

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

Child Development Center



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Parent Policies Handbook

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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 Texas Rising Star vendor for the Child Care Services (CCS) 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. Students and children are admitted without regard to race, nationality, color, creed, religion, sex, or family 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

- UTSA Child Development Center will be a safe and nurturing environment where children develop through play and real life experience and students find support for enhancing their educational experiences through learning activities designed by UTSA faculty.

Mission Statement

- We 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. An important component of the program is supporting UTSA students and families with children in our program as they work to complete their course work and graduate in four years.

Program Philosophy

In our program, we nurture children and provide early care and education so their emotional, social, creative, physical, language and cognitive development are successful. Through creative learning experiences in a safe environment, our curriculum emphasizes developmentally appropriate play experiences. Learning activities are based on *Creative Curriculum* and NAEYC curriculum standards. Teaching staff develop lesson plans with input from the children and based on their interests, ideas, and early learning needs. To help children reach their maximum potential, parental input is essential so that authentic assessment and individualized plans can be developed. 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 diversity and child-rearing practices;
- 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-initiated 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, manipulative materials, 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.



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.)

Parental Participation

The UTSA CDC encourages the parents or legal guardians to participate in Center activities. Parents will have various opportunities to visit and volunteer in the classrooms/center, including having lunch with their child, assisting in the classroom, reading to children, attending meetings, etc. Children that are not enrolled in the specific classroom for which you are volunteering should not be present during this time. The Center promotes an “open door” environment in which parents may visit at any time during the hours of operation without securing prior approval. We want to remind parents that daily routines and the individual needs of your child should be

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considered as you plan a visit to the classroom. Some children may have difficulty with changes in their routine or separating from their parents.

Parental Code of Conduct

If any person, whether it is 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 person 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, Fire Arms, Gang-Free Zone, and Other Hazards

- Smoking is prohibited inside the UTSA Child Development Center at all times.
- Smoking is prohibited outside the UTSA Child Development Center as a “smoke-free” zone. This includes anywhere on the premises, parking lots surrounding the center and anywhere in sight of the children.
- The use of foul or inappropriate language is prohibited on the Center premises.
- Alcoholic beverages/drugs 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 observe 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.
- UTSA CDC is a gang-free zone. Staff refer to and inform parents that under Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child care center is a gang-free zone where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher punishment.

Confidentiality & HIPPA

All information regarding children and their families is confidential. Enrollment files, **including health records**, 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 teaching staff. 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/designee or teaching staff. **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/TDA, and/or police authorities in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect.

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.

Photos of Children and Cameras

Children's photos will be used in classroom activities and for identification purposes on Care Action Plans and Medication/Allergy forms. These are part of the everyday curriculum and routine practice. In addition, the classrooms and center are monitored for safety by security cameras.

An acknowledgement form will be signed by parents that will include a statement of understanding this part of the program and the necessary use for classroom activities and safety. A permission form is 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. CDC staff is 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.

No photos or videos are to be saved on classroom computers for the teachers' or parents' personal use. CDC staff is not permitted to send photos and videos to any person (including parents) via the internet or E-mail. Teachers are required to delete all children's photos and videos from their computers at the beginning of every month when no longer needed for classroom activity or assessment purposes.

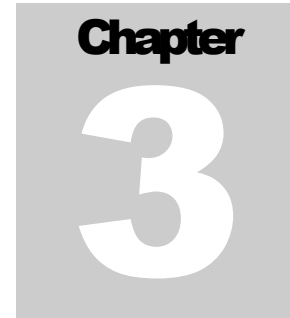
The CDC is used as a laboratory tool for UTSA education students. Children may be in an observed classroom during enrollment. Parents are asked to acknowledge they are aware of these observations in their enrollment packet. Student observations may include audio-taping or taking photos of children during activities. (Permission forms from parents on file would be reviewed prior to approval for student projects.)

