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El Camino College | Public Relations & Marketing Department  
16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506  
Contact: Ann M. Garten, Director, Community Relations  
Telephone: (310) 660-3406 | E-Mail: [agarten@elcamino.edu](mailto:agarten@elcamino.edu)

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## El Camino College Child Development Center Plans Open House

The El Camino College Child Development Center (CDC) has scheduled an open house for prospective preschool students from 1-5 p.m. April 26. As a special open house offer, families who enroll in the fee-based program at the open house event and pay the registration fee, receive the first week's tuition free!

The ECC Child Development Center is conveniently located at El Camino College, and offers a warm and inviting environment for children preparing for kindergarten, housed in a building specifically designed for preschoolers. Current students and teachers will be at the CDC open house, going through a typical day's activities. Visitors will have the opportunity to observe the preschool's various activities and offerings, and may direct questions to both the teaching staff and current parents.

The teaching staff is what has made a difference to the Nguyen Family. Huy Nguyen's daughter attends the school and has access to many different projects and experiences prepared by the teachers each day.

"Our daughter is very involved in school activities and has made a lot of new friends," Nguyen said. "We are very happy to know that the CDC will also prepare her well for grade school."

Enrollment is now open for the CDC fee-based preschool program. Flexible schedules are offered in this high-quality, year-round program, which is open to children ages 2 to 5. All students must be completely toilet trained. Low child/staff ratios and an emphasis on social skills are hallmarks of the academic curriculum.

"We believe that children learn best when given many choices during the day in a mixed age-group setting," CDC Director Sandra Parvis said. "When children are comfortable in their surroundings and have a consistent routine fostered by caring staff, they feel free to explore new dimensions of learning. The CDC is a place where they can do exactly that. By providing choices within our child-centered learning environment, children gain exposure to academics in a fun, interactive setting."

Teachers at the CDC are academically well prepared, all are mentor teachers certified by the State of California, and all have been on staff an average of 12 years. The CDC is also a "laboratory school," where future teachers are trained in best practices. The developmental curriculum prepares children cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically and linguistically.

For the past 20 years, the preschool has encouraged exploration, discovery, making choices, and play, along with social interaction to foster self-esteem, competence, and autonomy in children. Breakfast and snacks are provided. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education, and an open door policy is maintained throughout the center.

The parent participation opportunities are very meaningful to parent Monica Zavala. She has been able to join activities such as multi-cultural parties, field trips, and family projects, which connect her to her daughter's education.

"The Child Development Center has definitely helped me stay involved in my daughter's learning and progress, even though she is away at school," she said.

The school's mission has become increasingly important in recent years, as kindergarten curriculum adopts more rigorous standards, with the bar of achievement rising higher and higher.

"Within the last decade, our state has created higher educational standards, which puts today's kindergarten on par with the first grade of yesteryear," said Parvis.

"Children entering the kindergarten of today need to not only be able to spell and write their names; know, write, and recognize the alphabet; recognize numbers, shapes, and count; but they also must stay on task, follow directions, and be emotionally ready for this new adventure called school. This is why, here at the CDC, we stress social skills every bit as much as the academics."

The CDC is accredited by the National Accreditation Commission (NAC) for Early Care and Education Programs. By achieving NAC accreditation, the ECC Child Development Center provides a high-quality program for children, professional development opportunities for staff, a parent program that exceeds state licensing requirements, and an environment that is conducive for each child's individual growth and development.

For more information about the El Camino College Child Development Center, call the office at 310-660-3720, or go to [www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/cdc/](http://www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/cdc/).

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