

Welcome Packet

Pre-K Classrooms





Dear Parents,

My name is Sheri Leonard and I am the Director here at Child's Day. I have been in the Early Childhood field for nearly three decades and I have served in all roles in the early childhood education field from infant, toddler and pre-K teacher, school administrator, to adjunct faculty at Austin Community College teaching the next generation of preschool teachers. Working with children, teachers and families is rewarding in different ways but providing a warm community feel for everyone to succeed is what I love about Early Education Programs. I am so excited to start a new school year with dynamic teachers, amazing children, and many new families!

I want all families to know that I have an open-door policy. My office is located past the front office, behind the keypad entrance. If you have questions, feedback, concerns, or just want to say hello, I am here to meet with you and assist you in any way I can.

If I am in an appointment or otherwise unavailable, please feel free to email me and I'll do my best to respond to you in a timely manner. My contact information is below.

I am committed to ensuring your child has a great learning experience with us! As parents and guardians, I understand that you are the most important teacher in your child's life. Together the teachers and I join you in a partnership focused on helping your child achieve growth and success.

Welcome to the new school year!

Sheri Leonard

Director

sheril@childsday.com



Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Child's Day, where children come first!

We believe young children learn best by doing – through play and meaningful work. They need a safe, happy, stimulating, and nurturing environment offering concrete sensory experiences, positive social encounters, and age-appropriate learning opportunities.

We believe children can achieve their full potential by experiencing success with activities which encourage development of a healthy self-concept and foster positive interactions with peers and adults. Children learn to feel good about themselves as people when they are treated in a positive, caring manner. Trust and emotional security result when children learn to expect positive experiences with caring, affectionate adults.

We believe each child is unique and part of a family system. Since parents are the most significant adults in a child's life and know their children better than anyone, respectful and supportive partnerships between teachers and parents are critical to meeting each child's needs. Daily communication between parents and teachers is very important.

We believe parents and teachers benefit from child development educational opportunities which enhance their skills and improve their ability to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners.

Please familiarize yourself with the Parent Handbook and other assorted documents and forms available on our web site: www.childsday.com. Additional information and helpful hints about child development are also available from the staff.

We strive daily to be the best early childhood development center in Austin. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and expected. As owners, we want to know whenever you have a question or concern. Misunderstanding can occur when communication is lacking, so please be sure to let one of us (Lead Teacher, Director, or Owner) know when something is on your mind. We are proud of the faith you have placed in us and will work continually to justify your trust.

We look forward to having you with us!

Lauren and Neil Sicarelli

Owners

Child's Day



Welcome to PAC! The Parents' Advisory Committee (PAC) is a volunteer group of parents whose children attend Child's Day. You are automatically a member of PAC with your child's enrollment!

PAC meetings are held once a month, on the second Wednesday of the month. Meeting times will be posted on our website, but are usually held via Zoom from 12:00 to 1:00 or in the Activity Room from 4:30-5:30.

During the PAC meetings, parents will plan events that will take place throughout the year in honor of our children and their families as well as the Child's Day teachers and staff. PAC meetings also provide a great forum for updates from faculty on happenings in the school and open discussions among the parents and faculty.

PAC provides a wide variety of opportunities for you to be involved with your child and the school throughout the year. We value whatever contribution you can offer – time, creativity, hands-on participation, leadership, etc. Your participation does not have to take a lot of time for you to make a significant impact. Through your participation in PAC, you can:

- Get more involved in your child's experience at Child's Day
- Meet other Child's Day parents
- Support your child's teachers
- Help organize and participate in fun family events

Historically, parent volunteers have asked their fellow parents to contribute to a "No-Fuss" fundraiser at the beginning of each school year to fund the PAC budget. Through this fundraiser, families make a one-time donation in addition to their tuition payment in October. A few examples of the ways parents have used the funds include:

- Parent education programs
- Staff appreciation events (like holiday breakfast and staff appreciation week)
- Scholarships for faculty to broaden their teaching skills
- Family gathering events in the fall and/or spring
- Week of the Young Child (a week-long celebration of our children)

We hope you'll participate in PAC and become an active part of our school community. Be sure to come to the first meeting of the year where the budget and the no-fuss fundraiser request amount will be determined and initial plans for the year will be kicked off.

Classroom Philosophy Statement

1. Children must feel valued.

- Speak to children respectfully at their eye-level.
- Use the children's name often.
- Listen to the children's ideas and concerns.
- Offer children choices whenever possible.
- Acknowledge children's feelings.
- Offer comfort when appropriate.
- Incorporate children's ideas and interests into the curriculum.
- Always be honest and a positive role model with/for the children.

2. Children need experiences that utilize their senses.

- Children need time to interact with materials and each other.
- Children must have hands-on experiences with new and familiar materials.

