



The Children's Coalition

Parent Handbook
2021-2022



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Children's Coalition!

The mission of The Children's Coalition is to provide a joyful, nurturing, and safe environment where your child will grow and learn. We want you to be able to go about your daily activities confident in the knowledge that your child is happy and well cared for.

We have prepared this handbook to familiarize you with the Children's Coalition and its operating procedures. Please read it carefully and keep it available for your reference.

We look forward to the opportunity to get to know your family and share in your child's earliest and most formative years of life. Again, welcome to the coalition family! If you have any questions, comments or concerns, my door is always open. You can also contact me via phone at 409.740.4009 or by email at ccgalveston@gmail.com. Thank you for entrusting us with your child.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Boyles

Kimberly Boyles
Director

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1. History of the Children's Coalition

The Children's Coalition is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving Galveston, Texas, and surrounding communities. The Children's Coalition formed in 2009 in response to mass childcare closures due to destruction caused by Hurricane Ike in September of 2008. Left behind were a few daycare centers that employed the minimum number of teachers as required by the state, or church-based centers that were heavily subsidized by their congregations. Children's Coalition was formed, therefore, to address a gap in childcare options – providing lower teacher/child ratios and a high-quality curriculum. We believe that all children deserve to receive high quality childcare and the opportunity to be enriched by a curriculum.

1.1. Program Goals

- To provide a joyful, nurturing, and secure environment staffed with trained childcare professionals.
- To foster each child's development of a positive self-concept, positive socialization skills, self-help skills and a feeling of trust in other human beings.
- To practice healthy, safe, and nutritionally sound practices and to teach such practices to the children in our care.
- To provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials that are selected to emphasize concrete experiential learning in the areas of reasoning, language, visual perception, fine motor, and gross motor skills.
- To communicate with parents openly regarding their child's daily activities, individual needs, and developmental progress.
- To encourage creative expression and an appreciation for the arts.
- To respect diversity of children, parents, and staff.
- To identify special developmental needs of individual children, modifying the program to meet those needs and making referral for special services if appropriate.

2. Operating Policies

The Children's Coalition is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and thus is required to follow the minimum standards set forth by the state of Texas and is subject to their inspection. The center exceeds those requirements in many areas such as child to staff ratios, required teacher qualifications, curriculum and health and safety standards. Current inspection reports are posted in the office area for review. A copy of Texas' Minimum Standard Rules is always available to anyone for review. The local licensing office is at 123 Rosenberg, Galveston, TX. The phone number to the local office is 409.766.5924. The website is www.dfps.state.tx.us/. The Child Abuse hotline is 800-252.5400.

In compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, Children's Coalition does not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Children's Coalition policies are reviewed yearly and be change by a majority vote by the Board of Directors



2.1. Eligibility for Enrollment

The Children's Coalition was created to provide high quality childcare to the Galveston community, serving children between the ages of 6 weeks and older. Applications for enrollment at the Children's Coalition of Galveston are accepted on a rolling basis. The application is available on the website, www.ccgalveston.org, and may be submitted via email to ccgalveston@gmail.com. A non-refundable application fee of \$75 is due at the time of application.

The Center Director is responsible for ensuring the overall welfare of the children enrolled in the Children's Coalition. Acceptance and enrollment of any child in the facility is contingent upon approval of the Director. Children with special medical conditions or developmental needs may be enrolled with the permission of the Director after a screening process to determine if the Center will be able to fully meet the child's needs.

2.2. Wait List Policy

If a place is not available in an age-appropriate classroom at the time of application, you may opt to join the waitlist. Positions on the wait list are first-come-first-served, with the following exception: Member families with siblings enrolled at the Coalition are given first priority on the waitlist.

Parents will be contacted by phone and by e-mail when a space becomes available from the waitlist, and the spot will be held for 24 hours. If the director has not received a reply after 24 hours, she will offer the opening to the next applicant on the waitlist. The \$200 non-refundable registration fee is due when a family accepts the offer of admission.

2.3. Enrollment

At the time of enrollment, no later than the first day in attendance, the forms listed below must be completed in full and submitted to the Coalition director.

