

# Dependent children at TFS

One request from the community of users of the Toolik Field Station is that facilities and policies at TFS be developed to allow PIs with dependent children to bring their children to TFS while doing their research, if they have no reasonable recourse for substitute care. Many young PIs with funded research programs based at Toolik are women who are just starting their families. The Institute of Arctic Biology would like to accommodate their needs for family housing and daycare.

We requested feedback on the issue of family housing from members of the Toolik user community on two different occasions, at the Toolik Steering Committee meeting in December, 2002, and at a User Forum at TFS in July 2003. The feedback we received was that providing a way for PIs who are parents to bring their dependent children to Toolik is a good thing. However, there was a much stronger consensus on the need to provide for infants and small children at TFS than there was on how to accommodate the needs of older children. At the present time, TFS is focusing on providing for the needs of parents with small children.

## Policies for parents with dependent children at TFS (0 to 5 years old)

1. Parents must provide for the transportation of their child to and from TFS.
2. Parents must provide a plan for 24-hour supervision of their child while at TFS, to be provided by the parent, or by a day care provider furnished by the parent. Supervision includes plans for feeding, recreation, naps, and sleeping.
3. Day care providers furnished by parents are required to be certified in first aid and infant CPR. Parents must submit copies of this certification to the station management prior to arrival.
4. Parents shall ensure that their children have had all appropriate vaccinations before bringing them to TFS.
5. Dependent children are not allowed in the workplace, as per UAF policy (see Chancellor's web page). Laboratories, kitchen, the generator modules, and shop facilities are considered to constitute the workplace at TFS. Children may not ride in university boats or any other mode of transportation, other than the vehicle used to get to and from the station.
6. Dependent children are permitted in the housing facilities, the dining hall, the outhouses, and the community center/daycare facility. Dependent children may play in the tundra so long as they are not in experimental plots or sensitive areas, and are under supervision. A site map outlining approved areas will be made available.
7. Dependent children will be housed with their parents in the regular TFS housing facilities. TFS provides mattresses but not bedding. Parents must supply their own bedding and cribs, if needed, for their children.
8. Parents using the community center/daycare facility must provide their own bedding and crib or nap mat, all toys, disposable diapers (if needed), and any required food beyond what is provided by the regular TFS meal service.
9. Parents or caregivers are responsible for clean-up of the center, beyond routine sweeping and removal of trash.

10. TFS will not charge dependent children any fee for the use of TFS. The fee for their caregivers to stay at TFS shall be the same as other science users covered by the cooperative agreement, which is \$107.10 per day in field season 2010.
11. Parents who want to bring their dependent children to TFS must submit a request to the TFS Science Director at the same time as they make reservations for themselves, according to the published deadlines for reservations at TFS, and explain their reasons for wishing to bring their children. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and acceptance or denial of each request will be dependent on space availability and the plan for adherence to points #1-9.

**Community Center/Daycare Facility at TFS.**

NSF, CPS, and IAB have setup a facility at TFS that will be suitable for daycare for dependent children. The facility will also serve as a recreational center for other members of the community when no children are present, but children and their providers have priority. The facility will consist of a 20 x 30' Weatherport tent, subdivided into 4 areas intended for use as a restroom/changing area, a napping/nursing/rocking area, an open play/activity area, and an entrance area with cubbies for storage of personal items. TFS staff will be responsible for cleaning the facility and removing the trash, but will not provide other services at the facility beyond routine maintenance.