

Southeast Texas Family Resource Center

Standard Operational Policy and Parent Handbook



Mission Statement

The mission of Southeast Texas Family Resource Center is to create and support programs and to participate in collaborative efforts dedicated to fostering positive cycles of growth, development, and personal responsibility. For our local residents, that translates into quality education, skill development, and employment. For children, this means providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment away from negative influences present in a low-income neighborhood, and additional outlets for the funneling of positive energy.

Southeast Texas Family Resource Center

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OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe...

- That children are precious and must receive care from adults who are capable and caring-whose values enable them to be excellent role models.
- That children should experience numerous positive learning milestones, leading to an increased sense of competence and independence.
- That children's play is extremely vital to healthy physical development, acceptable social skills, and cognitive growth.
- That teacher, drawing upon their training and experience, must create an appropriate educational environment which carefully guides children from one developmental and cognitive level to another.
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Embracing Diversity: The Southeast Texas Family Resource Center welcomes those of diverse faiths, ethnic origins, and race. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, culture, religion, or ability.

Our Staff: Our staff is here to assist your child in making their stay enjoyable. Our staff is well trained and has extensive knowledge in Early Childhood Development. They are also trained in CPR and First Aid for children and adults.

Goals and Objectives: It is our goal to serve each child and their family with the highest quality of care.

Curriculum Goals: We use curriculum created by our Administrative and Program Director for our Kindergarten through eighth grade students. With our Pre-K students, we use Circle Curriculum, which is State Board of Education approved.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at the SETX Family Resource Center (hereby known as "the Center") is open to children attending school from Pre-K 4 to 8th Grade. Parents can apply for enrollment of their child at the Center by completing the **after-school registration form** and paying the registration fee.

ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS

Any child enrolled in school grades ages Pre-K 4 to 8th Grade. Schools our program services include Beaumont ISD schools, Bob Hope Beaumont, Harmony Science Academy, Fehl-Price Academy, and Earhart.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, statement that immunizations are on file with the elementary school, and signed Parent Handbook receipt. The Enrollment Registration and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration. The Child Development Center reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause. Continued enrollment at The Child Development Center Afterschool program is contingent upon the parents', emergency contact persons' and child's adherence to the policies and procedures of The Child Development Center as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition. Parents are required to notify The Child Development Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being unenrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit.

The afterschool programs are 10-month programs with a separate all-day program during the summer. Re-enrollment for current students will take place each fall with a separate enrollment for the summer months taking place at the end of May. **At that time, an email with a registration link as well as an annual registration fee must be turned in for each student in order to secure a place in the program for the upcoming year.**

Hours, Days, and Months of Operation

January-December

Monday-Friday

Center Operational Hours - 9:00 am-6:00 pm

After School Hours - 3:30 pm-6:00 pm

Full-Time Care Hours - 7:00 am-6:00 pm

Half-Day Care Hours - 7:00 am-2:00 pm

The following are the days that the Center will be closed: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr, Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve.

DROP OFF

Upon arrival for after school care, students will be checked into the Center by the secretary before walking to their classroom. Upon arrival for extended day care, parents

must walk their child(ren) into the Center to be signed in for the day before the students will walk to their classroom.

Extracurricular Activities

If your child participates in extracurricular activities during after school hours, we will need written permission to release your child from our program and a schedule of your child's activities.

PICK UP PROCEDURES

Upon departure (pick up), parents must sign their child(ren) out using their scanner cards on the computer in the lobby. If someone other than yourself will be picking the child(ren) up, please let the secretary in the lobby know and ensure that the designated person is listed on their authorized pick-up list. Please inform the designated individual that they will be required to show proper identification before the child is released to them. If there are any changes that would impact this procedure, please inform us in writing. When picking your child up, once you have scanned your child out from The Center, all parents and guardians are **required to wait** for their child before walking out to their vehicle. **ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT 18 YEARS OR OLDER WHEN LEAVING FROM THE CENTER.**

The following is our policy regarding scan cards and replacements:

- After a child is enrolled in the program, parents/guardians will receive a scan card for FREE.
- If a parent or guardian misplaces or loses this first card, he or she will have to pay \$2 to receive a new card. **This fee applies to the first and second replacement card.**
- If a parent or guardian misplaces or loses the second replacement card (the third card he or she has received), he or she will need to pay \$5 for any subsequent replacement card.
- If a parent or guardian has a card that no longer works, the card will be replaced for free **if the non-working card is returned to staff in exchange for the new card.**

Parents or persons designated to act “in loco parentis” are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day of pick-up. The Site Director will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or another authorized adult at pick-up.

