



Bay Area Child
Development Center, Inc.

Welcomes your family with our:

PARENT HANDBOOK OF
OPERATIONAL POLICIES

5215 Embassy Dr.
Corpus Christi, TX 78411
Tel: (361) 857-6543
Fax: (361) 857-2622

Revised August 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Welcome..... | 3 |
| In the Beginning..... | 3 |
| Our Philosophy of Learning..... | 3 |
| Curriculum & Instruction..... | 4 |
| Open Door Policy/Parent Involvement..... | 4 |
| Hours & Days of Operation..... | 4 |
| Enrollment Procedures..... | 5 |
| Parent Fees..... | 5 |
| Discipline/Guidance..... | 6 |
| Caregiver/Parent Relationship..... | 7 |
| Mealtime..... | 7 |
| Clothing..... | 7 |
| Immunization Records..... | 8 |
| Medicine..... | 8 |
| Absences..... | 8 |
| Illness..... | 8 |
| Admitting Children w/ Infectious Disease..... | 9 |
| Head Lice..... | 9 |
| Biting Policy..... | 9 |
| Toys from Home..... | 10 |
| Child Care Licensing..... | 10 |
| Child Abuse/Neglect..... | 11 |
| Dismissal..... | 11 |
| Withdrawal..... | 11 |
| Parent Conferences..... | 11 |
| Complaint Procedures..... | 11 |
| Conclusion..... | 12 |
| Policy Acknowledgement Form..... | 12 |

Welcome!

In order to assure that parents clearly understand the policies and procedures of Bay Area Child Development Center, Inc., we ask that all parents take the time to read the operational policies enclosed within the application packet. Any changes to this parent handbook will be posted in writing at least 2 weeks before any change takes place usually on the front door as you enter the building. The signed receipt takes place usually on the front door as you enter the building. The signed receipt page indicates you have received a copy of our policies and that you understand them.

In The Beginning...

During the first few weeks of school, do not be disturbed if your child

- Is shy and clings to you
- Is aggressive and will not share
- Hits and refuses to take turns
- Tires easily and cries a great deal
- Resists using the bathroom at the center and has accidents
- Doesn't talk much about what happened at school

These are all common signs of tension and stress in a new environment, and will disappear as your child becomes comfortable with the teachers, other children and the classroom routine. Be sympathetic and supportive! You can help by:

- Letting the child bring a favorite security object (blanket or pillow)
- Letting the child just stand and watch, knowing observation is one way of participating
- Not putting pressure on the child to produce something to take home
- Not pushing the child to conform to routines without time to adjust
- Allowing lots of time for personal routine, and a pleasant safe ride to school
- Having a cheerful positive attitude as the child leaves you, either at home or at school, such as "Good-bye, I'll see you later, Have a good day!"
- Encouraging talk about school, asking specific questions, such as: "What did you play with today?" or, "What was for snack today?"

****Remember the more relaxed the parent, the more relaxed the child****

Our Philosophy Of Learning

In a caring and positive atmosphere, we create a warm and happy place for children to learn. As we bridge the gap from home to school, we guide children to a continued good self-image while building social skills.

Sensory, motor, perceptual and language skills are introduced through materials and activities which are both child-centered and teacher directed.

Work is planned which emphasizes the process rather than the product fostering a sense of accomplishment and pride.

Based on the theory that children learn through play, classroom routines encourage active involvement, meaningful experimentation and reinforcement through repetition. Schedules are designed which balance structure and free choice, as well as active and quiet times.

Recognizing that children grow in predictable stages, we treat each child as an individual, working from the level each child has attained and moving forward one step at a time. We teach a love of learning by allowing children to experience their own stage of development and helping them to feel success without pressure.

Curriculum & Instruction

Our curriculum is developed through teacher observation and evaluation of each child. Concepts and skills are introduced which are appropriate to each child's stage of development. By doing this, we reinforce social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. Concrete, hands-on activities and experiences are planned according to a calendar of themes and units that are age appropriate for the children thus providing meaningful learning experiences.

While the rate of growth is different for each child, it is highly patterned, predictable and cannot be rushed. Age norms are not to be used as standards for expectations, but as averages to assist in assessment of growth. Appropriate manipulative and symbolic play activities support the level the child has attained.

