Parent Policies Handbook

REvised April 2009
Chapter 6

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Welcome

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) Child Development Center (CDC) provides students who are studying child development and related fields of study the opportunity to gain observation and hands-on experiences with children 6 weeks to 5 years of age. The UTSA CDC also provides early care and education for children 6 weeks to 5 years of age through a developmentally appropriate program accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The CDC is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and is a four-star designated vendor for the Child Care Delivery Services (CCDS) system. The CDC is open according to the UTSA calendar and these services are available to students, staff, and faculty of UTSA.

UTSA is an equal opportunity institution. The CDC and staff welcome families of all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds and students and children are admitted without regard to race, nationality, color, creed, religion, sex, or diversity. UTSA complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. We accept children with special needs provided they can benefit from our program and our staff can work effectively with them. If your child has a special need, please inform the Director upon enrollment so that an evaluation and individual education plan can be developed.
Our Philosophy

Vision Statement

• To provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can develop through play and real-life experiences.

Mission Statement

• To provide a child-centered program for children of UTSA students, faculty, and staff in which parents, teachers, and administrators work together to benefit the whole child through developmentally appropriate programs dedicated to helping children reach their fullest potential and develop necessary life skills.

Program Philosophy

To enhance children’s emotional, social, creative, physical, language, and cognitive development through creative learning experiences in a safe environment. The curriculum emphasizes developmentally appropriate play experiences based on Creative Curriculum developed through the children’s interests and ideas. To help children reach their maximum potential, parental input is essential so that an authentic assessment can help in the planning of individual experiences. The daily schedule is organized to meet the children’s needs for a balance of active and quiet play, large and small group interactions, and indoor/outdoor activities. The role of the teacher is to:

• Respect and respond to family diversities;
• Schedule daily activities;
• Provide a variety of activities, materials, and equipment;
• Observe, assess, and provide for individual needs;
• Stimulate children’s learning by listening, questioning, giving choices, making suggestions, and allowing for a balance between child-centered and teacher-initiated activities;
• Foster creativity;
• Reinforce and enhance curiosity; and
• Serve as a role model.

The program provides children with opportunities to:

1. Practice decision-making by selecting activities from a variety of learning centers, i.e. language, science, blocks, manipulatives, etc.
2. Participate in short and long term projects that stimulate higher thinking skills.
3. Express themselves creatively through art, music, dramatic play, movement, and use of unstructured materials.
4. Develop appropriate concepts and thinking skills through the exploration of a wide variety of concrete materials and activities.
5. Experience warm, positive interactions with children and adults.
6. Verbalize feelings in a supportive, accepting environment that encourages independence and self-control.
7. Enjoy and participate in language experiences, i.e. conversations, stories, puppets, books, songs, and creative dramatics.
8. Participate in many physical activities to develop fine and gross motor skills, i.e. puzzles, beads, play dough, climbers, tricycles, and balls.
9. Access technology that they can use by themselves, collaboratively with their peers, and with teaching staff, i.e. tape recorders, microscopes, computers, and videos (videos and film will be limited to developmentally appropriate programs on very rare occasions, with prior parent approval).

Parental Participation

The UTSA CDC encourages the parents or legal guardians to participate in Center activities at least one hour per month. Parents will have the opportunity to have lunch with their child, assist in the classroom, read to children, attend curriculum meetings, etc. Children that are not enrolled in the specific classroom for which you are volunteering should not be present during this time. Although the Center promotes an “open door” environment, we ask that you consider the daily routines and the individual behaviors of your child before planning a visit to the classroom. Some children may have difficulty with changes in their routine or separating from their parents. Any person participating in a classroom must undergo a criminal background check; therefore it is crucial that all parents submit one upon initial enrollment.

Parental Code of Conduct

If any person, be it a parent or otherwise, becomes aggressive while in the Center, in a classroom, or on campus grounds, the CDC staff will execute the following:

1. Ask the person(s) to move away from the children.
2. Ask another adult to call the front desk and notify the Director or persons in charge.
3. An attempt to communicate calmly with the person(s) will be made.
4. If the situation goes beyond comfortable control, the front desk staff will immediately telephone the UTSA Police Department for assistance.
5. If necessary, the situation may be addressed in writing and/or the Director may recommend that corrective action be taken.

- Smoking is prohibited inside the UTSA Child Development Center at all times.
- Smoking is prohibited outside the UTSA Child Development Center within 200 feet of the building.
- The use of foul or inappropriate language is prohibited on the Center premises.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited at the UTSA Child Development Center at all times. The UTSA CDC staff may telephone alternate pick-up authorizations, or UTSA Police, if they feel a parent or guardian is attempting to pick up a child while under the influence of a controlled substance.
- Law enforcement officials who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty may have firearms or ammunition on the premises of the child-care center.
- Firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited at the UTSA Child Development Center for all other persons.