3. Children need creative exploration.

- Give children lots of time to experiment and explore.
- Make time for art, dancing, music, movement, building, construction and dramatic play.

4. The children are the "roots" of the classroom.

- They learn from each other.
- The curriculum is based on the children's experiences, interests, ideas, and developmental needs.
- The classroom is a safe place to make mistakes.
- The environment encourages independence and the opportunities to make choices.
- The children feel empowered in their classroom.

5. Special attention is given to each individual child and his/her developmental needs.

- The curriculum is geared towards each child's learning style.
- Activities, toys and books are chosen to meet the individual needs and interests of the children.
- Expectations for each child are based on their needs and abilities.

6. Family involvement in the classroom is very important.

- Join us on field trips.
- Provide/ share items to enhance our curriculum.
- Come in and help with a project.
- Read stories to the children.
- Share family traditions/culture with the class.

7. Social and Emotional Development are key components to learning.

They are linked to all other developmental areas.

- We practice cooperating with others and working independently.
- We practice sharing in a relaxed, non- threatening way.
- We take care of each other and ourselves.
- We always try because we can do difficult things and there is support available if we need it.
- The classroom is a safe place to express emotions.
- Feelings are acknowledged.

With confidence and a strong self-image, children are more willing to try challenging new activities, utilize creative thinking in problem solving and share ideas.

Important Classroom Information

Pre-K Classrooms

Items to Bring:

- ☐ Three complete changes of clothes including socks, underwear (if applicable), and **one extra pair of shoes**. MUST be closed-toed shoes and have a back strap. Please **LABEL EVERYTHING** clearly with your child's name. Please put these clothes in a Ziploc to help reduce the spreading of germs
- ☐ Sunscreen/ bug repellent or the money to cover the cost, plus the signed permission slip.
- ☐ Blanket/ Lovey that your child might want during nap. It must fit inside the cubby.
- ☐ 1 Ream of Color or White Copy Paper
- ☐ 1 Black & White Composition Notebook
- ☐ Family photos include pets (if applicable); booklet will be handed out at orientation or playdate
- ☐ Well balanced meal in a lunch box with child's name; containers/ cups/ water bottles **MUST** be labeled. Please include a drink with lunch or water will be provided for them. Provide an ice pack or block to keep food cool; use thermos to keep items cold or hot
- ☐ Water bottles with a cap or folds down to prevent cross-contamination
- ☐ **ANY PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION MUST BE CHECKED INTO THE OFFICE**
- ☐ **Non-prescribed medication (i.e. teething tablets/gel/Benadryl) – MUST BE CHECKED INTO THE OFFICE.**

Arrival:

- ☐ **Between 7:45 am and 9:00 am**
Please make every effort to have your child arrive prior to 9:00 am so he or she can participate in planned group activities and so the teacher can greet you and your child each morning. This policy is in place to help children have a smooth drop off and minimize disruptions in the classroom.
- ☐ Please make sure to evaluate your child's health before arriving and review our illness policy if you have questions about whether your child is well enough for school.
- ☐ Communicate with the teacher:
 - How your child slept the night before
 - Your child's mood and demeanor
 - Did your child eat well for dinner and breakfast
 - Are there any changes in the routine for the family that may impact your child
- ☐ Say Good-Bye to your child so that he/she knows you are leaving. A confident quick goodbye is MUCH more reassuring for your child than a long drawn out goodbye.
- ☐ Parents must sign their child in by scanning the QR code through the Brightwheel app. This is a TX Childcare Licensing requirement.
- ☐ If your child walks in with a toy from home, please take it with you when you leave.

Pick Up:

- ☐ Please refrain from dropping off or picking up your child during transitions, lunchtime, or group naptimes. This time is generally between 11:00am and 2:30pm. Please check with your child's teacher to determine this period. If you have an extenuating circumstance and must pick up your child during this period, please let your child's teacher know in advance so that they can help minimize disruption to the other children.
- ☐ The program day ends at 5:45. Parents are asked to be leaving the building by 5:45pm. After 5:45pm, late fees will apply (\$20.00 for the first 5 minutes + \$2.00/minute after 5:50pm).
- ☐ Be sure to take sign out your child each day.

WHAT YOUR CHILD WILL BRING HOME- Your child will bring home work that he/she has chosen to do. It may not be apparent to an adult eye what the child has learned from the process, so ask your child about his/her work. Experience and observation make it clear to us that children learn much more when they are engaged in activities that are meaningful to them. As teachers, it is our job to offer a wide variety of activities each day and encourage each child to participate. Most of our activities are "hands on", which means that the children are learning by doing an activity (as opposed to listening to a teacher explain a concept). It is very hard to "show" this kind of learning taking place. We try to make you aware of these activities in several ways: in our monthly newsletter, in written observations of the children as they engage in an activity, through photographs that we take of the children as they work, and by sharing the children's thoughts from our group discussions.