Academic workbooks and worksheets may be used which require visual, motor and cognitive ability for preschool development. Children are provided many developmentally appropriate activities, which promote positive learning experiences and allow them to progress at their own individual place.

Open Door Policy/Parent Involvement

Our center has an open door policy. This means that you the parent are welcome to visit the center at any time during business hours. You may observe the classroom at any time.

We welcome any parent volunteers who would like to spend time in the classroom helping the teacher with the children or any ongoing activities that may be in progress. We also hold parent meeting several times during the year to discuss any concerns or changes within the center or with the licensing laws.

Note: Any parent who volunteers and intends to spend time in the classroom with the children must be willing to provide the information necessary for a criminal history check in advance of allowing any person or parent to actually work within the other children.

Hours And Days Of Operation

It is our mission to provide the highest quality childcare currently available in a consistent, reliable and professional manner.

The center is licensed for care from 7am-7pm, Monday thru Friday. The center will be closed on Saturday and Sundays until further notice. In the event that enrollment or

demand for Saturday care meets the criteria, the days of operation may change. The following Holidays are observed by the center and we will be closing the evening before:

The current 2007 holidays are as follows:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | April 6,2007 | Good Friday |
| 2. | May 28,2007 | Memorial Day (Monday) |
| 3. | September 3,2007 | Labor Day (Monday) |
| 4. | November 23,2007 | Thanksgiving Day (Thursday) |
| 5. | November 24, 2007 | Day After Thanksgiving (Friday) |
| 6. | December 24,2007 | Christmas Eve (Monday) |
| 7. | December 25,2007 | Christmas Day (Tuesday) |
| 8. | December 31, 2007 | New Year's Eve (Monday) |
| 9. | January 1, 2008 | New Year's Day (Tuesday) |

Enrollment Procedures

An Enrollment packet contains the following:

1. Enrollment Information sheets
2. Enrollment Agreement
3. Physician's Statement Form
4. CACFP Documentation Acknowledgement Form
5. Child Nutrition Program Application
6. Corpus Christi Independent School District eligibility form
7. Parent Handbook

All documents listed above including proof of current shot records, Vision/ Hearing screening(if your child is 4 years or older) must be filled out before your child can attend the center. After all documentation has been turned in, your child will be admitted. **It is the parents responsibility to let the center know of any changes in addresses, home phone numbers, work phone numbers, new shots, changes to the pick up list, etc.**

In the case of an emergency and the center needs to get in touch with you, non-working addresses and phone numbers could prove to be extremely detrimental to our communication with you. Once every couple of months, we request that you recheck the information you provided at enrollment to ensure that this information is current and in compliance with state requirements.

Parent Fees

The center assesses a one-time registration fee. Parents are responsible for payment of fees on Monday or the first day of care for the week in advance. A late fee of \$5.00 per day will be added to accounts not paid by 7:00 pm on Monday. Tuition can be paid weekly, biweekly or monthly, in advance. Those parents who do not keep their child's tuition up-to-date will be terminated with no option for re-enrolling the child and may be assessed the 2 weeks withdrawal fee. There is no reduction of fees for absences. One week per year will be charged at $\frac{1}{2}$ the normal rate for vacations. In the case of an extended illness of the child, arrangements are to be made with the front office immediately.

Parents of children who are registered for care must pick up the child on time. Any child left at the center past the 7:00 deadline time will be assessed a late fee of \$5.00 per

minute per child past the deadline time. This fee is to be paid at the time of pick up. Parents **MUST** call and inform the center of late pick-ups. If your child is left at the center for more than 1 hour without parental contact, Texas Protective & Regulatory Services will be notified as well as law enforcement. When there are other persons listed as persons designated to pickup the child/ren from the center, they should be contacted by the parent prior to this type of situation.

Children are enrolled for a specified amount of time. Any time used over the specified amount of hours will be charged at the hourly rate by the end of the week and will be due on Monday before the next week begins.

(This center does this to ensure that the proper child-staff ratio is maintained, that the proper designated person will pick up the child/ren and that all state and local law requirements have been abided by.) Late pick-up causes hardship for staff and cannot be condoned. Repeated lateness will result in suspension or possible termination.