Confidentiality

All information regarding children and their families is confidential. Enrollment files are kept in a locked file cabinet in the front office. Only front office personnel may grant access to children’s enrollment files to other CDC staff if deemed necessary. Parents must submit a written request if they wish to view their child’s enrollment folders. Children’s portfolios pertaining to curriculum, assessments, and daily activities are kept in a secure location in the classroom and are maintained by the teachers. CDC teaching staff may review children’s portfolios when necessary for appropriate planning. Parents who wish to view their child’s portfolios may do so by scheduling an appointment with the CDC director or designee. Other persons, such as counselors, therapists, and health professionals, can gain access to information from files only with written permission from the parent or guardian. CDC staff will not give out information over the telephone or internet unless identification is verified and confidentiality secured. All records may be subject to on-site review by representatives of the Texas Department of Family Protective Services, Child Care Licensing, Health Department, USDA, and/or police authorities in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Media release permission forms are filled out by all parents, allowing or denying photos (or videos) of their child to be placed in public view in the classroom, on the CDC premises, at the UTSA campus, on the internet, or on brochures and flyers. Children’s photos will be used for identification purposes on Care Action Plans and Medication/Allergy forms. CDC staff are not permitted to send photos and videos to any person (including parents) via the internet or E-mail. Due to the CDC being used as a laboratory tool for UTSA education students, children may be in an observed classroom during these times. Parents are asked to acknowledge they are aware of these observations in their enrollment packet.
Children’s records are maintained at a central storage location at UTSA for four years after a child withdraws. Records are destroyed at the end of the four year period. Teachers are required to delete all children’s photos and videos from their computers at the beginning of every month. No photos or videos are to be saved on classroom computers for the teachers’ or parents’ personal use.

Grievance Procedures

We have great concern for the care of your child and welcome any feedback. We encourage you to discuss any concerns relating to your child with the classroom teacher. If an issue cannot be resolved, the Director is always available to assist in finding a resolution.

It is our policy to collaborate and work with you in determining the appropriate care for your child. A formal grievance form is available to all parents at the front desk of the CDC and we would be happy to supply you with a copy at any time.
Admission and Fees
Information

Eligibility for Enrollment

Infants and children ages 6 weeks to 4 years as of September 1 of the relevant academic year are eligible for enrollment in the CDC if their parents are currently UTSA students, faculty, or staff. A student must be enrolled and maintain full-time status in a degree-seeking program (12 hours for an undergraduate student and 9 hours for a graduate student) for their child(ren) to attend the Center. Faculty/staff must be benefits-eligible (appointed at least 20 hours a week). Children with special needs will be accepted if the Center has the ability to provide the required services. A child may be withdrawn from the summer program and re-registered for the fall semester as long as the registration and supply fee have been paid. If a child is withdrawn at any other time, the child will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list.

Exceptions:

- A student-parent who is in his/her final semester (i.e. is scheduled to graduate) need not be enrolled full-time for his/her child to remain enrolled at the student rate, provided that he/she is taking the requisite number of hours to satisfy graduation requirements for that semester.
- A full-time student with a child currently enrolled may drop below full-time status and continue to have his/her child enrolled in the CDC provided the student remains enrolled for at least 6 hours, AND there is no eligible child of a full-time student on the waiting list that is accepting a slot at that time. In such a situation, the part-time student must pay the faculty/staff rate.
- A child who is enrolled in the 4-year old classroom during the fall semester may remain in the CDC for the spring semester if a qualifying parent drops below full-time status, but remains a UTSA student enrolled for at least 6 hours. In such a situation, the part-time student must pay the faculty/staff rate.
- Student-parents who drop below full-time status and do not qualify for the exceptions listed above may appeal in writing to the CDC Director to retain their child’s eligibility for care. The letter should explain the circumstances surrounding their drop from full-time status. If they are accepted for continued enrollment, faculty/staff rates may be applied.
Waiting List Policy

Parents can place their child(ren)’s name(s) on the waiting list using the UTSA CDC website. When an opening occurs within a classroom, parents of children from that age group will be contacted in the order of the date they were added to the waiting list, taking into account the criteria for eligibility, priority, and the Center’s commitment to maintaining roughly 80% enrollment of children of UTSA students. An unborn child’s name may be placed on the waiting list once the pregnancy is confirmed.

Should a child be offered a position in the CDC, parents must accept the position within 24 hours and pay the non-refundable registration and supply fees within 48 hours from the date of acceptance. Once a child is enrolled, parents must pay childcare tuition on the date of the signed contract.

If an opening is offered but the parent turns down the space, written notification stating the space was turned down will be sent to the parent. However, the child’s name may remain on the waiting list in its current position, or be removed if the parent requests to be dropped from the list.