PROBLEM SOLVING- One of the most important skills we will practice with your child this year is problem solving. This skill will help the children in all areas of the classroom, but most importantly it will help them socially as they practice negotiating and compromising. We will often ask the child "How can we solve this problem?" All ideas are considered and many will be tried before they are rejected, so that the children are able to actually see why a solution won't work. Our goal is for the children to eventually be able to work through their conflicts without adult intervention. The ability to negotiate and compromise is a life-long skill that is easier to learn at this age.

BIRTHDAYS-For safety reasons, Child's Day requests no balloons or lighted birthday candles. On the day of your child's birthday, our morning activities will include making birthday cards for your child. This makes the day special for your child, and also gives the children an opportunity to practice emerging writing skills.

Please let us know in advance if you wish to provide snack on the day of your child's birthday. Birthday treats are served after afternoon snack, around 3:30 pm.

STAR OF THE WEEK-In lieu of Show and Tell, our class will feature a "Star of the Week." On Monday, they will be given a special box to fill up with 5 of their favorite things. These can be items like books, toys, photos, awards, etc. On Friday, the Star of the Week will present their box of items to the class. I

encourage parents to help their child select items and talk about why these items are important to them. We will top the week off with a book the class will create about the Star.

Things to keep at home:

- ☐ Personal Toys: Toys brought from home are easily lost or broken and are not always shared willingly. Child's Day provides an abundance of toys. Please encourage your child to keep his/her toys at home. Books are always welcome. We will have scheduled Star of the Week times starting in September where children can bring items from home for a specific time.

Reminders/ Notes:

- ☐ To help keep us in compliance with State regulations, be sure to **Sign-in/sign-out each day**
- ☐ For the safety of your children and others, please keep your child and siblings close by at drop-off/ pick-up. Texas law prohibits children under the age of 7 from being left alone in a car.

Please **LABEL EVERYTHING brought to school!** Label lunch boxes, water bottles, food containers and lids, clothing, shoes, socks, jackets, sweaters, gloves, etc. Many children have items that are the same or similar and determining whose is whose can be confusing to the child and the teacher! Labeling all of your child's belongings will prevent them from being lost or misplaced.

Here are a few websites with good sticker labels if you are interested:

www.oliverslabels.com

<http://mabelslabels.com> (great for cups, containers and clothing)

SAMPLE

Pre-K Daily Routine/Schedule

Times are flexible and will vary to meet the needs of the children and our enrichment class schedule

Room opens- Morning health check upon arrival
Free Choice: Open Centers and/or Journaling
Bathroom/Wash Hands
Playground
Morning Circle Time:
 Morning Message, Pick Jobs, Calendar
Small Group Activities:
 Story Dictations, Handwriting Without Tears, Math, Group Projects
Snack
Playground
Wash hands/mat jobs
Lunch
Rest Time
Wake up, wash hands
Afternoon circle time
Free Choice: Open Centers and/or Journaling
Afternoon Snack
Clean up, Bathroom
Playground
Afternoon Activities
Field Mice room closes

***This schedule is subject to change. Once the children have adjusted to classroom routines, playground schedules are finalized and enrichments begin, we will forward all parents a more permanent schedule. To avoid classroom disruption, we ask that all children be dropped off no later than 9am.**

For the children's well-being and their need for uninterrupted rest, please no pick up or drop off between 1:00 – 2:30pm daily.

Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum

The curriculum at Child's Day is based on the principals of Developmentally Appropriate Practice, which recognize that children learn best by doing. In our PreK classroom, we use the Emergent Curriculum format. Children are empowered to make their own choices and the curriculum is based on the children's interests, experiences, and developmental needs.

It is a common misconception that Developmentally Appropriate Practice and "academics" are mutually exclusive. In reality, when children are involved in the hands-on activities provided in our classroom, they are acquiring the academic skills they will need to succeed in elementary school.

Children learn best while *doing*. Giving a child the opportunity to figure it out for himself/herself ensures that he/she will really understand the concept. Memorizing is *not* the same as understanding.

Before children can understand the importance of the alphabet, they have to understand that the letters mean something when put together in certain ways. The same is true of numerals – understanding "fiveness" is as important as being able to identify the numeral. Before children can write letters or numbers, they have to have enough small muscle control to be able to hold a writing instrument and control it. Small muscle control can be gained by stringing beads, manipulating puzzle pieces and Legos, etc.