The parent, or a responsible designated adult, will walk into the building to pick up the child/ren, sign them out, and inform the teacher that they are leaving. It is equally important for you to enter Bay Area Child Development Center at the end of the day when you pick up your child/ren. Each child should be signed in and out by the parent and make certain that the caregiver is aware that you are removing the child from the classroom. This is so we know you have assumed responsibility for them. IF someone else other than the parent is picking up your child, you must inform the office previously in writing that the person has approval to pick up your child. That person must present a valid Texas Drivers' License to the person in charge and then begin regular check out procedures. If approval was not given in writing by the parent prior to pick up, **THE CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED.**

Discipline/Guidance

We believe that children learn best through experiences. We also believe that the teachers must lovingly guide and direct children to stimulate learning and interaction with their peers. We promote positive educational experiences, which encourage and enhance their growth and development while in our care. We believe this is best accomplished by:

- Having a variety of developmental and age appropriate activities for children
- By the use of group and individual instruction
- Limiting the number of children in each classroom, allowing more educational Materials and opportunities for constructive and meaningful interactions in-group or individual setting.
- By meeting the needs of the children
- By redirecting a child if their behavior is inappropriate for the activity
- By using positive language with the children to reinforce appropriate Behaviors

During class time and in applying the above methods of guidance, if a child is still having a difficulty interacting with others in their classroom, he/she is directed to another center and observed for a while. If group behavior is a problem or the play center has become a difficult situation for the group, the activity is closed and the children are regrouped and redirected to other activities in the classroom.

The staff member will speak with the child in positive problem solving manner:

- Children with continual difficulties in group participation and/or activities are introduced to these methods and if necessary, the parents are counseled and their input is requested. If necessary, outside assistance is sought.
- Please be advised that any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment is against our philosophy, ideas and methods of teaching. None of these methods of discipline shall occur at this center.
- We try to be as consistent as possible with specific classroom rules so that Children will know what is expected of them. We find that this instills positive reinforcement and guidance, which contributes to their success.

Caregiver/Parent Relationship

Teachers spend a great deal of time and energy with the children in their care. Parents may wonder if a teachers feelings are hurt when the child runs joyfully to his/her parent's arms, at the end of the day, and is delighted to see the parents. This is the way it should be. Teachers are not a substitute parent nor are they meant to be. They are caregivers. They are interested in your child's care, and they take this trust very seriously. Many consider it a privilege-but are still caregivers.

* Some parents are unable to observe this reaction in their child. They may feel uncomfortable with the relationship the child and teacher develop. This is important to the child's ability to cope and have successful experiences. It takes nothing away from the child's relationship with Mom and Dad.

* Sometimes a child acts as if he/she doesn't want to go home. There may be several reasons for this. The child may have just started some new game or project and doesn't want to leave it; perhaps he/she may just be tired. They want to go home, but don't want to go through all the fuss and bother to get there. Remember, they do not prefer the teacher to parents, or the school to home.

* If parents have any concerns, contact the Director or Assistant Director if you would like to discuss this further.

It is perfectly normal to have these feelings concerning you child.

Mealtime

Bay Area Child Development Center serves three nutritiously balanced meals and an afternoon snack to our children daily. Breakfast is served between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00a.m. If you arrive later than 9:00 a.m. plan to feed you child before you arrive at the center. Lunch begins at 11:00 a.m. and our afternoon snack is served beginning at 2:00 p.m. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. We participate in the USDA Child Care Food Program, and our kitchen, menu and food service meet their strict guidelines.

Clothing

All preschool and kindergarten children need a complete change of clothing and a blanket (and pillow if your child requests it) at all times. Always label your child's clothing and other items the child brings to the school with permanent marker. These items, which will be located in your child's cubby, should be taken home on Friday of each week and

returned with your child on Monday to ensure sanitation. Children should always be dressed appropriately for the weather. Please be sure that your child's clothing is comfortable, washable and allows for self-dressing. We get involved in activities and should not have to be overly concerned with staying clean.

- * Dresses with ruffles or bows, pants with difficult belts and fastenings should be avoided
- * Jelly shoes or flip-flop sandals do not stay on feet at all times, do not provide enough traction on steps, ladders, or tricycles-THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED!
- * When the weather is cold, always send a hat and a sweater to layer over clothes (we do go outside, weather permitting 2 times each day).
- * Children should wear shoes and socks to the center each day.