- The Children's Coalition Application/Admission Form
- Infant/Child Information Sheet
- Texas Department of Health Preschool Child Health Record
- Emergency Medical Authorization form
- Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form (Last Page of Parent Handbook)
- Most current shot record – Please see our vaccination policy on page 16.

2.4. Hours of Operation

The Children's Coalition hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, January through December. The Coalition will observe and close the following holidays: New Year Eve, New Year Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, with two additional days for teacher in-service and/or yearly classroom transition. If the holiday falls on a weekend we will observe the holiday either the Friday before or Monday after the holiday.

2.4.1 Inclement Weather

Closure due to weather or emergency the Coalition will follow (GISD) Galveston Independent School District. Notifications will be sent out via Bright Wheel and email.

2.5. Arrival and Departure Procedures

Children's Coalition is currently following COVID-19 Pandemic Policy until further notice.

After signing in by using the Bright Wheel system, please notify the teacher of your arrival and share any information needed for the day.

The transition from home to school can be difficult for some children, and teachers will assist you and your child in time of separation anxiety. If your child must be dropped off after 10:00 a.m. due to a doctor's appointment, please notify the teacher in advance or center director.

At pick-up, please allow your child to finish any project or group activity they are working on before signing out and collecting any artwork, soiled clothing, or outerwear. Please make sure the caregiver knows the child is leaving. Parents are asked to refrain from talking on cellphones during pick-up, as this is an important time for teachers to provide updates and information about your child's day. The Coalition closes promptly at 6:00 p.m., and parents should allow themselves adequate time to gather a child's belongings and talk with the teacher before closing.

The front doors to the building are always locked in security; key fobs (issued to parents) are active from 6:30 a.m. -6:00 pm. One key fob is provided to each family, and an additional key fob may be issued at a cost of \$10.00. Please notify the director immediately in the event of a lost key fob so she can deactivate the lost fob. Lost key fobs may be replaced for \$10.00. All key fobs remain the property of the Children's Coalition and are to be returned on your last day as a Coalition member. A \$25.00 charge will be assessed for any key fobs not returned to the Coalition.

To ensure the safety of all children in the parking lot area during arrivals and departures, and to alleviate traffic congestion, please observe the following guidelines:

- Children must be dropped off and picked up from their classroom. Do not drop children off on the playground with a caregiver other than their teacher.
- Never leave a child in the car.
- Never leave your car motor running.
- Open all doors cautiously to assure they do not swing into a family entering the building.

The Department Human Services will be notified if any adult arrives to pick up a child and this person demonstrates behavior that would indicate to the staff that he/she is in an altered state of consciousness due to alcohol or drugs. The child will not be released to any person who appears to be in this state.

Parents will be required to list all persons authorized to drop off and pick up their children on the emergency form. These individuals must show government issued picture identification (driver's license) to the teacher or director before the child is released. Any deviation from the normal authorized

person(s) will require a written note from the parent to the Children's Coalition Director prior to the event. Children will only be released to persons listed on emergency form.

2.6. Late Pick Up Policy

If your child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m., according to the teacher's classroom clock, parents will be charged a late fee payable immediately and directly to the teacher by cash or check. Credit cards are not accepted to pay late fees.

The late fees are calculated as follows:

Actual Pickup Time*	Late Fee
6:01 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.	\$15.00 per family
6:16 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.	\$30.00 per family
6:31 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.	\$45.00 per family
6:46 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	\$60.00 per family

Children not picked up by 7:00 p.m. will incur charge of \$60.00 plus \$1.00 per additional minute per family.

* Actual Pickup occurs when the parent or his/her representative accepts physical custody and possession of the Child from the teacher and is not calculated from the time the parent arrives in the parking lot or other part of the Property.

2.7. Visitation Policy

Parents are welcome to visit any time. If a parent or other family member stops by for a visit during the day, the child will be removed from the classroom for the visit. Individuals not listed on the emergency contact form will not be allowed for visits during the day, unless accompanied by a child's parent or legal guardian. Parents are asked to be mindful of classroom routines when planning visits during the day. Disruption in routine, especially for young children, can have long lasting effects on a classroom dynamic.

The Children's Coalition has an established relationship with UTMB for residents and students to visit and observe in our classrooms. Please contact the director if you have questions about these planned visits. All visits are scheduled in advance, and the observations are completed in a manner intended minimize disruptions to the classrooms.