Goals for Pre-K

We help to facilitate our goals for the children by providing an environment where children feel safe, successful, and challenged. We plan for a variety of activities that encourage emergent literacy and writing, and activities that encourage emergent math skills. We also expose children to a variety of different topics and experiences (familiar, new, easy, and challenging). We help them to:

- Become enthusiastic learners
- Work for greater lengths of time independently, in small groups and in large groups
- Use words more frequently and successfully to solve conflicts, express emotions, share ideas, etc.
- Work cooperatively together
- Become confident, responsible, caring community members
- Make independent choices and deal with the consequences of those choices (positive and negative)
- Become self-sufficient with daily routines (dressing, cleaning up, conflict resolution, etc.)
- Self-regulate behavior more consistently
- Utilize a variety of creative outlets (art, dancing, storytelling, music, movement, building, construction, etc.)
- Expand language (storytelling, brainstorming, surveys, reading quality literature, journals, exposing children to other languages)

Parent Communication Information

We want to communicate your child's experience in meaningful ways. Here are some things to look forward from your child's teachers:

1. **Food, Naps, Diapers/Toileting:** Each day your child's teacher will track your child's naps, diapers/toileting, and food. This information will be shared daily either on a paper Daily Report or through Brightwheel. This will let you know how your child ate and slept throughout the day. You will also receive photos and updates about your child's day through Brightwheel.
2. **Reminders:** If your child has a need (such as a change of clothes, a reminder to bring their water bottle to school, needing to replenish a consumable, etc...), your child's teacher will send you a note through Brightwheel. Class-wide reminders and needs may be shared through Brightwheel and/or email.
3. **Child Development:** We want the information you receive about your child to be meaningful, consistent and reflective of where their developmental experience is. Teachers will share frequent updates and anecdotes about your child's development through photos, Brightwheel messages, emails, and three times per year at Parent Teacher Conferences. Teachers will provide input on your child's social emotional development, gross motor and fine motor development, language and literacy development, and their cognitive and math development.

Communication between Teachers and Parents

We believe communication between parents and teachers are essential to the children's optimal development. There are many opportunities for parents to be aware of what is going on in the classroom and their children's lives.

- During pick-up, please allot yourself time for a **face-to-face** conversation with the teachers to talk about your child's day. This is a great opportunity to discuss any challenging behaviors that may have arisen during the day.
- For infant and toddler classrooms, teachers will track your information about what your child ate for snack and lunch, how long he/she napped, when diaper changes occurred and the type (urine or BM), your child's disposition, something he/she enjoyed, and reminders. This information will be shared daily either on a paper Daily Report or through Brightwheel.
- Teachers will share photos and information about daily activities through Brightwheel. Be sure to read these notes and talk about it with your child...they love to talk about their fun day!
- A **developmental lesson plan** will be posted on the hallway bulletin board providing information on our curriculum for each week.
- If your child gets a mild injury at school (scratch, bite, scrape, etc...) or injures someone else, you will receive an incident report to sign. If the injury is on the face or head, we will give the parents a call.
- If your child becomes ill at school, we will contact parents. If we can't reach you after 30 minutes, we will contact your emergency contacts. We ask that all children be picked up from school within one hour of being contacted due to illness.
- You will receive a weekly newsletter that shares information about activities and experiences, what we're learning about, and any important information you need to know.
- Please be sure to read any **flyers** posted on the front door or letters sent in your child's cubby. They will often have important information, i.e. updates with the classroom, classroom parties, pre-conference worksheets, etc.
- Child's Day hosts three **parent-teacher conferences** a year to discuss with you your child's individual development and goals.
- You are welcome to request a **meeting** anytime during the year to address any concerns or to obtain more information regarding the development of your child.
- Parents may call infant classrooms directly. You can reach the Chicks and Ducklings at 512-327-8166. You can reach the Hummingbirds and Finches at 512-518-1701. To leave a message for any other classroom, please call our main number: 512-327-3274. You may also send notes to your child's teacher via Brightwheel. The teachers' main priority is supervision of and interactions with the children. They will respond to parent communications during their plan time or when they have a moment.
- Every classroom has its own email: classroomname@childsday.com.

Please inform your child's teacher about:

* How the child slept the night before, including hours of sleep * The child's mood and demeanor of the morning * If the child ate well for dinner and breakfast * If there is any change in routine for the family at home which may have an impact on the child * New pregnancy or baby * If there has been any sign of fever, skin eruptions, vomiting, diarrhea, discolored mucus, extreme fatigue, discharge from the eyes	* If the child is taking any medication (provide the time it was given) * If the child needs to leave earlier than normal * Anyone visiting your home * A move to a new home * Either parent traveling out of town * Random stay-home days * Illness or Death in the family * Extracurricular activities that may affect their temperament
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Positive Guidance and Discipline

Guidance and discipline are techniques used to teach children positive, appropriate behaviors needed to coexist with others. We believe this social learning and development of inner control is best accomplished through important adults modeling appropriate behaviors. These are behaviors we would like to see the children mimic. These skills develop slowly with experience and age. Physical punishment, shaming, withholding food and discouraging words can be frightening and/or diminish a child's self-worth and are not part of our guidance and discipline philosophy.