Occasionally, the media will request permission to take photos of children in the center for release to the public in the form of news articles or programs. Permission forms are filled out by all parents, allowing or denying photos or videos with or without audio of their child to be released for publication which could be at the UTSA campus, on the internet, or on brochures, flyers, or newspapers.

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. You may pick up 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. In order for a student's child (ren) to attend the Center, they 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). Faculty/staff must be benefits-eligible (appointed at least 20 hours a week with an appointment time of at least 4.5 months). Families with at least one parent or guardian who meets the definition of a faculty/staff member can only receive contracted services at faculty/staff rates and are not eligible for student rates. Children with special needs will be admitted if the Center has the ability to provide the required services. If a child is withdrawn during the summer, he/she may not have a space available at the beginning of the next school year as openings cannot be held. However, the child will be given priority for admission on the fall semester waiting list. If a child is withdrawn at any other time, the child will be removed from or placed at the bottom of the return waiting list at the request of the parent.

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 to complete the semester 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 for the rest of the semester*. Enrollment as a full time student will be required the following semester to remain enrolled.
- 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 the qualifying parent drops below full-time status in the spring semester, 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.

Ineligibility for Enrollment: Five Year Limit Per Student Family Under Student Funding

No family may exceed five years of tuition assistance. Funding to support a reduced rate for child care services tuition is limited. At the beginning of each contract year for a family, the CDC must calculate an end date based on the five year limit, regardless of whether the services application are for first, second, or subsequent siblings. If the student family will reach their five year limit during any semester, any enrolled child will be able to finish that semester, but the contract will end at that time.

This also applies to returning families who have had services during previous years or for other children in the past. Past years of student funding for services will be calculated into the total time allotted. If a family has exceeded the five year limit, the space will be awarded to the next student on the waiting list. The purpose of this policy is equity and access to all UTSA student parents needing child care services.

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. Parents expecting to adopt a child can add the child to the wait list with confirmation of a pending date.

When a child is offered a position in the CDC, parents must complete the following to accept the position and begin enrollment:

1. Accept the position within 24 hours of the date contacted for the opening and coming to the CDC to pick up a billing form for registration;
2. Pay the non-refundable registration and supply fees within the next 24 hours from the time and date of accepting the open enrollment space.
3. Once a child is enrolled, the start date will be given to the parent and a childcare tuition contract will be prepared with the start date and the amount of the contract. Billing will begin from the start date.

If an opening is offered, but the parent turns down the space, 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. If a parent accepts the offered position and pays the registration fees, a start date is given

when enrollment begins. Once enrolled, the parent may change the decision to start as agreed without owing the CDC the two-week notice if the parent notifies the center no later than the start date that they wish to decline the offer and remain on the waiting list for future enrollment.

A parent that wants to accept an enrollment space must pay full time tuition rate to be enrolled beginning on the start date set at the time of accepting the open position. If the child is not able to start on that date and is not able to attend, the CDC will hold the paid space for a period of no longer than 30 working days. The new start date will be set by agreement. Spaces cannot be held without payment once an enrollment space is accepted.

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 faculty/staff who is benefits-eligible (appointed at least 20 hours a week with an appointment time of at least 4.5 months) employee of UTSA can keep their child in the Center if the faculty/staff 70/30% ratio is not exceeded. Faculty/Staff rates will apply.
3. Children of a CDC staff member (provided the 70/30% 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 faculty/staff who is a benefits-eligible (appointed at least 20 hours a week with an appointment time of at least 4.5 months) UTSA employee provided the 70/30% ratio is not exceeded.

Parent Orientation

An initial introduction to the program is given to parents as they try to decide if our program is a match for their child care needs. When the parent enrolls a child in the program, operational and enrollment policies are discussed with him/her during new parent orientation. An orientation time will be scheduled by the start date whenever possible. If not possible, the new parent orientation should occur within one week of the start date. This helps parents understand about the expectations of the program and what is included in the written policy handbook and gives

parents an opportunity to have their questions answered. Parents may request a conference with the Director at any time or if they have questions or concerns about policies and procedures.