2.8. Emergencies

In case of emergency, we must be able to reach parent(s)/guardian(s) or a designated emergency contact person at any time when your child is in care. Please notify the director or your child's teacher immediately of any changes in your schedule, emergency phone contacts, or any other vital information. All families will be asked for updated contact information sheets annually in August. For details on the Coalition's Emergency Preparedness Plan, please see pages 23 and 24.

2.9. Child Custody and Statement of Custody

If an enrolled child's parents are divorced, the Children's Coalition will contact the custodial parent, unless other arrangements are made by the custodial parent or as directed by a court order. A copy of the legally filed, executed, and current order must be kept in the child's file.

2.10. Tuition and Fees

Monthly Tuition and Supply Fees

Age	Rate	Supply Fee	Monthly Total
Infant (6wks-18mos)	\$800.00	\$15.00	\$815.00
Toddler – Pre-K 3 (19mos-3yrs)	\$730.00	\$15.00	\$745.00
Pre-K4	\$650.00	\$15.00	\$665.00
After School Rate K- and up	\$75.00 Weekly	\$15.00	
Summer Camp K and up	\$150.00 Weekly	20.00	

2.10.1. Application Fee

A \$75 non-refundable application fee is submitted at the time of application. This fee will be applied to the first month's childcare fee.

2.10.2. Registration Fee

A \$200 non-refundable registration fee is due when an offer of admission is accepted. The registration fee secures a child's place at the Children's Coalition.

Tuition is due on the first business day of each month. Tuition is based on monthly rate and will not be adjusted for absences or vacation. If a family has more than one child enrolled, a 10% discount is applied to the lesser of the tuitions. Discount will not apply to any school age programs. Tuition payments are payable to the Children's Coalition. After three business days, a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged for each day a tuition payment is late. If tuition (including late fees) is more than 20 working days delinquent, the child's position at the Center will be re-allocated to the next eligible child on the waiting list. Tuition is not prorated or discounted for any reason. No refunds on tuition, supply fees or annual membership fees. Tuition rates are subject to change by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The supply fee is assessed to cover the cost of consumable products in the classrooms. The supply fee rate corresponds to the tuition rates by age and will be added to monthly tuition.

Drop-in care may be available upon request. This opportunity is only available if space and ratios allow. Availability of this service is considered on a case-by-case basis and is at the discretion of the Children Coalition Director. Drop-in attendance is defined as single day attendance scheduled at least one week prior to drop-in date. All Children's Coalition standards and regulations apply to drop-ins. Tuition rates for drop in attendance will be billed at a flat rate of \$50.00 per day. School age children will be charged a full day rate if attending more than 3 hours in a day. No discounts apply for drop-in care.

2.10.3. Membership Fee

A membership fee of \$200.00 per family is due March 1st each year. For new children enrolling after March 1st, the membership fee is prorated as follows:

Quarter	Prorated Fee
April 1 – June 30	\$150.00
July 1 – September 30	\$100.00
October 1 – December 31	\$50.00

2.10.4. Returned Check Fee

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for returned checks.

2.10.5. Online Payments

For your convenience, all tuition and fees can be made online at www.ccgalveston.org. A 4% service fee will be added to all online payments.

2.11. Withdrawal from the Coalition

Parents are required to provide one month's written notification when withdrawing children. Notice is required to allow adequate time to fill the vacancy. The Coalition reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment with written notice for the following reasons:

- non-cooperation of a child or parent/guardian
- delinquency in payment of tuition or other fees
- recurring tardiness in picking up children.
- inability of child or parent/guardian to adjust to the Children's Coalition.
- a potential risk to the health or safety of the child, the other children, or staff
- if the best interests of the child, the other children or the staff of the Coalition are not being served.

Typically, the Children's Coalition will provide 30 days written notice of enrollment termination; however, the Children's Coalition reserves the right to immediately terminate enrollment if circumstances, as determined by the Coalition Director, warrant such a termination. Tuition will not be prorated if your child is withdrawn from the coalition.

2.12. Grievances

Parents with a grievance concerning a classroom should approach their child's teacher with the concern. If the concern is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the Coalition Director should be contacted with the concern. If the concern is regarding a Coalition policy, the Director is the first point of contact.