We use the following positive approaches to guidance and discipline:

- 1) **Prevention:** All classroom environments are set up to be safe and developmentally appropriate. We limit the number of guidelines the children have to follow. It is our goal that the children be able to experience the environment with as little restraint as possible in order to develop their own internal control.
- 2) **Observation:** We get to know the children, their interests, personalities and their stages of development so we can meet all of their needs.
- 3) **Modeling:** We believe that children learn from behaviors modeled for them by important adults in their life. We treat the children and other adults with respect and act and speak to them the way we want the children to interact with others.
- 4) **Acknowledgment:** We comment when they are using appropriate behaviors. (i.e. "You are being gentle" or "You helped your friend!") We call this positive reinforcement.
- 5) **Choices/Problem solving:** We encourage children to assist in very simple ways with care giving routines as is appropriate for their age. We encourage the children to find solutions when challenges occur. We also observe and comment on their choices. We often give children very structured choices rather than open-ended questions. This insures that the choices they make are choices we as adults can live with. This begins even in infancy and helps to develop self-confidence.
- 6) **Redirection:** We will remove a child from a situation or encourage a child to act or try a behavior in a more appropriate manner (i.e., I see that you're pushing. You can push this car. We have gentle hands with our friends.)
- 7) **Clear limits and follow-through:** We will state the rules and expectations in a simple way and have an adult step in and help the child follow rules when necessary.

When changes or patterns in behavior are observed, we may notify the parents to set up a meeting. At times, it is helpful to involve the director or assistant director as we put our heads together to form a positive support plan for your child. During these meetings, we ask parents to share their observations and we all work together as a team to ensure each child's success. If it is recommended that your child receive an assessment or any type of outside service to help them have a more successful school experience, we will gladly partner up with those services in any way we can.

What Do Children Learn Playing in Classroom Centers?

In early childhood classrooms, the rooms are arranged so that the learning can take place in centers. These are the basic centers your child experiences every day at school. Your child will also have access to sensory centers, science centers and special themed spaces that offer limitless opportunities for hands on learning through play.

Block Center

Children are learning math skills (spatial relationships, shape identification), science skills (texture, thickness, hard or soft, gravity), social skills (sharing, teamwork), language development (vocabulary building, tone of voice, auditory memory).

Manipulative/Puzzle Center

Children use fine muscles that need to be developed for later handwriting. They also use visual memory and visual motor skills to determine how things fit together. Manipulatives and puzzles require children to use reason in order to use the toys appropriately. Much use of language takes place in this center as children discuss among themselves and ask questions of the teacher.

Dramatic Play

This center is the focal point for language development. Children must be able to speak and listen as “make-believe” games develop. Social skills are put into practice during the give and take of sharing. Cognitive development takes place as children express ideas and bring “make-believe” to reasonable conclusions. Much of what children intuitively learn from parents and teachers is put into practice in this center.

Art Center

Children’s creativity is encouraged through exploration with the art media provided (paint, glue, finger paint, construction paper, craft items, crayons, markers, etc.). Also, fine motor development and coordination are encouraged as they use their hands to make things. It is in the process of making something that children learn, not in producing the product. Therefore, teachers are not concerned with how the end product looks, rather how the child approached the project. All activities have the underlying purpose of getting children ready to use their fingers and hands for handwriting.

Book Center

Literacy development takes place every day in the class book center. Children have the opportunity to explore printed material and gain an understanding of print awareness, vocabulary development, and pre-reading skills. Alphabet skills are naturally encouraged in this center.

Child's Day Food Policy

In Child's Day's effort to prevent choking and keep children safe, we offer the following guidelines for lunches and in class party snacks. Please pack a balanced, nutritious meal with variety for your child to eat. The children are learning to self-feed; please choose finger foods that will help increase their success.

Here is a reminder of possible choking hazard foods that are prohibited at Child's Day according to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing Division. If any of these foods are accidentally packed in your child's lunch box, we will send it back home with a reminder note. This is applicable for every student in every classroom. We understand that your child may eat some of these foods at home. **Please be mindful that these foods are prohibited in group care.** At the bottom of this page is a lunch food list filled with great ideas for your child. Your child's teacher reserves the right to not serve a food item (even if unlisted) if they suspect it may be a possible choking hazard. Thank you for helping us to keep your children safe and to remain in compliance with Texas Minimum Standards!