A parent may accept the space and pay full time tuition rate to hold the space (if child is not yet attending) for a period of no longer than 30 days.

The waiting list is maintained and selection of children for classrooms for the academic year is based on the following considerations:

- The birth date related to space availability of each classroom;
- The ability to provide the required services for children with special needs; and
- The contribution of your child to a good learning situation for the college students based on your child’s age, sex, maturity level, and other considerations.

Waiting List Priority

Within the parameters of the above listed eligibility requirements, priority will be granted as follows:

1. Children currently enrolled in the CDC will have the first priority to move to the next age group.
2. Children of a full-time student who graduates and then becomes a full-time, benefits-eligible employee of UTSA or whose spouse is a full-time, benefits eligible employee of UTSA, can keep their child in the Center as faculty/staff (provided the 80/20% ratio is not exceeded).
3. Children of a CDC staff member (provided the 80/20% ratio is not exceeded).
4. Siblings of a child who is currently enrolled in the CDC.
5. Children of a full-time student (must remain a full-time student).
6. Children of a full-time, benefits eligible UTSA employee (provided the 80/20% ratio is not exceeded).
7. Children of a part-time UTSA student taking at least 6 hours.
8. Children of a part-time, benefits-eligible UTSA employee (provided the 80/20% ratio is not exceeded).

**Parent Orientation**

Operational and enrollment policies will be discussed with parents during parent orientation. Should a parent have a question or concern regarding a policy or procedure of the CDC, they may request a conference with the Director.

Parents will be notified in advance of any change in operational and enrollment policies. Parents agree to sign a written notice of any such changes indicating that they have been informed of those changes.

**Registration Requirements**

In accordance to licensing standards, it is important for parents to complete all the necessary forms in the enrollment packet in order to register their child(ren) for care. A child will not be able to attend if all the forms are not completed.

- A background check is required for all parents in order to allow them to participate in any classroom or center functions. The background check must be processed during initial enrollment.

- A record of the child(ren)’s up-to-date immunizations (or affidavit for exclusion from immunizations) must be submitted on or prior to the first day of attendance, without which the child(ren) may not be admitted.

- A Health Statement concerning the child(ren)’s capability of attending a child care program must be submitted prior to the first day of attendance.

- Parents must complete custody information on the Application for Enrollment, if applicable. A copy of any court documents outlining custodial arrangements must be provided to the CDC and the CDC staff will follow the Court Orders on file.

**Annual Re-Enrollment**

Parents must submit a new Enrollment Application for every year of enrollment. The Health Statement, complete with a physicians signature documenting an annual physical, must be included with the new Enrollment Application. All necessary forms and signatures must be submitted prior to the first day of attendance for the new school year.
All children attending the UTSA CDC will be enrolled on an annual contract. Registration and supply fees are paid 3 times during the year as indicated in your annual contract. These fees are non-refundable and are not included in the tuition. Tuition will be prorated over a 12 month period. Parents may pay at minimum, twice a month, but will be billed on a monthly basis. Tuition and fees will not be adjusted for times that children do not attend the Center. If a child turns three years old during the course of the school year, their tuition rate will not change unless he/she is moved to a classroom with a higher child to teacher ratio. Transfers will be based on availability of space and the child’s readiness.

Fees are paid monthly or semimonthly in advance of service. Payments are to be paid in person at one of the Fiscal Services offices (JPL 1.03.06; MS 1.02.32; or DT FS 1.508). A statement will be provided to the parent prior to the due date. Return the paid receipt to the CDC. A $25.00 late fee will be charged for fees paid after the due date. If payment has not been received by the end of the month the child(ren) will no longer be admitted to the CDC. Re-enrollment can be reconsidered once the outstanding balance is paid in full, and if there is space available for the child(ren).

Withdrawal from Center

Parents must provide a two-week written notice to the Director prior to withdrawing their child from the CDC during the months indicated in their contract. If a two-week notice is not provided, parents will be billed for the two weeks. This allows the CDC time to fill the vacated space.

The Director, in his/her sole discretion, may discontinue child care at any time and without notice if he/she determines that (a) it is not feasible for the Center to meet parental expectations, (b) the child has not adjusted to the program, (c) the child or parents fail to comply with the policies and procedures of the CDC, or (d) the child or parents fail to cooperate with CDC staff.

Parents who terminate their contract for the summer, but wish to return in the fall, may place their child(ren)’s name(s) at the top of the waiting list. However, this will not guarantee a space in the Center for their child(ren) in the fall.

Child Care Assistance Referrals for Qualified Families

- Child Care Delivery Services (CCDS): For information regarding child care financial assistance, please call 246-5240.
- SPC Equity Center: For information regarding child care financial assistance, please call 531-3518.
- Kimmelman Scholarship: For information regarding the scholarship, please see the front desk staff at the CDC.
Hours/Days of Operation

Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters

7:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M. Monday – Friday

Due to child/staff ratio requirements, these hours are strictly enforced.