Unless it is an emergency, please finish all phone calls prior to entering the building during drop-off and pick up times. We have a *No Cell Phone Policy* in the building.

Emergency Contact & Authorized Pick-Up People

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Admission Information form. Parents are required to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from the afterschool program. In an emergency, the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached staff will call Emergency Contact. State regulations require each family to have at least one Emergency Contact and one Authorized Pick-Up Person. The persons on the Admission Information form will be required to provide a government issued photo ID prior to one of the Executive Directors or Secretary releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule. All changes and/or additions to the Admission Information form must be made in writing and dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form. The Center reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Admission Information Form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Admission Information Form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

When picking your child up, once you have scanned your child out from The Center, all parents and guardians are **required to wait** for their child before walking out to their vehicle. **ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT 18 YEARS OR OLDER WHEN LEAVING FROM THE CENTER.**

PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at a The Center, as provided by law. In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), The Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto.

In the absence of a court order on file with The Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by the request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, The Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. The Center staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Court Orders Affecting Enrolled Children

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), The Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. Until custody has been established by a court action, one parent may not limit the other from picking up a child in our care. The Center must be notified immediately of any changes in custody orders. Certified custody orders must be given to one of the Executive Directors. If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed. Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, The Child Development Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of The Center cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. The Center will report any violations of these orders to the court.

Parent Conferences

Please do not use drop-off/pick up time to communicate lengthy concerns with your child's teacher or one of the Executive Directors as this can be a distraction to the care of other children in the classroom. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teachers and Executive Directors are responsible for supervising the remaining children in the program. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day if the parent(s) is unable to meet during the course of the day. During the conference time, each parent will receive information on their child's development and have the opportunity to set goals with teachers based on the results from the developmental assessments conducted by the teacher.

Parent Notifications

Parent(s) will be notified of important information, including but not limited to policy changes, closure dates, early releases, and field trips in one of the following ways:

- Verbal communication with parents
- Written notes sent home
- Written notes posted in the parent check-out station
- Phone calls home
- Emails sent to parent

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Parents have the opportunity to visit the Center at any time during operational hours to observe their child, program activities, the building, the premises, and equipment without having to secure prior approval. We encourage parents to participate in field

trips, to volunteer, and to participate in any Center activity that we host. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our Director so the appropriate state required background checks can be completed.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent for non-emergency reasons (such as vacation or after-school activities), please complete a leave of absence form and submit the form to the Center at least two weeks prior to the absence. If the leave of absence form is not submitted at least two weeks prior to the absence, you will be responsible for your child's regular tuition payments.

If your child is going to be absent for unplanned reasons (such as illness or family emergency), please call or email the office and let us know as early as possible. It is imperative that if your child is absent, you contact us by noon, so the van driver is aware prior to making the afternoon pick up from the school.

ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Your child will not be allowed to attend the Center if one or more of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the operation activities including outdoor play;
- The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of other children in care;
- The child has one of the following (unless a medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the Center's activities):
 - Tympanic (ear) temperature of above 100 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness; or
 - Oral temperature above 101 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness; or
 - Armpit temperature above 100 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs /symptoms of illness; or
 - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness as lethargy, abnormal breathing,
 - uncontrolled diarrhea, two vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that a child may be ill; or
- A health care profession has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

A child who was ill may return to the Center when:

- The child is free of symptoms of illness for 24 hours; or
- The parent/guardian has obtained a health-care professional's statement that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition.

***Note: All illness and injury information can be found in the Minimum Standards 746.3601-3605**

DISPENSING MEDICATION

The Southeast Texas Family Resource Center will not administer medication.

- We will only administer antibiotic ointment, when needed, with parental permission.
- Bug spray and Sunscreen are not medications. In the event that bug spray is needed, we will spray the children with "Off" unscented brand. We do not use sunscreens because of the risk of allergies.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION

All parents that enroll their child in our programs are required to disclose all current medical conditions and allergies and provide all necessary medical equipment needed to help aid your child in case of an emergency. In case your child has a severe medical emergency during care at the Center, such as an allergic reaction, severe asthma attack, or severe medical injury, our staff will react accordingly:

- -Administer proper medical attention and medication we have on site for injured students. EMS will be called immediately if an Epi-pen or Diastat is administered.

