extremes can inhibit learning. It is therefore the aim of this policy to:

- Promote the smooth transition of children at the start of each new setting. Prevent and alleviate stress
- Promote continuity of teaching and learning.
- 

Some things that you can do to support your child during this time of transition would be to:

- Have your child visit the classroom and teacher before his/her first day.
- Come visit the school, play on the playground to familiarize your child with his/her new setting.
- Read a story about "going to school".
- Talk with your child about what school will be like for them, the friends that they will make, and the activities that they will be engaged in.

## **Transitions within the Program**

We use careful planning and considerations when planning transitions within the school environment. When children have settled into the familiarity of the routine, children will be more cooperative through each transition of the day. Some transitions in the classroom include:

- Clean-up
- Coming to circle

- Leaving circle
- Washing hands/meals
- Going outside
- Coming inside
- Going from here to there
- Going to relaxing and resting
- Waking up from rest

Some ways to make transitions in the classrooms more successful:

- Engage child in a choice activity.
- Sing a song.
- Use a puppet.
- Have a contest

Sometimes students transition to a new classroom to support inclusive practices. If this happens, your child will initially be introduced to the new classroom, along with a familiar teaching staff. They will increase their time in the “new” classroom, until the student is familiar with the new staff, students, and schedule.

## **Transitions Exiting from the Program**

Children who exit from the Emily Meschter Early Learning Center are supported by their families and the staff. As part of ensuring effective collaborations with the community and providing children and families with a seamless transition.

- Parents who have given a notice of their child being withdrawn from the program will be able to pick up all of their children’s work samples on his/her last day of school.
- Teachers will make sure the child does not leave any of their belongings behind including art projects and program materials.
- Teachers and children will create a “goodbye card” for the child who is exiting the program.
- If the child is moving out of the city/state, the teacher will obtain an address from the child’s parents, and the class will write the child, at least one time.

At times families have to exit their children immediately from the program or are absent for 5 consecutive days without any contact, if this occurs:

Teachers will gather all of child’s work samples, and belongings that were left behind and leave them at the front desk for a week or until their parents pick them up, whichever comes first.

## **Transition to Kindergarten**

Some of the activities that support our student's transition into kindergarten successfully include:

- Development of a summer calendar to support kindergarten activities.
- Each family is provided information about Kindergarten Round Up/Registration
- Kindergarten parents attend an orientation discussing kindergarten.
- Preschool teachers will discuss kindergarten expectations with their students.
- Preschool teachers will read books about going to kindergarten.

## **Policy: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to our children's health. We recognize the importance of staff as positive role models for children as they learn to live healthy lives. Research has indicated that the child care setting is a strong predictor of young children's physical activity levels and likelihood to model physical activity levels and likelihood to model healthy habits.

In our efforts to promote physical activity, we will follow these guidelines:

Daily physical activity will be planned and provided for a three hour program:

- Staff will include up to 30 minutes per day in curriculum for physical activity.
- 15 minutes of the 30 minutes will be teacher-led and 15 minutes will be free-play.
- Staff will encourage moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity.
- Sedentary time will be limited to fewer than 30 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Screen time will be limited to one hour or fewer per week, staff will provide no more than one hour of screen time per week, unless screen time engages children in physical activity or is used for educational purposes.

**Physical activity will never be used or withheld as a punishment.**

## **Policy: SUN SAFETY**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to protecting the health and safety of students and staff. While we like to provide opportunities for outdoor physical activity, we also want to make it sun safe. Well-defined research has documented a multitude of negative health conditions from overexposure to the sun.

Staff will encourage parents to apply sunscreen before the students arrives at school, school employees will not be allowed to apply sunscreen to students. Families will be encouraged to:

- Use sunscreen, lip balm, hats, sunglasses, light clothing and shade.

- Limiting exposure during peak UV times, from 10 am to 4 pm.
- Regularly checking the UV Index to monitor the intensity of the sun's rays and plan for outdoor activities accordingly.

### **Policy: BREASTFEEDING**

Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Research has documented a multitude of health benefits to both the mother and infant when the infant is breastfed. The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Breastfeeding mothers and employees shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area will have an electrical outlet, comfortable chair and nearby access to running water.
- A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breast milk. Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the child care facility's refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled

### **Policy: CACFP**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center recognizes the importance of affordable child care while also providing quality nutrition to low-income families. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) helps Arizona child care facilities improve and maintain the health and nutritional status of children while promoting the development of good eating habits. CACFP also cuts costs of care for low-income families. Emily Meschter Early Learning Center will explore the CACFP program and check eligibility by:

- Having the director of the facility or designated staff visit the CACFP website: [www.azed.gov](http://www.azed.gov)
- Having the director of the facility or designated staff call CACFP at
- 1-800-352-4558 to determine if this program is a good fit for the facility.

### **Policy: FRUIT JUICE**

Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong healthy eating and drinking habits. Too much juice may be linked to weight problems and is associated with tooth decay and decreased appetite for other nutritious foods. Too much juice may also take the place of more nutritious beverages such as fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or water. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

We will not serve fruit juice. Water or milk shall be used as the first choice for thirst and will be offered throughout the day.

### **Policy: FOOD ALLERGIES**

Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong healthy eating and drinking habits. We also understand that some children may be allergic to certain food products. If your child is allergic to food products, please let your teacher and Ms. Genesis know about this condition.