• UTSA/CDC Holiday Calendar (dates are published in the Administrative Calendar located at www.utsa.edu/cal.cfm). Typically they include:

  - Christmas and New Year’s Break
  - Martin Luther King Day
  - Memorial Day
  - Independence Day
  - Labor Day
  - Thanksgiving Break
  - 3 ½ Staff Development Days (TBA)

• Notices for holidays, closures, etc., will be distributed at the beginning of each semester.

Daily Arrival Time

Our program is developed around daily routines that provide a framework of support for the children as they pursue their interests and engage in various problem-solving activities. To nurture this support, it is important that your child(ren)’s arrival be as smooth as possible. For this reason, we encourage the child(ren) arrive by 9:30 A.M. so that they can become familiar with the daily schedule and as a result learn about time sequencing. Arriving after 9:30 A.M. prevents your child from benefiting fully from this process. It is very important that the children have time to settle into the day’s routines prior to the morning meals and nap time. If you must arrive after 9:30 A.M., please check with staff at the front desk prior to walking your child to their classroom. Parents may be asked to withdraw their child(ren) from the Center if continuous late arrivals disrupt the program for the other children. We request children do not arrive between 11:00 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. as this disrupts meal and nap times.
Daily Drop-Off/Pick-Up Routine

Safety of the children enrolled in our program is of great priority to the CDC, therefore access to our Center is secured by a keyless entry system. Parents are issued security cards at time of enrollment which are to be used to gain entry through the front doors during business hours only. Parents must notify CDC staff of lost or stolen cards to ensure that security measures are taken. Replacement cards are $20.00 at the parent or guardian’s expense. CDC office staff will query as to location of card if parent fails to utilize it to gain entry.

The CDC utilizes the ProCare Child Care Software as the center’s management tool. This computer program enables the office staff to update and organize children’s records, accounting and billing information, children’s attendance. The parents must sign their children in at drop off through our computerized system and sign them out at the end of the day. This is accomplished by inputting the four digit code, issued to them at the time of enrollment, into an electronic keypad located on the front desk counter.

**A CDC staff person must be aware of each child’s arrival and departure.** Parents are required to bring their child into the classroom each morning to say “good-bye” and complete a **daily health check**. Please allow extra time on a daily basis for this requirement. Parents must return to the classroom at the end of each day to take their child home. Upon arrival and departure we encourage parents to share information about your child with your child’s teacher or the Director. This helps us respond appropriately to your child throughout the day and helps us plan curriculum. Although sharing is important, please keep these discussions brief as to not prevent teachers from taking care of their responsibilities to the children in their care. If necessary, conferences can be scheduled to discuss matters in greater detail.

**For the safety of our infants and younger children**, older siblings need to be taken to their classrooms prior to taking infants and younger children to their classrooms. Older siblings who are not enrolled in the Center may accompany parents to drop off/pick up a child; however, they must remain with parents at all times in a well-behaved manner. Children may not be left unattended at the front office. Children not enrolled in the Center must not be allowed to play freely with CDC children or on the playgrounds during business hours.

* Please note that when children are in the company of their parents on CDC premises, the parents are responsible for their own children.

**Emergency Closing**

In case of an emergency closing, local radio stations will make the announcements. You may also dial the campus hotline at 458-SNOW to check for university closings. The CDC will follow the UTSA closing policy. **Please be alert to inclement weather days as this is the usually time where emergency closings may occur and you will want to allow sufficient time to pick up your child from the Center.**
Late Pick-Up Fees and Closing Time

The CDC closes promptly at 5:30 P.M. Late fee policies are strictly enforced. Parents need to plan for and develop a backup system to ensure that their children are picked up prior to closing.

Parents of children remaining at the Center after 5:30 P.M. (as documented with the ProCare sign-in procedure) will be charged $5.00 for any portion of the first five (5) minutes after 5:30 P.M. After the initial five (5) minutes there will be a $1.00 charge for each additional minute until the child is picked up. (For example: a parent arriving at 5:31 P.M. will pay a $5.00 late fee and a parent arriving at 5:36 P.M. will pay a $6.00 late fee)

Late fees must be paid at the Fiscal Services Office within five (5) working days of the late pick-up. If payment is not made, the child will not be accepted for care unless other arrangements have been approved by the Director. Once the late fee is paid, the child will be re-admitted to the CDC.

If a child has not been picked up by 6:30 P.M., and staff has not been able to reach any of the emergency contacts listed for that child, Child Protective Services and the San Antonio Police Department will be notified. In the best interest of our children, parents should have a backup plan for pick-up in case any emergency arises.