Parents will be notified in advance of any change in operational and enrollment policies. Parents agree to provide a signed form as written acknowledgement of any such changes indicating that they have been informed of those changes.

Registration Requirements

In accordance with 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 record of the child's up-to-date immunizations (or affidavit for exclusion from immunizations) must be submitted on or prior to the first day of attendance. Children will not be admitted without this record. A TB test may be required depending upon Health Department recommendations for the San Antonio area.
- A health statement/physical stating the child is able to attend a child care program must be submitted prior to the first day of attendance, and annually after enrollment. If the child is four years old, a vision and hearing screening is part of this health requirement. For children under four, the parent must have the vision and hearing screening performed within 120 days of the child's fourth birthday. For children under two years old, more frequent physicals may be required based on recommendations for infant and toddler physicals. Each child's records must be current at all times.
- 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. The CDC staff will follow the Court Orders on file.
- A background check on the parents **may be required** if parents decide to volunteer on a regularly scheduled basis in the center.

Annual Re-Enrollment

Parents must submit a new Enrollment Application for every academic year of enrollment. The Health Statement, complete with a physician's 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.

Tuition & Fees

All children attending the UTSA CDC will be enrolled with an annual contract beginning and ending in August and based on the start of each academic year. Tuition payments will be divided into installment payments during this period. Partial-year contracts starting after the beginning of the academic year will be prorated based on start date. Tuition is paid in advance of service.

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Parents may choose to pay monthly on the 1st of each month or semi-monthly/twice a month on the 1st and 15th of each month.

Payments are to be paid in person at one of the Fiscal Services offices. 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 five working days after the due date. **If the payment has not been received by the end of the month, the child 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.

An annual Registration Fee of \$105.00 plus an annual Supply Fee of \$150.00 will be charged to each child's service account. These fees are billed at enrollment. In August of each year when annual contracts are renewed, the fees are billed for the renewal agreement in the next academic year. Please refer to your annual contract for details. These fees are non-refundable and are not included in the tuition.

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-week period even if the child does not return.

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 or demonstrates behaviors such as repeatedly hitting, kicking or causing injuries to other children, staff, or others, (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's name back on the waiting list for fall. **However, this will not guarantee a space in the Center for their child in the fall and their names go on the waiting list in order of the date placed on the list.**

Addressing Challenging Behaviors

An important part of the role of the teaching staff is to address challenging behaviors that occur in early childhood development of individual children. Positive behavior is always encouraged. Guidance techniques that meet the needs of individuals and that are age appropriate are used. No harsh discipline or techniques which do not teach a child positive behavior will be used in the center. Teaching staff observe children and assess what may be causing the challenging behavior. Various teaching strategies will be used based on each situation. As strategies are tried without change in the behaviors, family members will be invited to help develop individualized plans that address specific behavior support. Parents may be required to have a child assessed by health professionals for the purpose of preventing injury to any child, adult or property if behaviors become unmanageable.

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Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) or Child Find

Referral information will be provided to specialized consultants in Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) or Child Find for families who need assistance with early identification of possible developmental delays or special health needs.

Child Care Assistance Referrals for Qualified Families

- Child Care Services (CCS): For information regarding child care financial assistance, please call 210- 230-6300.
- United Way 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.

The UTSA Child Development Center (CDC) is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday. We are open year round and observe the same holidays that are given to the University of Texas at San Antonio. Those dates are published in the *Administrative Calendar* located at www.utsa.edu/cal.cfm. Also, a copy of the Schedule of Events listing other CDC professional development days and staff meetings when the program is closed is provided to parents annually. Some of the usual holidays and closures are:

- Professional Development Days (2) in January (TBA)
- Martin Luther King Day
- Student Affairs Conference /Training (1) in March or April (TBA)
- Memorial Day
- Professional Development Day (1) in fall *or* summer (TBA)
- Independence Day
- Professional Development Days (2) in August (TBA)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Break (2 days)
- Christmas/New Year Winter Break (Determined by UT System)

Reminder notices for holidays, closures, etc., will be distributed at the beginning of each semester and posted in advance of closures. Scheduled closures are also on the web site Schedule of Events at www.utsa.edu/cdc/.