### **Policy: FAMILY-STYLE MEALS**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong habits of healthy eating patterns. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

Serve meals family-style whenever possible to support children in learning to serve themselves and develop healthy relationships with food. Our role as caregivers is to provide nourishing food. The child's role is to decide whether and how much to eat. We will never force a child to eat.

Model behaviors for healthy eating and positive body image in the presence of children by having staff members recognize the important role adults play as role models for children as they learn to live healthy lives.

### **Policy: ORAL HEALTH**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to protecting the health and safety of our students and staff in regards to tooth decay, which is an infectious disease and a serious problem among young children in Arizona. Our facility recognizes that we play an important role in preventing tooth decay and in educating children, their families and staff on tooth decay prevention. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will provide oral health education, and guide our staff members on steps they can take to prevent tooth decay according to the age appropriate guidelines in the Empower Guidebook.

### **Policy: STAFF TRAINING**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to furthering staff knowledge on the Empower Program topic areas including: physical activity, nutrition, oral health and tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will make sure that our staff receives or attends 18 hours of training annually on early childhood care topics.

### **Policy: ASHLine**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to supporting the efforts of the Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine) to help staff and parents quit tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy and to protect the health of our children, their families and our staff, our facility will promote the ASHLine information on the dangers of second and third-hand smoke by placing them in a visible spot at least once per year so parents and staff can see them. We will also refer parents, when possible, to ASHLine.

**Policy: SMOKE FREE CAMPUS**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to providing a smoke-free environment for children and staff due to acknowledged hazards from exposure to second-hand smoke. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will notify all employees, families and visitors of the smoke-free policy. Appropriate signage will be posted.

**Policy: CELL PHONE FREE CAMPUS**

The Emily Meschter Early Learning Center is committed to providing limited cell phone use on their campus. We encourage you to put your cell phone away when you are with your child. Engage in conversation as you say hello and goodbye to him/her. This will increase your child's self-esteem and develop a healthy relationship between both of you.



**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

**FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER:** 690-2368; Provides social services and referrals/information for Flowing Wells residents.

**TUCSON ASSOCIATION FOR CHILD CARE, INC.:** 881-8940; Offers referral services and general information for child care resources in Tucson.

**OUR TOWN FAMILY CENTER:** Admin. 323-1708; Crisis Service 323-1706; Crisis intervention for families, family counseling and parent classes (services on a sliding scale).

**THE PARENT CONNECTION:** 321-1500; Resource, education, prevention and support center for parents of children ages 0-5 (sliding scale available).

**PARENTS AS TEACHERS:** (through Parent Connection) 321-1500; In-home educational program for parents with children under 3 years of age.

**PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT:** 740-8267;

Numerous health programs available in addition to referral for free or limited cost health services such as dental and vision.

**CASA DE LOS NINOS:** 624-5600; Temporary shelter for children in families undergoing significant crisis or stress; shelter for abused/neglected children; other miscellaneous programs available such as parenting classes, fathering, and divorce group for children.

**PARENTS ANONYMOUS:** 622-6869 (office) or 1-800-352-0528 (24 hour call line); Parent support and crisis intervention for child abuse prevention.

**CHILD PARENT CENTER - HEAD START:** 623-8680 – 602 E. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Tucson, AZ, 85713

**Important Phone Numbers:**

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Director - Dr. Susan Shinn            | 696-8909 |
| Operations Specialist - Lety Granados | 696-8909 |
| Front Office                          | 696-8909 |
| Health Assistant - Genesis Guerero    | 696-8910 |
| Attendance Office                     | 696-8910 |
| Transportation                        | 696-8870 |

**Teacher Contact Numbers:**

|                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Angela Mammen<br>(Lead Teacher) | 696-8913 |
| Jessica Caramella               | 696-8916 |
| Benjamin Collinsworth           | 696-8911 |
| Emilie Pechuzal                 | 696-8914 |
| Aubrey Erickson                 | 696-8912 |
| Jessica Jankowski-Gallo         | 696-8915 |
| Ashley Myers                    | 696-8906 |



**Student Services Contact Numbers:**

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Speech Pathologist - Sara Piekarski    | 696-8849 |
| Speech Pathologist - Susan Wells       | 696-8846 |
| School Psychologist - Annette Campbell | 696-8850 |

# FLOWING WELLS EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER MISSION STATEMENT



The Flowing Wells Early Childhood Center is dedicated to providing a quality and enriched learning experience which is developmentally appropriate for all children.

“We treasure and value the importance of each child’s experiences.”



Our priorities include:

## **ENVIRONMENT**

We provide a safe and stimulating learning environment that supports and encourage a variety of choices. The environment also provides an abundance of appropriate activities and loving guidance.



## **CORE GOALS**

We strive for each child to become more self-sufficient as they increase their social skills. We encourage and facilitate a love of learning and respect for self and peers. Parental involvement is an essential element to achieve these goals.



## **INDIVIDUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

We promote tolerance, recognizing and applauding each child’s talents, ethnicity, beliefs and lifestyle. We support each family’s values and work to provide an opportunity for each child to acquire a strong, positive sense of their own identity while developing respect and consideration for other people whose perspectives and experiences may differ from their own.



## **FLEXIBILITY**

We work towards individual goals based on each child’s needs and capabilities. Learning opportunities and experiences are planned; spontaneous teaching moments due to suggestions, unexpected events, needs of a child and integrated activities are also included.