Children with Severe Allergies

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the **Severe Allergy form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered.** This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and must be updated as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy. This form is included in the annual registration packet. Parents must also execute a **Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies** form. This form releases the Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the Severe Allergy form, provided the Center exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instructions for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets).

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency, the Center will make an immediate attempt to contact the parent and other emergency numbers. Please ensure that all contact information is up to date. ***You can update your contact information at any time by filling out the appropriate form on our website or filling out the form at the front desk.*** The Director will input change in the system immediately and notify you for confirmation of receipt.

If critical illness or injury requires immediate attention of a physician, the Center will follow the Minimum Standards Guidelines:

- Contact emergency medical services or take the child to the nearest hospital
- Give First Aid/CPR when needed
- Contact the physician or health-care professional identified in the child's records;
- Contact the parent
- If there is a more serious illness or injury, we will call 911, then notify the parent.

If a child becomes non-critically ill while at the Center, we will:

- Contact the parent/guardian to pick up the child
- Contact the emergency contact if necessary
- Care for the child apart from other children
- Give appropriate attention and supervision until the parent picks the child up
- Give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation if the child has diarrhea or vomiting.

Incident and Accident Reports

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the Afterschool program, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up.

However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later if that is most convenient.

Lice Policy

Children with live lice and/or nits who have NOT been treated may not attend after school care. Once a child has been effectively treated for lice and/or nits and returns to school, they may return to the after-school program. Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. Head lice are a common occurrence among young children. Head lice spreads from person to person by direct contact with hair or by sharing items such as hats, brushes, etc.

Surgery

Children may not attend the program the same day that they have surgery. Young children recover quickly, but there is always a risk of reactions to anesthetics. The Center does not have the materials or staff to react to such emergencies.

Vaccine Policy

Students are required to have either their immunization records or immunization exemption at their schools. Parents are then required to fill out the **Immunization Form** included in the Admissions Form stating that the records are located at their child(ren)'s school.

Though the Center strongly encourages its employees to have up-to-date vaccinations, they are not required.

EMERGENCY PLANS

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather/natural disaster, the parent/legal guardian should contact the Center regarding possible cancellations or delays in programming. In every room, there is an emergency evacuation plan.

Regular Drills and Review

Monthly Drills: Fire drills will be conducted and recorded monthly.

Quarterly Drills: Lockdown drills and bad weather drills will be conducted and recorded 4 times a year.

Review and Update Plan: Directors will regularly review and update the emergency plan to incorporate new safety information, staff changes, and evolving protocols.

In Case of Fire

The staff will take all of the children away from the building and wait at the park until further instructed. The teachers will use their sign-in and sign-out sheet to account for each child.

In Case of Tornado

All doors will be closed, and the children will be moved to the inside hallway with no windows.

In Case of Emergency Closure

Should the program close before the scheduled time, the program staff will first attempt to reach the children's parents to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the Admission Information form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person, at the time of the call, of the pick-up location should the children need to be evacuated from the center.

Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

We are partners with the City of Beaumont, if an alternate shelter becomes necessary, we will transport kids to the Beaumont Civic Center.

Civic Center Address:

801 Main Street

Beaumont, TX 77701

****To see our complete policy for emergency situations, please ask the Director who will provide the Emergency Preparedness binder for you to look at.***

DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICIES FOR S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

At the Family Resource Center the term guidance is used for several reasons. It is a positive term and implies working with the children to develop internal control of their behavior. Our goal is to encourage children to become creative, independent, responsible, and socially mature human beings. This involves learning to make responsible choices and accepting the consequences of such choices.

Guidelines for Positive Discipline:

- When unacceptable behavior occurs redirection will be employed. The child will be removed from the distressing situation and directed to another activity or group of children within the classroom in order to regain control.
- If further assistance is needed the child will be brought to the office.
- Parents will be notified if the behavior continues.
- Close communication with parents will be the method of being informed about what measures work best with each individual child.
- **Dis-enrolled:**
When the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made toward solving the problem, the child may be dis-enrolled from the center at the discretion of the Center Director.
- ***Our discipline policy does not include any form of physical or psychological punishment.***

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which involve the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Grabbing or pulling a child

- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

We expect acceptable behavior from all students. Our goal is to model positive behavior. If your student is experiencing something outside of school that may impact their behavior, please let us know. We want to partner with you on behavior management. Severe discipline issues may result in your student being suspended.