Daily Arrival Time is 7:30 – 9:30 A.M. for Children in All Classrooms (Note: This Section Does Not Apply to Infant Rooms)

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 early learning activities. To nurture this support, it is important that your child's arrival be as smooth as possible. For this reason, *we encourage parents to bring their children between 7:30 – 9:30 A.M.* so that they can become

familiar with the daily schedule and participate in the morning activities and guided explorations. **When children arrive after 9:30 A.M., they miss some of the early literacy, math, science, and social play activities that occur in their classrooms each day. It is very important that the children have time to settle into the day's routines *prior to the lunch and nap times.* If you must arrive after 9:30 A.M., we understand. However, we do not allow *arrival times between 12:00 noon and 2:00 P.M. as this disrupts nap/rest time for other children in the CDC.* If you know you will arrive after 11:30 A.M., but will arrive no later than 12:00 noon, you must call the front desk so they can let the teaching staff know you will be arriving before noon. Nap/rest time begins at noon. No children can be admitted for the day between 12:00 noon and 2:00 P.M. If you arrive at 12:00 noon or before 2:00 P.M., you will be required to bring your child back after 2:00 P.M. when the children are waking up. (Note: If your child has not had lunch, he/she must arrive for lunch service at 11:30 A.M.)**

Daily Drop-Off/Pick-Up Routine

Safety of the children enrolled in our program is 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. Lost cards must be deactivated.

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 a digital fingerprint imaging machine located at the front counter. Your fingerprints will be input at the time of enrollment.

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. This informal communication is important; but we ask parents to remember that teaching staff are also caring for children during this time. If necessary, a formal conference can be scheduled to discuss matters in greater detail.

For the safety of our infants and younger children, we ask that older siblings 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 or in the reception area. Children not enrolled in the Center must not be allowed to mix in with the group of CDC children in classrooms 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. CDC recommends that authorized adults arrive at the center at least five minutes before closing to ensure that children are picked up before the center closes.

Parents of children remaining at the Center at 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.

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.

**UTSA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
PARENT POLICIES HANDBOOK**

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 teaching staff 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. Then your child must be picked up from the Center at that time and as soon as possible:

1. An illness that prevents your child from participating comfortably in Center activities. This also includes outdoor play, as well as indoor activities.
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 after being sent home due to symptoms of contagious illness. 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.

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 all 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. Teaching staff and administrators 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 at home as much as possible. If the child is required to have three (3) doses of medication per day – or every 8 hours – then the CDC will give only one dose. 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 the name of the medication, the dosage 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 must not be stored in your child's backpack. All medications must be given to the assigned teaching staff 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, sunscreen cream, insect repellent and similar creams or ointments. These items must be child appropriate and only applied with documented parent or guardian authorization.

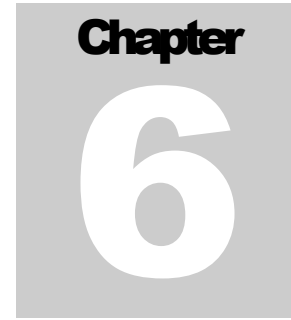
- Classroom teaching staff must obtain written authorization for any over-the-counter cream, lotion, or ointment from the parent or guardian. The permission is valid up to a six month period.
- Authorization form must include the name of the substance, the date permission is granted, and the parents must designate to which body parts the teacher may administer the substance. It must only be applied as per label instructions.

- 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.

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 area directly outside the preschool playground gate, except Infant Room North. Infant Room North exits the building and goes to the front grassy area near the parking lot to wait for evacuation notices to leave the area. Drills are practiced monthly, or for severe weather drills, every three months.