Prohibited Foods List

Research has shown that 90% of fatal choking occurs in children younger than four years of age. It is a requirement and best practice for **ALL CHILDREN** in group care (this includes infants through Pre-Kindergarten, regardless of age) to abstain from packing potential choking hazards and bringing them to school. Examples of foods that present a risk of choking include:

- hot dogs sliced into rounds
- whole grapes
- hard candy
- string cheese
- nuts
- seeds
- hard chunks or very small pieces of uncooked raw vegetables (ex: broccoli, raw peas, carrots) Soft, manageable vegetable pieces are ok.
- dried fruit (raisins ok)
- pretzels [including pretzel thins]
- chips
- peanuts
- popcorn
- marshmallows
- spoonful of peanut butter
- chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Again, please bring the lunches in labeled containers that the children can open and are safe for children to handle, drop, and use (do not send glass or ceramic containers to school except for infant food in glass jars). **Please label every item inside your child's lunch, including things like zip lock bags, pouches, and individual packets of food to avoid mix-ups!**

Note: Food for infants should be cut no larger than ¼ inch square. Food for toddlers/2s should be cut no larger than ½ inch square.

School Lunchbox Ideas

Put together a simple delicious lunch by mixing ideas from the 3 categories.

Note: Lunches should also include healthy dairy options.

Grains

whole wheat tortillas •pita pockets with sun butter, banana •bagel with cream cheese or sun butter •whole wheat muffins •whole wheat waffles •naan/flatbread with dipping sauce •pasta with marinara •whole wheat sandwich •mac n cheese •cheese quesadilla •bean and cheese tostadas

Protein

Hardboiled egg •cottage cheese •tacos •sliders •hummus •grilled chicken •sun butter with apples •turkey rollups •tuna •cheese slices •yogurt with fruit or granola •leftovers dinner •roast beef •refried beans

Fruits/Veggies

Banana •peaches •apples •pears •pickles •nectarines •black beans •salsa •cole-slaw •honeydew melon •strawberries •mango •papaya •cucumber slices •orange slices •plums •avocado •soft sweet peas •steamed vegetables •pepper slices

Parties & Celebrations Frequently Asked Questions Sheet

Q - Can I celebrate a special event for my child in their classroom?

Yes! Birthdays and holidays are an especially exciting time for young children and the Center will be pleased to help your child celebrate with classmates and staff **if arrangements are made in advance.**

Q - What do I need to know if I want to plan a celebration in my child's classroom?

Email your child's lead teacher and share your thoughts on how you would like to celebrate your child. Party planning should attempt to minimize disruption of routine and prevent unwarranted anxiety for the children.

Q – How do I share information about my child's celebration to other students? Can the lead teacher do that for me?

Lead teachers have many tasks that they must oversee and complete in order to make sure your child is having a high-quality experience in school every day. If you need help getting birthday information to other families, here are some recommendations:

- Use your classroom directory to reach out to parents. Sometimes, classroom directories are not complete until the end of September. If a classroom directory is not available, please utilize one of the next recommendations.
- Print paper invitations and place them in every child's cubby.

Please help us to honor each teacher's very full schedule by utilizing one of the recommendations above to reach out to parents for celebrations.

Q - What kind of snack can I bring to share at a celebration for my child?

First, please be aware of any food allergies in your child's classroom, including if it is a peanut free zone. Child's Day recommends **healthy – low sugar snack** options for celebrations. Here is a list of the popular celebration snacks that have been used in the past:

- Fresh fruit such as apple slices, pear chunks, bananas, cut up berries, etc...
- Mini muffins made with banana, pumpkin, corn, cranberries or blueberries.
- Cookies such as crunchy oatmeal and raisin or blueberry.
- Healthy cereal or granola bars.
- Fresh fruit kebabs with a dipping sauce of vanilla yogurt.
- Yogurt buffet served with a variety of toppings like chopped fruit and berries, granola and shredded coconut.
- Strawberry tips or banana slices dipped in dark chocolate.
- Fruit shakes made from blended fresh fruit, ice and yogurt

Q - What is prohibited at a celebration hosted at Child's Day?

- Balloons are a choking hazard for young children and should not be brought into the center. If you absolutely cannot do without balloons, Mylar balloons are an alternative.)
- State licensing prohibits any type of open flame in the center; birthday candles are not permitted.
- **If your child's classroom is a nut-free zone, any snack that you bring in to share must be nut-free.**

Q – My child has many allergies and I would prefer they not eat food that is brought in from outside of the school.

What can I do so my child doesn't feel excluded?

- If there is going to be a celebration in your child's classroom, the lead teacher will inform all parents. If your child has allergy or dietary restrictions, please send in a "special" snack that we can serve them during the celebration so that they don't feel excluded. Some parents opt to send in a box of frozen treats that we can keep at the school so that we can pull one out in the event of a celebration and you don't have to worry about possibly forgetting to send something in.

Q - A student in my child's class is having a birthday party in the classroom. Do I as a parent have to attend?

No. If your child's classroom is celebrating another child, your participation is welcome but not required.

Q - I want to have a celebration outside of Child's Day but I'd like to use our classroom directory or personal invitations handed out at school to invite my child's classmates. Do I have to invite everyone in my child's class?