Pick-Up Authorization

Parent(s) or guardian(s) must complete the appropriate forms to authorize any person, 18 years or older, to pick up their child. Make sure both parents are listed on this form. Only persons listed on the form will be allowed to pick up your child. A picture I.D. is required before your child will be released. The CDC staff can not release a child to any authorized adult if aware that the person does not have appropriate vehicular child safety seating.

When children enrolled at the CDC are participating in a program with the Independent School Districts, parents must provide written authorization for their child(ren) to be released to the school bus. If their child(ren) will not be attending the public school program for that day, it is the parent’s responsibility to inform the public school before the school bus arrives at the CDC.

Either child’s parent will be allowed to pick up his/her child unless legal documentation is provided to the CDC stating otherwise. Unless a copy of a Court Order granting custody to only one parent is on file at the center, our employees do not have the legal right to withhold a child from a person who can prove to be the child’s biological parent. The CDC will follow the guidelines stipulated in the Court Order. A child may be released to a non-custodial parent, only with the written consent of the custodial parent allowing the center to do so.
In Case of Illness

What if My Child is Sick?

On a daily basis the classroom teacher will perform a health check upon the arrival of each child and before the parent leaves. The health check ensures that children are free from symptoms of illness (i.e. elevated temperature, rashes, head lice [including nits], diarrhea, communicable diseases, vomiting, etc.). These precautions are necessary to protect the health of all children in the group.

Parents are requested to notify the CDC of any diagnoses of communicable or contagious diseases to which the child or immediate family members have been exposed. Parents will be notified of any communicable diseases that are reported to the CDC.

With reference to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standard Rules for Child-Care Centers, the CDC uses the following guidelines to protect your child(ren) from contagious illness. If any of the following conditions occur, while your child is in attendance, you will be notified and then your child must be picked up from the Center as soon as possible:

1. An illness that prevents your child from participating comfortably in Center activities including outdoor play.
2. An illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
3. Your child has any of the following:
   • Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater (armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater).
   • Lethargy
   • Vomiting
   • Diarrhea
   • Abnormal breathing
   • Unexplained rash
   • Oozing sores or mouth sores with drooling
   • Red or irritated eye, with or without discharge
4. If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease (such as pink eye, chicken pox, head lice, etc.), they will not be readmitted to the CDC until
they are free of all symptoms or a doctor’s written consent to return to the 
CDC is provided.

THE 24-HOUR ‘SYMPTOM FREE’ RULE
The CDC requires that your child be free from symptoms of illness (i.e. fever, diarrhea, 
vomiting) for at least 24 hours, therefore your child will not be admitted to the Center 
the next day. A child may only return before the 24-hour time period if approved by a 
physician in writing, stating the reason for the symptom and that the child is not 
contagious. Keep in mind that “fever-free” means without medication for fever 
reduction.

Emergency/Evacuation Procedures
Staff members are trained in emergency procedures, including CPR and first aid. If an evacuation 
of the building is necessary, children will be moved initially to the field directly across the parking 
lot from the front of the Center. The children will then be walked to the University Oaks 
Recreation Room (800-379-3974). If telephone service has not been interrupted, then parents 
will be called to pick up their child(ren). If there is no telephone service, then parents may contact 
the UTSA Police Department as they will know the location of the children. If there is a need to 
evacuate the entire UTSA Campus, the children will then be transported to the University 
Methodist Church Day School at 5084 DeZavala (691-2704).

Illness or Accident at the Center

The CDC cannot knowingly care for ill children. Therefore, it is important to have a backup 
plan in place to ensure that sick children can leave the CDC quickly. In case of an illness or 
accident occurring at the CDC, even if it does not require immediate emergency room treatment, 
parents must be notified. If your child has an illness which requires that she or he be sent home, 
appropriate attention and supervision will be provided until the parent or authorized adult is 
contacted and picks up the child. Quick response helps avoid exposing other children to the 
illness. The CDC staff will also notify the parent immediately if a child bumps his or her head or 
if something appears to require a parental decision for medical treatment.

Parents will be informed of all accidents and other issues concerning their child. Minor accidents 
requiring first aid, such as scrapes, will be communicated to parents via a written accident report 
on the day the accident occurs. The report must be signed by a parent/guardian. Due to 
confidentiality policies and for the best interest of the children, the CDC staff does not give the 
names of children involved in any incident other than that of your own child.