1. When building evacuation is deemed necessary, Center Director will contact AVPSAL and Campus Police. Immediately designate the area will be evacuated. The evacuation will require a door-to-door check of the facility by Campus Police. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If a working fire, smoke or other evidence of combustion is present, under no circumstances will anyone except fire service personnel equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus (SBCA) enter any structure. Should any occupant refuse to evacuate, continue the evacuation and if time permitting, return to the refusal site, obtain name and advise disciplinary action will be taken (this refers to adults only, no child is to be left in the building).
2. If it is determined that a building emergency is necessary all children and staff will be relocated to the **University Oaks Recreation Room (888-471-3156)**. Depending on the situation they may be transported by foot, baby buggies, or campus shuttle.
3. Child Development Center Staff will immediately contact all parents, guardians, or emergency contact individuals and inform them of the situation, where we will be located for pick-up, and how soon they must pick-up their children.



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 snacks and baked goods must be from a Health Department-inspected kitchen or commercial bakery and/or 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
- Oatmeal Cookies
- Cereal Mix
- Angel Food Cake with Cool Whip and Fruit
- Sherbet or Ice Milk
- Sugar Free Popsicles
- Muffins
- Fruit Slices (Fresh fruit must be whole when brought to the center-prepared on site.)
- Vegetable Slices (Must be whole when brought to the CDC-prepared on site.)

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. A cell phone and electronic device policy must be signed by all adults.

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 or provide support for staff to report all suspected abuse including physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, and neglect as required by law.

The UTSA CDC takes several precautions to ensure the prevention of abuse and neglect during center operating hours. There are always to be two staff members present in the center at ALL times. The Director and/or Assistant Director will go into the classrooms several times daily, in the mornings and afternoons. Teaching staff and caregivers are also to position themselves apart on the playgrounds so that children can be visually and audibly supervised at all times.

Parents are encouraged to discuss child abuse and neglect with the Director and/or their child's teaching staff. 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 and staff through the university.

For more information on child abuse prevention, please visit www.preventchildabuse.org

National Child Abuse Prevention Month is held every April in order to recognize, educate, and prevent the problem of child abuse and neglect.

Child's Progress & Home Language

Prior to your child attending the CDC, parents are encouraged to arrange a visit with the classroom teaching staff. At that time the teaching staff 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 written 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. You will receive a written progress report about your child's development and activities twice a year. 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. Please let your child's teaching staff know what languages are used in your home so that the program can work on dual language needs as necessary.

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 teaching staff.

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 teaching staff may request that alternative shoes be worn.

The children must be able to participate in outdoor learning activities daily (weather permitting) including cold and hot days. Please provide appropriate clothing for cold weather days including hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, coats, etc.

Dress children in cool clothing when the weather is hot, especially providing protection from the sun. Children play in the shaded areas, but still need lighter clothing during warmer weather.

Diapering

Parents are responsible for supplying eight (8) disposable diapers per day to cover an 8-hour period. 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 teaching staff 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 updated at least every 30 days.
- The CDC provides infant formula and baby food that is approved by the USDA for the CACFP. Alternatively, parents may choose to bring some or all of the required food components from home. (See "Additional Information" below.) Parents will be asked to complete a Parent Feeding Preference form when their child is enrolled in an infant classroom.
- Parents must provide clean bottles for feeding each day.

- 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 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 cup.
- CDC staff will accommodate special diet requests when accompanied by a doctor's statement of health needs, allergies, etc.
- Food restrictions to religious guidelines are respectfully managed according to CACFP guidelines.

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. The child's first name and initial of last name, as well as the current date, must be labeled on each bottle.
- Only unopened, commercially prepared infant formula/food may be brought into the center for infants. The child's name must be written on the food container along with the date it was brought to the center.
- All formula/infant food must be prepared according to the manufacturer's label instructions. Solid food will not be added to bottle feedings unless a doctor's note supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this.

Breastfeeding

In each infant care space, provisions will be made for mothers to breastfeed their infants if needed. A comfortable seat within the classroom area that enables mothers to breastfeed her child is always available. Mothers also have the right to provide breast milk for their child while in care.