Immunization Records

The shot records of each child must be current. The TDPRS and the Texas Department of Health check these shot records periodically. If your child is missing an immunization, he may not be allowed to attend the center until he/she has received those immunizations. The center periodically does its own audit of the files and will try to let the parents know when an immunization is about to become due or is overdue. Hepatitis A series are now a required shot as of September 2002.

It is the parents responsibility to keep the required schedule of immunizations and to give a copy of any new immunization record to us immediately. This is very important for the health and safety of all children un our care.

Medicine

The center has opted to not administer any medications. Parents are asked to discuss with their physician medications that can be given before and after care or the parent him/herself can come to the center to administer them as required.

Absences

Parents are expected to call the childcare center to inform us of intended absences. Please refer to our policy regarding infection disease for procedures on returning to school after such an illness. Childcare fees are based on enrollment in the program rather than attendance. Therefore adjustments will not be make for days missed.

Parents whose children are enrolled under Workforce Development Program must follow the specified guidelines for attendance, scheduling and reporting absences.

Illness

Children must be kept home when they are ill. Children with fever, diarrhea or vomiting in a previous 24-hour period may not attend school without a doctor's approval. Children too sick to participate in the full program, including outside play, need to be kept at home. If your child is ill and will not be attending the center on any given day, parents need to call and inform the center.

If a child comes to school when he/she is not feeding well, he/she will be more vulnerable to infection. It is in the best interest of the child and staff to keep your child at

home when he/she is ill. Children need to be well to participate actively in the program. Following a fever a child's temperature must remain normal (98.6) for 24 hours before he/she returns to school. Child Care Minimum Standards state that a fever exists at 100.4 degrees.

Admitting Children With Infectious Disease

Parents or guardians of any child enrolled at Bay Area Child Development Center or parents making application for enrollment must notify the director of any medical condition requiring special attention or consideration.

Children afflicted with an infectious disease shall be excluded from the center. When the child is free of disease, a physician's note to that effect must be submitted to the office. The child may then be readmitted.

Head Lice

Children may not attend the center while infested with head lice or nits. Infestations must be treated with medicated shampoo and nits removed before children may return to care. In an effort to control outbreaks of head lice, the Texas Department of Health is appealing to parents to be on the lookout for the lice, and to take prompt action if their children become infested. Treatment includes the use of medicated shampoo and the disinfecting of personal articles.

The center does its own periodic checks of the children to try to ensure that lice are not spread through the center. Notices are placed near the door area of the classroom if any child shows positive for the lice so that parents can be aware and on the lookout. All measures for protection are used continuously.

Fumigation of homes and school is not recommended. Although they can spread from person to person, head lice (unlike body lice) do not transmit disease. However, scratching of bits may lead to secondary bacterial infection.

Biting Policy

Biting is not unusual when speaking about young children. Children may bite for many reasons. Some reasons include: teething, excitement, anger, frustration, curiosity and many more. Biting, however, is a behavior that is stressful and painful to all persons involved - the biter, the victim, parents and staff.

IF YOUR CHILD BITES ANOTHER CHILD:

- He/she will be separated from the rest of the group for a short period of time. The caregiver will explain why this behavior is unacceptable.
- The parent will be notified and the teacher will discuss agreeable methods for handling biting with the parent.
- A second biting incident will call for a conference between the parents and the teacher and can result in the child being suspended for the rest of the day.
- A third incident will mandate alternative solutions including but not limited to dismissal and /or a conference with the director to discuss alternative solutions and will involve suspension and possible termination

The Director at her discretion, has the right to suspend or terminate a child who becomes a risk to the other children.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BITTEN:

- Ice will be applied to the injured area
- If the skin is broken, hydrogen peroxide will be applied
- Parents will be notified and made aware of the situation
- Extra precautions will be taken to keep the bitten child away from the biter
- Extra precautions will be taken to keep the biter close by the staff member's side

We realize biting is not uncommon, however after several documented incidents of this behavior the center shall have the option to terminate or dismiss the child permanently from further attendance to the center. Licensing standards dictate that childcare centers must provide a safe and healthy environment for its children. If you wish to discuss this or any other child care policy of the center, the Assistant Director or Director will explain this policy in more detail.