Parents are required to sign an authorization form so that the Director or other staff member may 
seek medical attention in the event of a serious injury or illness occurring at the CDC. Parents will 
be notified as soon as the child’s medical needs have been met.
Medications

To minimize risk to the children enrolled, the UTSA CDC does not give over-the-counter medication without a prescription. The staff can administer certain medications, only with a written prescription from a physician, detailing the specific circumstances and providing specific instructions for individual dosing of the medication. Designated staff will be trained in medication administration, and only these persons will be authorized to administer medicine or treatment to the children at the center. If a child has a periodic and recurring medical problem, the child’s health care professional must provide a written statement providing information on symptoms to watch for and a prescription for any medication the child may require. An Action Care Plan will be developed for the child and signed by the Director, parents/guardians, appropriate staff, and the health care professional (a separate signed statement or authorization from the health care professional is sufficient). This information must be updated every six months to ensure the proper dosage and treatment is administered for the growing child.

Although the staff can administer certain medications, it is important that the parent administer the medication as often as possible. If the child is required to have three (3) doses of medication per day, then the CDC will give the noon dosage. Children must have been on the designated medication 24 hours prior to the CDC giving their first dose.

Medications and special medical procedures will be administered as follows:

• Prescription medication must be in the original container labeled with your child’s name, date, directions/instructions for administering, and the physician’s name.

• All nonprescription medications must be in the original container and labeled with the date and your child’s name.

NOTE: Fever-reducing medication will not be administered to mask symptoms of a contagious illness. A physician’s written diagnosis of the reason for the fever and a statement that your child is not contagious to others is required before such medication will be given.

• If medication is needed, the parent must sign a permission form each time (daily, if necessary) requesting the staff to give the medication to your child. The form must be completely filled out indicating amount, date, and time to administer the dosage. *Any substance* (such as lip balm, cough drops, etc.) must be left with the CDC staff and have a permission form signed if administered at the CDC.

• No medication can be administered with telephone approval.

• Parents must provide a medication cup or spoon, with the dosages clearly marked by the manufacturer matching the prescribed amount for liquid medications.

• Medication will not be administered after the stated/printed expiration date.

• Medication should not be stored in your child’s backpack. All medications must be left at the front desk immediately upon arrival.
Although the UTSA CDC does not administer over-the-counter medication without a prescription, an exception will be made for certain diaper-rash creams, sun-protectant, insect repellant and similar creams or ointments. These items must be child appropriate and only applied with documented parent or guardian authorization.

- Classroom teacher must obtain written authorization for any over-the-counter cream, lotion, or ointment from the parent or guardian. The permission is valid up to a six month period.

- Authorization form must include the name of the substance, the date permission is granted, and the parents must designate to which body parts the teacher may administer the substance.

- All substances must be in the original container with the manufacturer’s label and not expired. The containers must be labeled with the child’s first and last name. Containers will be disposed of, or returned to the parent upon expiration, in the event that permission is denied, or at the time a child is no longer enrolled in that classroom.
General Information

Birthday Celebrations

Parents may celebrate their child’s birthday with their class. Therefore, if you wish to provide a snack item in celebration of your child’s birthday, it should be arranged and coordinated with your child’s teacher prior to bringing any food items into the classroom. All baked goods must be from a Health Department inspected kitchen or commercial bakery and still in the original factory sealed container or box.

Parents may choose one of the items from the following suggested list or discuss an alternative with their child’s teacher:

- Crackers
- 100% Fruit Juice
- Cheese
- Sherbet or Ice Milk
- Vegetable Slices with Yogurt Dip
- Angel Food Cake with Cool Whip and Fruit
- Sugar Free Popsicles
- Muffins
- Fruit Slices (fresh fruit must be whole when brought to the center)
- Cereal Mix
- Oatmeal Cookies

Cell Phones and Cameras

For the safety and security of the children in our Center, all parents and visitors entering the building must turn off and keep out of sight cell phones and cameras, and they must remain turned off and out of sight until they exit the building.
Child Abuse and Neglect

State law requires that suspected abuse or neglect be reported so that a specialist can intervene before harm is done to your child. The Director will report all suspected abuse including physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, and neglect.

Parents are encouraged to discuss child abuse and neglect with the Director and/or their child’s teacher. Because of our concern for the welfare of children, we have numerous resources on abuse and neglect available for parental use, in addition to access to Counseling Services for students through the university.

Child's Progress

Prior to your child attending the CDC, parents are encouraged to arrange a visit with the classroom teacher. At that time the teacher will introduce your child to the classroom, clarify enrollment information, discuss classroom procedures, and provide a list of any items needed.

Assessment of your child’s progress in the program is ongoing. Classroom teachers observe each child and create individual plans which will enhance developmentally appropriate curriculum based on your child’s strengths and areas of projected development. A collection of each child’s work and a summary of progress will be shared and discussed regularly with parents each semester.

Parent-teacher conferences will be held in the fall and spring semesters for in-depth discussions about your child’s progress. However, other conferences may be held at any time to discuss problems or concerns throughout the semester.

We encourage open and free communication as often as possible. Other ongoing communication will include monthly newsletters and written documentation, as well as parent bulletin boards and daily plans for each classroom. Parent/Staff communication is important to providing quality care for your child(ren), therefore we will provide translation for languages other than English, if necessary, to the best of our ability.