Infant Sleeping

According to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standard Rules for Child-Care Centers, infants must be allowed to maintain their own pattern of sleeping and waking periods. The CDC will provide crib sheets. Soft or loose bedding such as blankets, sleep positioning devices, stuffed toys, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, and comforters must not be used in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age. Soft or loose bedding such as blankets, sleep positioning devices, stuffed toys, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, and comforters must not be used in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age. If your infant is older than 12 months, you may bring a favorite stuffed toy or blanket for napping. **To reduce the risk of SIDS, infants will be placed on their backs to sleep. Infants who are able to roll over independently are allowed to do so.** 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. The health professional must state that a different sleep position is allowed and will not harm the infant. 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 vegetable strips, 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/foods needed.

Special diet requirements based on *religious restrictions* will be accommodated with a *written parent/guardian statement* on the form provided in the enrollment packet.

At least once daily, teaching staff will provide an opportunity for tooth brushing in groups where children are able to stand at the sink during this routine: This is typically 21 months old and up.

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. Teaching staff 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 2:30 P.M., depending on the classroom schedule. Children are not forced to sleep; however, all children are required to rest or sleep on their cot for at least one hour. Children who are not sleeping at the end of one hour may get up, go to the restroom or have their diaper changed, and choose from "*quiet activities provided.*" Infants/Toddlers who sleep or rest in cribs will be removed from the crib for other activities when they awaken. *These activities may take place in a designated quiet area in the room.*

After 2:30 p.m. children can participate in "*regular activities*".

Outdoor Learning Time

All children, including infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children, are required to have daily outdoor play activities when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk. Children participate in outdoor learning activities in the morning and afternoon unless it is raining or there is a health alert issued by local weather stations that are monitored daily. This time is an integral part of your child's day. Your child will go outside even in very hot and very cold weather unless there is a local weather advisory, so please dress your child appropriately. During very hot or cold weather, 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. Note: Large motor activities will be made available indoors if children cannot go outdoors due to weather conditions. All indoor large motor equipment and materials meet national safety standards and are supervised by teaching staff at all times

Field Trips and Transportation

The UTSA CDC does not plan or provide field trips for children enrolled in the program. Children and teaching staff may participate in nature walks in the area around the CDC, but will not be mixing with other adults or children who are not from the CDC. Volunteers to meet DFPS required ratios for walks can include parents or family members, students or other approved UTSA CDC volunteers that meet DFPS rules. 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. In the rare event of an emergency evacuation, UTSA Police Department will assist by contacting shuttles, if needed.

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 teaching staff. 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 teaching staff 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 teaching staff.
- 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 for review 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:

Child Care Licensing
3635 S. E. Military Dr./P.O. Box 23990
San Antonio, Texas 78223
(210) 337-3399 (or) (210) 863-5699

Web Site

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

Child Abuse Hotline

1-800-252-5400

This information is also posted on the CDC's Parent Information Bulletin Board.

Gang-Free Zone

Under Texas law, 1000 feet surrounding a child care center is a “gang-free” zone. Parents can find more information about this law and the requirements by reading the posting on the parent bulletin board in the front hallway near the water fountains.

Consumer Product Safety Recalls

For your convenience and safety, please review the web site for recalled products. These are also posted in the front hallway of the center for review. The web site is www.cpsc.gov.

Child & Adult Care Food Program Nondiscrimination Rules

Nondiscrimination Statement – “In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.”

Complaint Filing Procedures – “To file a complaint of discrimination, write SDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 1 (866) 632-9992 (toll free), 1(800) 877-8339 (Federal Relay Service) or 1 (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Speaking Assistance). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

PARENT POLICIES HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM -2014

I, _____, have received a copy of the 2014 *Parent Policies Handbook* for the UTSA Child Development Center. My child's enrollment in the center indicates my agreement to abide by the articles articulated in this policy handbook.

Parent Signature

Date

Name(s) of Children Enrolled: _____

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