Toys From Home

Toys guns, swords, and toys that could hurt another child are not allowed! They will be taken away and put aside until dismissal - PLEASE keep them at home. Cartoon inspired toys encourage specific sorts of play. They keep children from the open-ended activities, which we offer and from the equipment we provide. Please leave these toys at home. When children bring their toys from home problems occur.

- The toys get broken and the children get upset
- The children give the toys away without permission from the parents
- The children argue over the toys and their ownership
- The toy may get lost

THE CENTER WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST TOYS!!

Child Care Licensing

Childcare licensing is a state agency, which governs the minimum standards for day care centers. The enrollment information packet contains the documentation required from the parent by licensing. This means that you must fill out all information clearly and it must be kept current. If there is a space that you do not have an answer for, a N/A must be in the space provided to document that you have read each area.

Licensing comes to the center periodically to check the center to ensure it is following minimum standards. Licensing also comes to the center for an investigation of any accident, incident or allegation. These reports are located on the required posted documents board on the wall just inside the door of the center. Any questions you may have about any report can be taken up with the Assistant and/or Director at any time for further information.

A copy of the Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers is available at your request at any time during business hours. You may contact your local Department of Protective & Regulatory Services at (361) 878-7470 or at their web site DFPS.state.tx.us

Child Abuse/Neglect

As required by law any suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the 1-800-252-5400 child care abuse hotline or you can reach them on their secure website at www.txabusehotline.org

Dismissal

In accordance with the Minimum Standards and Guidelines for Daycare Centers as promulgated by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, this center shall have the right to exclude any person appears to endanger the health and safety of the children or employees of the center.

This center shall have at its discretion, the exclusive right to permanently dismiss or terminate any child or person from enrollment or further attendance, should persistent misbehavior or disruptiveness of office and/or classroom activities occurs. This includes but is not limited to biting, fighting, loud or excessive talking, refusal to follow center and/or classroom rules, juvenile delinquency or any action that could put the caregivers or the center in jeopardy. Medical diagnoses of children suffering from mental and/or physical disabilities or hyperactivity shall not be inferred as exceptions to grounds for dismissal. Should it be determined that your child poses a threat to other children or employees of the center, the relationship shall be terminated.

Withdrawal

A notice of withdrawal is required 2 weeks before the end date of care. This is to ensure that another child can be put into the space provided for your child. Since most centers base their income by enrollment, children on the waiting list will be given priority to fill the space. If notice is not given, the parent will be charged an early withdrawal fee, which is 2 times the weekly rate.

Parent Conferences

We believe that the parents are the primary teachers of their and that the partnership between staff and parents is necessary to maximize the benefits each child receives from this program. Parents and staff conferences are encouraged to create a team approach for fostering each child's development. Parents are encouraged to participate informally on a daily basis to provide and receive feedback concerning their child's development progress. When a formal conference is needed we will be happy to schedule a meeting at the parent's convenience to discuss individual developmentally appropriate goals and expectations.

Complaint Procedures

It is our intent to resolve any concerns parents have about the operation of the program and the care of their children. We encourage parents to have open communication between teachers and administrators and we welcome their comments regarding our services. When necessary the following procedure will be followed to resolve complaints:

1. The initial concern should be expressed to the appropriate teacher or administrative staff member of duty. It is our goal to resolve concerns and answer questions as soon as they are brought to our attention.
2. In the event that the complaint or concern is not resolved, the parent will register the complaint verbally with the Assistant Director or Director of the program. The outcome of this meeting is usually a prompt resolution of the issue. The decision of the Executive Director is final.

Conclusion

We are very happy to include your family in our center. We look forward to getting to know your child and his/her family. We would like to do everything to help you and your child/ren be happy and hope that your family and this center will have a long and lasting relationship. Feel free to contact the Assistant Director or Director at any time. We appreciate any comments or suggestions that will ensure the excellent care of your children.

Bay Area Child Development Center Parent Handbook **Policy Acknowledgement**

I, _____ ACKNOWLEDGE, I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook for BACDC, and hereby agree to abide by the aforementioned policies as my child/ren is/are enrolled in this center. I further understand that upon withdrawal from the center, I must give a 2 weeks advance, and that I am obligated for payment of tuition until final withdrawal.

Date: _____
Parent or Guardian