Clothing

Children should be dressed in simple, washable clothing suitable for play. While children wear smocks during messy activities, occasionally accidents do occur. Clothing should also have easy access for toileting purposes. Jewelry can become a strangulation hazard for children (especially during climbing) and may be removed by the classroom teacher.

Tennis shoes are suggested as footwear since they are soft-soled and provide fairly safe footing. Children should not wear boots of any kind since accidental kicks can result in injury to a child or
adult. Also, sandals should not be worn if they do not have a back strap, as they can be dangerous while running or climbing on play structures. Open-toed shoes do not provide adequate safety during climbing, running, and riding equipment and classroom teachers may request that alternative shoes be worn.

The children are required to go outside everyday (weather permitting) including cold days. Please provide appropriate clothing for cold weather days including hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, coats, etc.

**Diapering**

Parents are responsible for supplying eight (8) disposable diapers per day to cover an 8-hour period. Infants that require cloth diapers will need to be documented by a doctor’s statement. The children’s diapers will be checked on an hourly basis, or as needed. Staff will promptly change soiled or wet diapers. You may bring a whole package of diapers to be stored in the changing table. Each diaper must be labeled on the bottom side with your child’s name. Permanent markers work well for this.

**Guidance**

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 include at least the following:

1) Using praise and encouragement for good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
4) Using brief, supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child’s age and development, 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:

1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
5) Putting anything in or on a child’s mouth;
6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abrasive, or profane language;
8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child’s age.

Infant Care

“The most dynamic and dramatic growth in your child’s entire life – physical, emotional, social, and mental – will occur in the first three years of life.” (Craig T. Ramey, 1999)

Every baby is unique and young infants thrive on the warmth and caring that come from close relationships with caregivers. Our goal is to learn each baby’s individual eating and sleeping patterns, how he/she approaches new objects and people, and how he/she prefers to be held for feeding, sleeping, or comforting. Remember, parent and teacher communication is an essential component to quality care.

Infant Feeding Guidelines and Schedules

- Staff will follow infant feeding guidelines established by the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Parents will need to provide individual feeding instructions to the classroom staff.
- The CDC does provide infant formula and baby food that is approved by the USDA for the CACFP. Parents may choose to bring some or all of the required food components from home. Parents will be asked to complete a Parent Feeding Preference form once their child is enrolled in an infant classroom.
- Children will be introduced to whole milk and table food provided by the Center by 12 months of age. If your child needs to remain on baby food or formula after this time OR you choose to have your child eat the food provided by the Center prior to 12 months of age, a doctor’s note will be required.
- Children older than 18 months of age will not have bottles available to them while in care. Whole milk in sippy cups and table food will be provided by the Center. Due to safety concerns, toddlers will not be allowed to walk around while holding a bottle or sippy cup.
- CDC staff will accommodate any special diet requests when accompanied by a doctor’s statement.
- To promote healthy dental hygiene, after a feeding, infant’s teeth and gums will be routinely cleaned to remove liquid and food that coat the teeth and gums.

Additional information for parents choosing to bring infant food from home:
• Parents will supply a minimum of four (4) bottles as recommended by CACFP policy, or breast milk bottles for an 8-hour period until the child is one year old. Bottles must be prepared and ready to warm. The child’s name as well as the current date must be labeled on each bottle.
• Parents will provide unopened baby food on a daily basis. You may bring a one-week supply at a time. The child’s name and the current date must be written on each jar.

Infant Sleeping Patterns

According to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standard Rules for Child-Care Centers, infants must be allowed to sleep on demand up to a three-hour period. The CDC will provide crib sheets and blankets. You may bring a favorite stuffed toy or blanket for napping. To reduce the risk of SIDS, infants will be placed on his/her back to sleep until the child can roll over independently. Infants will be placed in a side-lying or stomach position only when a written request from the infant’s doctor has been received by the CDC. Unless specified by the infant’s doctor, positioning devices that restrict the infant’s movement in the crib will not be used.

Meals/Nutrition Policy

A menu is posted weekly on the bulletin board and copies are available for parents through E-mail. The CDC prepares and provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack for all children. Meals are served family style, creating additional opportunities for your child’s social and language development. Children are encouraged to taste all foods served and are never forced to eat.

Since the foods children eat contribute to their growth, development, capacity to learn, and overall behavior, menus are nutritionally balanced according to USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program Guidelines and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standard Rules for Child-Care Centers. Snacks consist of fruits, raw vegetables, raisins, crackers, cheese, cereals, vanilla wafers, etc. Sugary and high fat foods will be avoided, and beverages served are milk, 100% fruit juice, or water.