Suspension of a Child

A child may be suspended from the programs at the Center at the discretion of the Executive Directors.

Termination of Services

The Director retains the right to dismiss any child whose behavior is disruptive to the point of fellow classmates not able to benefit from planned activities or whose behavior endangers the health, safety and well-being of other children.

NUTRITION/MEALS

Students and parents are educated on proper nutrition during the year. We currently provide breakfast and lunch and two snacks during the summer. During the school year, we provide dinner and a snack. Our menus and food program follow guidelines under the state requirements (milk must be served with breakfast, lunch, and dinner). We do not charge an extra fee for meals and snacks. All meals are approved by the CACFP program for their nutritional appropriateness. Meals include milk, fruit, and vegetables. Foods and liquids hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of the children's reach. If your child is on a special diet, or has a food allergy, the office must have a copy of the doctor's report. An emergency food allergy plan must be completed by an authorized medical official. This is a requirement of the state. **Our center is a peanut free zone except for peanut butter. No outside food is allowed at our facility. *During special occasions such as birthdays or holidays only commercially packaged foods are allowed.**

ENROLLMENT & TUITION

Children between the ages of 4-13 are eligible to enroll at the Family Resource Center. Our Center welcomes students without regard to their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, ability, gender, or family structure. We operate on a sliding scale and we also offer scholarships.

Documents to be completed and returned before enrollment are:

- Admission Information
- Health Requirements
- Authorized Person(s) to pick up child
- Discipline & Guidance Policy
- Field Trip Permission Slip
- Permission Slip to Administer Medicine
- Release of Liability
- Permission to Photograph
- Permission to view PG-13 movies
- Food Program Enrollment Form
- Child Nutrition Program Application
- Transportation Information Form

A registration fee of \$25 (per family) is due once the Director has assigned a start date. If a child is withdrawn then re-enrolls at a later date, a second enrollment fee will be expected. Tuition is non-refundable.

Child Care Subsidies

The Center accepts childcare subsidies through the Texas Workforce Commission / CCS.

Scholarships Program

The Child Development Center offers a scholarship program to families who meet our qualification guidelines. For a copy of the scholarship application and guidelines please ask one of the Executive Directors.

Late Payment

Tuition payments are due by Friday of the week of care. **A late fee of \$25 will be added if payment is not received by Thursday of the following week. If payment is not received by Friday of the third week, the child(ren) may be disenrolled for nonpayment.**

Parents experiencing temporary financial difficulties should discuss their situation with the Director as early as possible so appropriate payment arrangements can be made prior to tuition becoming past due.

Fee Structure

*After School Care \$160/week

**Summer Care \$185/week

*Families will be charged the weekly fee if a child is enrolled but does not attend. A Request of Absence form can be filled out for any extended times when a family knows their child won't be attending so that the fee for the week(s) can be waived. This applies for school breaks as well.

**If a child is enrolled for summer but hasn't begun attending classes, the family will provide the Center a start date to prevent charges from before the child begins attending.

Family Discounts

First Child (youngest) No discount

Second Child \$30/week for After School Care, \$35/week for Summer Care

Third Child \$30/week for After School Care, \$35/week for Summer Care

Tuition is expected for days your child may be absent due to illness, family emergencies, doctor visits, hospitalizations, vacations, or any other reason unless a Leave of Absence form is submitted at least 2 weeks prior to planned absences.

Parents will be notified at least a week prior to any additional fees for field trips, pictures and any other special events.

Additional Fees

A service fee of \$25 will be charged for any returned checks.

The admission form, signed acknowledgment forms, and consent forms are all kept in the child's record. Parents have the right to access their own child's record during a parent conference with the caregiver or director.