Yes. If celebration invitations are distributed at the Center or your child's classroom directory is utilized for invitations, all children in the class should be invited.



Child's Day Illness Exclusion Policy

The health of your child is of the utmost importance to us. Child's Day and Child Care Licensing requires that precautions be taken to safeguard the health of all children enrolled. This includes excluding children from attending with symptoms outlined below. **Please notify the school when your child is out sick and if a specific diagnosis is confirmed.** The school will notify families and staff about any illnesses.

Administrator or staff will ask parents at drop off how their child is feeling and if a child appears to be sick, it is also the Administrator or staff's responsibility to ask a parent to take a child back home if the child is deemed not well enough to be at school.

Teachers will also conduct health checks on each child during the day, which may include temperature checks. Admin/staff will question parents about scrapes, bruises, etc. that are visible. Child's Day does not employ a school nurse; therefore, any first aid administered, or medication given will be done by the child's teacher or administrative personnel.

A child who becomes ill at school will be removed from their classroom and cared for in a separate space by one caregiver until their parents are able to promptly pick them up from school. Children who are sick must be taken home within one hour of being contacted as we do not have facilities to care for sick children. If neither parent can be reached, other persons listed on your enrollment forms will be called.

In the event of illness, the following policies and procedures must be followed:

Symptom/Diagnosis	When Child will Be Sent Home or Excluded	When Child may Return
Fever	Has a tympanic (ear) temperature, or for infants under six months old, an axillary (armpit) temperature, of 100 degrees or higher OR has had a fever of 100 degrees or higher during the previous 24 hours.	The child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school. The child must be well enough to comfortably participate in a group care setting.
Respiratory Symptoms	If child exhibits difficult or rapid, shallow breathing or severe coughing, the child shall be excluded from the program. If the child makes high pitched croup or barking sounds after he/she coughs, and the child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough, the child shall be excluded from the program.	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious and the child can cope with the routine activities of group care.
Cold Symptoms Nasal Congestion Sneezing Watery eyes Cough	If accompanied by fever (see fever criteria above)	The child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious. The child must be well enough to comfortably participate in a group care setting.

Symptom/Diagnosis	When Child will Be Sent Home or Excluded	When Child may Return
COVID-19	Child tests positive for COVID-19	The child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school. The child must be well enough to comfortably participate in a group care setting.
Diarrhea	After 2 occurrences within a 24-hour period	When diarrhea subsides for 24 hours without medication or doctor's note stating child is not contagious
Diaper Rash	If sores are oozing and leak body fluid	When exclusion criteria are resolved
Active Head Lice	When live nits/eggs are present	When exclusion criteria are resolved and after first treatment is complete
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	When spots/bumps/lesions are noticed or present in the following areas: • Hands, feet & mouth • Diaper area • Thigh/legs	The child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school. If lesions or spots are still present, the child must have a doctor's note stating when the child is no longer contagious.
Itching	If itching is suspected to be caused by any of the following: Scabies, Impetigo, or Ringworm	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious
Appearance or Behavior Changes, Lethargy, Irritability	If the child looks or acts differently, is lethargic, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, or difficult to awaken, the child should remain at home for further observation. If the child is not able to participate in the daily activities and routine of school comfortably and safely, they should remain at home.	When child can participate comfortably in the routine activities of the program.
Mouth Sores	When sores cause drooling	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious.
Eye Discharge - Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) - Allergies	Thick mucus or pus from eyes When discharge is noticed Pinkish/red swollen or irritated eyes	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious and has taken medication for at least 24hrs
Rash – Skin/Scalp	When unidentified rash is noticed and is accompanied by: • Behavior change • Persistent itching • Fever • Has oozing/open wound/sores • Child is unable to participate	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious and return date
Chicken Pox	• When lesions are noticed or present	When all lesions are dried and crusted. Typically takes 6+ days and doctor's return date

Symptom/Diagnosis	When Child will Be Sent Home or Excluded	When Child may Return
Strep Throat	If child has a positive strep culture	After at least 24 hours of antibiotic medicine and note with return date
Vomiting	After one occurrence within a 24-hour period. Gagging/minimal drool/spit-up due to excessive crying/anxiety does not constitute vomiting.	When vomiting subsides for 24 hours without medication and able to participate comfortably in the routine activities of the program.

For illnesses not specifically listed above, please refer to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services [School Communicable Disease Chart](#).

Your child's exclusion and readmission to the program is subject to review by their receiving classroom staff and/or a Director. If your child has a chronic illness or disability, please discuss a plan for reasonable admission/exclusion criteria with a Director.

The school will make efforts to notify your child's classmates of any illness in the classroom.