If your child has any food allergies, Center staff must be notified in writing by his or her physician to include the symptoms resulting from the allergy, the remedy, and precautions to be taken.

If your child requires a special diet, the Center must receive a written statement from your child’s physician describing the type of diet needed. We will work to accommodate those needs.

At least once daily, teaching staff will provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum cleaning to remove food and plaque.
Nap/Rest Time

According to Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standard Rules for Child-Care Centers, all children are required to have a rest period after lunch. Children will be provided with cots to sleep or rest upon. Your child may bring his or her own blanket, pillow, and a small stuffed animal. Providing a restful environment will create an appropriate naptime. This includes turning off the lights with natural light only, a comfortable room temperature, and soft, relaxing music. Teachers will give individual attention to help children fall asleep with such techniques as appropriate back rubbing, gentle back pats, stroking hair, or rubbing arms and legs.

Naptime will extend no longer than three (3) hours, between 11:30 A.M. and 3:00 P.M., depending on the classroom schedule. Children are not forced to sleep; however, all children are required to stay on their cot for at least one hour. Children who are not sleeping at the end of the hour may get up, go to the restroom or have their diaper changed, and choose from quiet activities provided. These activities may take place on your child’s cot or in a designated quiet area in the room. After two hours, children can participate in regular activities until all children are awake or until the end of the three-hour rest period. Any child still sleeping after three hours will be awakened.

Outdoor Learning Time

All children, including infants, are required to go outside on a daily basis, weather permitting. Children participate in outdoor learning activities in the morning and afternoon unless it is raining. This time is an integral part of your child’s day. Your child will go outside even in very hot and very cold weather, so please dress your child appropriately. On days when the temperature is extreme, extra precautions are taken such as shortening the amount of time your child spends outdoors, encouraging a higher volume of water intake, and providing activities in the shade.

Field Trips and Transportation

During days of pleasant weather, the children and teachers may participate in events such as nature walks or field games outside the center boundaries. Groups will adhere to all center policies and will remain within view of the center at all times. The UTSA CDC does not plan or provide field trips for children enrolled in the program. The center does not provide any type of transportation or travel to any child while in the direct care of center staff during business hours, except in the rare event of an emergency.
Potty Training

Learning to use the toilet can start when a child has:

**Physical Ability**
- Is able to walk
- Wakes up with a dry diaper on a regular basis
- Can control the muscles that hold and release the bladder and bowels
- Can take underwear off and put them back on

**Mental Ability**
- Understands the body’s signals for needing to use the toilet
- Can communicate the need to use the toilet
- Understands what is expected (the child understands when to go, what to do, and where to do it)

**Social/Emotional Ability**
- Can express needs (the child expresses discomfort when he/she has a soiled diaper and can tell you)
- Wants to learn to use the toilet

Children will not be forced or bribed to use the toilet. When you feel your child is ready to take that step, it will be necessary to discuss it with the classroom teachers. Pull-ups are NOT to be used for toilet training purposes at the Center. The most effective way to transition your child is to bring extra under pants along with the plastic liners to go over them to prevent their clothing and the environment from becoming soiled. Accidents are to be expected along the way and you will need to bring extra clothes for your child. Remember that this is a process!

**Supply Needs**

- Each child will be required to have one complete set of clothing appropriate for weather (including shoes) for emergency changes as needed. Clothing must be labeled with your child’s first and last name.

- All classroom supplies and materials will be provided by the CDC.

- No toys should be brought from home, unless specified by the classroom teacher for a planned activity. These items can create problems among children throughout the day and can be lost or stolen. The CDC cannot be responsible for items brought from the home. A small soft toy or stuffed animal from home is allowed for naptime only and
must be considered safe for the child to sleep with at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

• Children need to bring a labeled, age-appropriate toothbrush in a plastic toothbrush container for appropriate dental hygiene.

• All items brought from home should be labeled with your child’s name.

**Licensing**

Copies of the Minimum Standard Rules for Child-Care Centers as set forth by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services are available to parents by request from the administrative staff at the front desk.

Parents may review the CDC’s most recent licensing report. It is posted on the bulletin board located outside the Director’s office.

Parents can contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at:

- San Antonio Office
- P.O. Box 23990
- San Antonio, Texas 78233
- (210) 337-3399

**Web Site**

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/About_Child_Care_Licensing/

**Abuse Hotline**

1-800-252-5400

This information is also posted on the CDC’s Parent Information Bulletin Board.
PARENT POLICIES HANDBOOK
RECEIPT FORM

I, ______________________________________, have received a copy of the Parent Policies Handbook for the UTSA Child Development Center.

______________________                  ___________________
Parent Signature                                                                                 Date

Name(s) of Children:_________________________________________________________________________

Enrolled:_________________________________________________________________________________

(Sign and remove this page and return to the UTSA Child Development Center office.)