The following is our policy regarding scan cards and replacements:

- After a child is enrolled in the program, parents/guardians will receive a scan card for FREE.
- If a parent or guardian misplaces or loses this first card, he or she will have to pay \$2 to receive a new card. **This fee applies to the first and second replacement card.**
- If a parent or guardian misplaces or loses the second replacement card (the third card he or she has received), he or she will need to pay \$5 for any subsequent replacement card.
- If a parent or guardian has a card that no longer works, the card will be replaced for free **if the non-working card is returned to staff in exchange for the new card.**

WITHDRAWAL FEES AND PROCEDURES

A two-week **written** notice is required before withdrawing a child from our Center. The account must be paid in full before withdrawing –including your child’s tuition for that two-week period.

Students will not be eligible for re-enrollment without providing the required notice and paying any outstanding charges.

CALENDAR

Our program follows the Beaumont Independent School District calendar.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation will be provided to children during the school year. All rules from the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services will be enforced.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthday celebrations are welcome in each classroom. Special birthday refreshments may be brought in, but please notify the Director in advance. Please note that only commercially packaged foods are allowed. If you wish to pass out birthday invitations, all classmates must be included.

WATER ACTIVITIES

The children participate in water activities, such as: Sprinkler play Sprinkler play includes various types of water play that are non-pooling (not a standing body of water, can range from an attachment for a water hose to professionally installed water play like splash pads).

***Parent/Legal Guardian consent for participation of water activities is requested and given on the admissions application.**

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips do not occur during the school year but happen during the summer months. Notifications for field trips will be made in writing and available to parents to see. A field trip permission form will be sent out, indicating the day, time, location, purpose, and items your child will need for the day. The teacher will send a detailed list home for the field trip.

***Summer field trip locations may vary on a year-to-year basis based on availability of the field trip location.**

- State regulations require that your child to participate in field trips or other outside activities:
 - You must complete and return the field trip permission form at least two days prior to the scheduled field trip.
 - Your child must wear his/her Center T-shirt on the day of the field trip.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Social, emotional, and physical development through play is paramount in the lives of young people and is a staple of our afterschool programs. During the school year, children will participate weekly in outside play with weather permitting. During the summer, we will have at least two outside playtimes a day, weather permitting. Inside playtime is also an important part of a child's schedule and will be incorporated into their day. In case of inclement weather, inside play will be scheduled at least two times.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY, PHOTOGRAPHS, & PUBLICITY

This social media policy applies to parents, employees, students, and The Board of Directors of The Center. This policy includes, but is not limited to, the following technologies

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram)
- Blogs
- Discussion Forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (e.g. YouTube, Tic Tok)
- Micro-blogging (e.g. X (formerly Twitter))

As part of our duty to safeguard children it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families and employees. We therefore require that:

- No photographs taken at the Center are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your child. This is to ensure the safety of children who cannot have their photos posted publicly.
- Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children.
- No public discussions are to be held, or comments made on social media sites regarding the children, staff, or Directors that could be construed to have any impact on the Center's reputation or that would offend any member of staff or parent using the Center.
- If a parent names the Center on any social media platform, they must do so in a way that is not detrimental or derogatory to the Center.
- Parents are not permitted to set-up private or public social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) accounts/groups related to the Child Development Center without expressed written consent from one of the Executive Directors.

Photographs of the children participating in our programs may be taken from time to time and may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures, or other publicity materials. We have a consent form soliciting your permission for photographs, including your child, to be used without compensation included in the admissions package.

ANIMALS

- Parents will be notified if animals are visiting the Center.
- We will ensure the animals do not create unsafe or unsanitary conditions
- We will ensure that the children do not handle any animal that shows signs of illness, such as lethargy or diarrhea
- We will ensure that caregivers and children practice good hygiene and hand washing or coming into contact with an animal and items used by an animal, such as water bowls, food bowls, and cages

These requirements to keep children safe around animals at the Center also apply away from the Center. For field trips, we will notify parents in writing if animals will be present.

Under no circumstance should any type of animal be brought into the Center by a child, parent/guardian, or any other person.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The activities for the day will vary. At the Center, a child's day may include the following:

- Homework Time
- Dinner

- Reading
- Math
- Tutoring
- Computer Time
- Learning Centers
- Outdoor Play

A daily schedule is posted outside of each classroom door.

Homework

All children in the after-school care are required to complete their homework before playtime.

Screen Time Policy

Electronic media is only used for educational purposes. Children are not allowed to bring their personal electronics into the center.