Child's Day Illness Reduction Policies and Procedures for Parents and Staff

Protecting the health of our teachers and the children in our care is our top priority. In order to help reduce illness in our school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Parents should drop off and pick up children at the classroom door.
2. Parents should evaluate their child's health and any symptoms BEFORE heading to school daily to make sure they are able to attend.
3. Health checks will be taken before teachers or children enter the classroom at drop-off and throughout the day, which may include temperature checks.
4. Adult and child hands should be washed throughout the day including each time a child or adult enters the classroom, after toileting/diaper changes, before eating, after wiping noses, when returning from outside, and after group play activities.
5. Please refer to the illness exclusion policy and keep your child at home if they are sick. This is the best way to prevent the spread of illness in a group setting.
6. All areas of children's play will be properly sanitized as needed, mid-day and at the end of the day.
7. All children's toys will be properly sanitized daily. Toys that come into contact with children's mouths will be placed in a designated container to be properly sanitized.
8. Home toys will not be allowed to support health and safety policies; comfort items/lovies are okay.
9. Teachers do not warm up food to reduce food handling. Parents may want to consider using a thermos to keep lunch warm.
10. All children should bring 2-3 changes of clothes in Ziplock bags that are labeled with child's name to be used when needed.
11. All bottles, bottle caps, sippy cups, and water bottles from home used for feeding or drinks should be labeled with child's name.



PRESCRIPTION AND NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION PROCESS

Do you need to drop off prescription medication (Amoxicillin, drops for eye infections, epi-pens, asthma inhalers, etc...) or over the counter medication (ibuprofen, acetaminophen, teething tablets, anti-itch cream, etc...) for your child?

ALL MEDICATIONS must be brought to the front office and a parent/guardian must complete a prescription or non-prescription medication authorization form. A doctor's authorization is required for all medications, even non-prescription medications. Classroom teachers **CAN NOT** accept medications from parents. Prescription and Non-Prescription authorizations forms are available in the front office.

I'm a parent dropping off medication...what should I do?

Please come to the front office any time **after 8:00 am** so that an administrator can receive the medication and give you the proper form to fill out. The medication needs to be in the original packaging with the original dispenser. If the prescription for the medication is on the box, you must bring in the box with the prescription.

After receiving the medication and making sure that we have all the required documentation, the administrator will bring the medication directly to the classroom where it will be stored in a medication cabinet or designated refrigerated area. Epi-pens are stored in insulated storage containers which are taken out to the playground.

Do I need to have a prescription from my doctor and are there any forms I need to fill out as a parent?

Yes, we must have a doctor's authorization to administer both prescription AND non-prescription medications. The doctor's authorization should include dosage and timing instructions. Prescription and non-prescription forms are available in the front office. A doctor's note is required for **ALL MEDICATIONS** excluding over-the-counter topical creams such as diaper rash ointment, anti-itch cream for bug bites, lotions, sunblock, etc... When in doubt, call the office for clarification.

What if no one is in the main office or in the Director/Assistant Director office?

Please wait in the front lobby area and call the school phone number. An administrator may be away from their desk, but they typically travel with a portable phone and can meet you in the front office to receive any medications that you are dropping off. **DO NOT LEAVE UNATTENDED AND UNCHECKED MEDICATION IN ANY OFFICE OR ANY CLASSROOM.**

Why can't I give my child's medication directly to their teacher?

During drop off and pick up are busy times for our teachers as they visit with parents and supervise children simultaneously. It can be challenging to go over the required paperwork, ask clarifying questions, and secure medication in the midst of so much transition. For the safety of your child, we want to ensure that something as critically important as medication has a consistent and uninterrupted intake process.

Classroom Name: _____

Please return this form to your child's teacher.



Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Permission Form

To protect the children from sunburn and insect bites during outside time, we recommend selecting one of the following options for sunscreen and insect repellent.

Please mark your preferred option, fill in any blanks, and return the form to your child's teacher as soon as possible. If you elect to participate in the classroom bug spray and sunscreen share, \$20 will be added to your ledger.

Child's Name: _____

- ☐ I will participate in the purchase of a class set of "Off Family Care" insect repellent and "H-E-B Baby Oxybenzone Free" or "H-E-B Kids Broad Spectrum" sunscreen (depending on availability). I give permission for teachers to apply these products on my child.
 - *\$20 will be added to my ledger to purchase insect repellent and sunscreen for the class.*
Please note: Teachers will notify parents if the classroom is getting low on insect repellent and sunscreen and needs to be replenished.

- ☐ I will provide my own sunscreen and insect repellent. I give my permission to apply the following products on my child:
 - _____ (sunscreen)
 - _____ (insect repellent)

- ☐ I elect to opt out of both of these options. I do not give permission to apply sunscreen or insect repellent on my child.

Parent's Signature

Date

Parent's Printed Name

***According to Childcare Licensing, this form must be renewed every 6 months.**