Clothing

We ask that all children dress in accordance with the dress code of their school. For younger children, we ask that they have a change of clothes in their backpacks in case of accidents. During the summer, we ask that all children wear their FRC camp shirt for field trips.

Items from Home

Your child should not bring any candy, gum, carbonated drinks, fast food (unless you are feeding the entire class), expensive sentimental items, flip flops, cowboy boots, slick-soled shoes, backless shoes, toy weapons, or toys or electronics of any kind.

PEST CONTROL

The Center has pesticides applied periodically by a licensed exterminator. No children are present in the room at the time of the service.

NURSING MOTHERS

We have a quiet place designated for nursing mothers in a private office. This area is designated specifically for nursing mothers. You may use this facility at any time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Within the Center, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of the Center who have a “need to know” in order to care for your child most appropriately and safely. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as The Center strives to protect everyone’s right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with The Center. The Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the Center. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families, and employees associated with The Center. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees, or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy and could be dismissed from the school.

ABUSE & NEGLECT

All caregivers are required to have one hour of annual training on recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect. Parents are welcome to attend this training; please contact the Center director for more information.

Parents and employees are provided the following form/website/pamphlet to increase awareness regarding warning signs and prevention techniques: “DFPS Kids should Be Seen and Not Hurt” or www.preventchildabuse.org.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect

Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure to report it. You are required to make a report within 48 hours of the time you suspect the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. ALL EMPLOYEES of The Center are considered mandated reporters under this law. Employees are required to report their suspicions of child abuse/neglect to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400. The Center requires employees to inform the Director prior to making the report.

The employees of The Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to

investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report, under the Act. Mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at The Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities.

The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, the staff of The Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time • Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

GUIDELINES ON CHILD ABUSE

The following pages contain information relating to child abuse. It is extremely important to make yourself familiar with the information, especially the parts pertaining to the characteristics of battered children and the indicators of child neglect. If you have any suspicions or concerns regarding a child, please get in touch with the Executive Directors and begin to keep a written anecdotal record of the child abuse indicators including dates and descriptions.

Characteristics of Battered Children

Abused children endure life as if they are alone in a dangerous world, with no real hope of safety. Feeling unprotected, an abused child tries to protect himself in all the ways he can. When a child has been injured and is brought for treatment, the child usually appears to: Have no close feelings or affect with parents or other people. Be fearful. Be quiet. Show no reaction to pain or expectation of being comforted. Having had violent physical contact with adults in the past, the child is often: Wary of physical contact

initiated by an adult. When admitted to a hospital ward, the battered child: Seems less afraid than other children and settles in quickly.

- When other children cry, the battered child: Becomes apprehensive and watches them with curiosity.
- The battered child will also become: Apprehensive when an adult approaches the crying child.
- While in a new situation, the child: Seeks safety in sizing up the situation and being alert for danger.
- Children who have been battered do not behave as typical children do: They display many adult-like reactions.

Indicators of Child Neglect

There are various characteristics that can describe child neglect in general, but for clarity, neglect can be divided into two subgroups: physical and emotional neglect. These two aspects contribute to each other and rarely occur separately.

The following are characteristics that may indicate physical neglect:

- Malnourished
- Ill-clad or dirty
- Overcrowded or unhealthy sleeping arrangements
- Receiving inadequate supervision
- Totally unsupervised

Many of the above-mentioned characteristics are also indicative of emotional neglect, along with the following:

- An insecure child, seemingly withdrawn or overaggressive
- Failure to attend school regularly
- Constant friction in the home
- Exposure to unwholesome and demoralizing circumstances
- Denied normal nurturance

Reporting Child Abuse in Texas

In Texas, the Health and Human Services Commission investigates reports of suspected child abuse, and neglect. THHSC Employees are available to receive referrals at the Child Abuse Hotline at any hour (**1-800-252-5400**). Calls received at the hotline during normal working hours are immediately referred to the appropriate office. THHSC accepts all reports of suspected child abuse and neglect and other referrals by telephone or online from all sources including identified sources, news media, anonymous sources, sources that have incomplete information, and referrals from the child or parent himself.

When making a report:

- Call the abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-252-5400.
- When you make a report, be specific. Tell exactly what happened and when. Be sure to record all injuries or incidents you have observed, including dates and time of day, and keep this information secure. *Failure to report is a Class B criminal offense, punishable by a \$2,000 fine and/or imprisonment for up to 180 days. Failure to report also could subject you to considerable monetary liability in a civil rights action.
- Reports should be made as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before bruises and marks start to fade. It is important for the investigators to be able to see the physical signs.
- Give the agency person any information you have about the relationship between the child and the suspected abuser.

Please provide at least the following information in your report:

- Name, age, and address of the child
- Brief description of the child
- Current injuries, medical problems, or behavioral problems
- Parents names and names of siblings in the home

Will the person know I've reported him or her?

Your report is confidential and is not subject to public release under the Open Records Act. The law provides for immunity from civil or criminal liability for innocent persons who report even unfounded suspicions, as long as your report is made in good faith. Your identity is kept confidential.

Finally, err on the side of caution. If you have reason to suspect child abuse, but are not positive, make the report. If you have any doubts about whether or not it is abuse, call the hotline. They can advise you if the signs you have observed are abuse.

Immunity From Civil Or Criminal Liability And/Or Employment Action

Any person who reports abuse or neglect, pursuant to the law or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report, is immune from any criminal or civil liability because of such action. As mandated reporters, employees of The Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services, which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith." Further, the employee is immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for reporting under the Child Protective Services Act unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

Penalty For Failure To Report

Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect, pursuant to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is a disorderly person and subject to a fine of up to \$500.00 or up to six months imprisonment or both.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts)
- Dropping off/Picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN OF OTHER PARENTS, OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CENTER

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, The Center cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the Child Development Center will not assume the risk of a second chance. PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.

Confrontational Interactions with Employees, Other Parents, or Associates of the Center

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of The Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

GANG-FREE ZONE/FIREARMS & WEAPONS

State law requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed childcare centers. The following is a tip sheet to

assist in complying with the law. This information may be posted at your childcare operation, or copies may be provided to parents.

What is a gang-free zone? A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your childcare center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends? The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. The local municipal or county engineer may produce and update maps for the purposes of prosecution. Parents may contact their local municipality or courthouse for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

What is the purpose of gang-free zones? Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my day care center? A childcare center must inform parents or guardians of children attending the center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

When do I have to comply with the new requirements? The law is already in effect, so providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately. Licensing staff will offer technical assistance to facilitate compliance until rules are proposed and adopted, which is estimated to occur in March 2010. In the meantime, providers should update their operational policies and procedures to include providing the information mandated by this law to the parents or guardians of the children in care.

OPERATIONAL POLICY CHANGES

The Center's current parent handbook is posted on the Center's website. The Center will notify parents/guardians of significant changes to the handbook, but parents are encouraged to review the document on the website periodically.

ACCESSING OPERATIONS MOST RECENT LICENSING REPORT

The Center's most recent licensing report is posted in the bulletin board area and a copy is always available for your review. Additionally, inspection results are posted online at: https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care and simply type in Southeast Texas Family Resource Center and click on inspections.

CHILD CARE MINIMUM STANDARDS

Chapter 42 of the Texas Human Resources Code requires the Texas Department of Family & Protective Service (DFPS) to regulate childcare in Texas, and to create and enforce minimum standards. The Center has a copy of the minimum standards.

Additionally, they can be found on the Internet by typing in Texas childcare minimum standards or at the following web site:

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default.asp

IMPORTANT NUMBERS & WEBSITES

Parents may contact the following numbers if needed:

Texas State Licensing Office (409) 730-2424 (512) 276-3094

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_Us/Default.asp

Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222

Texas Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400

<https://www.txabusehotline.org>

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

<https://www.cpsc.gov/about/about.html>

Department of Family Protective Services

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Information_for_Parents/default.asp

Texas Health and Human Services

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/>

DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICIES FOR S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which involves the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

My signature verifies that I read and received a copy of this discipline and guidance policy.

Signature

Date

Circle one please:

Parent

Employee/Caregiver

Household member of child-care home

Policy Agreement

Please read carefully, sign, and return the following form to the Center director.

I have read the Family Resource Center Operational Policies Handbook and agree to abide by all the policies and procedures therein.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Date: _____

Circle one please:

Parent Employee/Caregiver Household member of child-care home

****Policies are reviewed annually and updated if necessary.***