Parents can discuss any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures with the Coalition Director. Having a director who is readily available to address concerns is one of the many benefits of our small organization, and members are encouraged to maintain an open line of communication with teachers and the director.



2.13. Staff/Child Ratios

The Children's Coalition offers developmentally appropriate childcare and preschool to children ranging in age from six (6) weeks to Pre-K age. The children are grouped according to age and abilities with the minimum staff/child ratios listed below. In the event a staff member is out Coalition may have to use state ratios to cover classrooms.

Age	Children's Coalition Teacher to Student Ratio	State Ratio*
Infant Room (6 weeks to 12 months)	1:4	1:4
1-year Room	1:4	1:5*; 1:9*
2-year Room	1:4	1:11
Pre-K Room	1:9	1:15*; 1:18*

*State Minimum Standards: 12-17 months is 1:5; 18-23 months is 1:9; 3 years is 1:15; 4 years is 1:18
Research indicates that group size and teacher training are both relevant to the quality of early childhood programs. Based on that knowledge, the Children's Coalition maintains low child/teacher ratios. Children's Coalition teachers have experience in early childhood settings, and many have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. All teachers are required to have a high school diploma and relevant prior experience.

2.14 Bright Wheel

Bright Wheel is the all-in-one platform for the school. This is an app that is downloaded on any mobile device. You must be able to have access to Bright wheel. We use Bright Wheel for all areas of communication in the center. Your child's teacher will post videos, pictures, and daily activities. The things posted on bright wheel are also kept confidential. This electronic system will be how you receive daily and important information about your child. The Bright Wheel system can give updates on your child's developmental milestones. Bright Wheel also gives you the availability to update contact information without the need of staff assistance. At the time of enrollment, you will receive details on how to access Bright Wheel.

2.15 Texas Rising Star

Children's Coalition is excited to be a part of Texas Rising Star. Texas Rising Star is a quality rating and improvement system the exceeds minimum standards in Texas early childhood programs.

2.16 Infant Program

The infant program at the Children's Coalition has two teachers. Important information is included below, but parents are encouraged to contact the teachers or director with any questions or concerns.

Items required for infants:

- Infant Communication: All detail about feedings, naps, and diaper changes for infant daily care are posted on Bright Wheel system.
- At least two complete changes of labeled clothes
- Sleep sack
- Diapering supplies (diapers, disposable wipes, ointment, powder, etc.)
- Breastfeeding mothers are welcome during the day to feed their child. The Coalition has provided a private feeding space available for nursing. Coalition can provide parent resources for breastfeeding. Please speak with the Director or your child's teacher to plan a feeding/visit schedule.
- Formula or breastmilk bottles must be prepared by parents and labeled with your child's first name and last initial.
- Sunscreen and mosquito spray (6mos and older)
- Infant Feeding instruction form filled out and signed every 30 Days. The feeding instruction form is required by state licensing until a baby is eating table food.

Note: All items must be labeled with child's first name and last initial

2.17 Toddler and Preschool Programs

Important information is included below, but parents are encouraged to contact the teachers or director with any questions or concerns.

In toddler and preschool classrooms, a daily schedule planned to provide a balance of activities to enhance and support early learning experience.

Parents are responsible for providing nutritionally balanced meals and snacks. Refrigerators are available to store lunches, and microwaves are available for heating food. Meals must be ready to serve to children with minimal preparation by teachers. Catered lunches are available, and parents can sign up for this option and pay a monthly fee for lunches.

Items required for toddler and preschool classes:

- At least one complete change of labeled clothes
- Diapering supplies (diapers, disposable wipes, ointment, powder, etc.) until child is toilet trained.
- Nap time blanket

2.18 Diapers

Parents are responsible for providing an adequate supply of disposable or cloth diapers for their children. Parents will be notified via Bright Wheel when their child's supply is low.

Cloth diapers can be used at the center. Please speak with your child's teacher about supplies and storage (clean and dirty) of the cloth diapers.

2.19 Clothing

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and seasonally appropriate. To decide if your child is appropriately dressed for the day, ask yourself, "Will I be upset if my child comes home with dirt, finger paint or chocolate pudding on his/her outfit?" If the answer is "yes," please change to more appropriate clothing for the day.

We ask that children wear rubber sole shoes for outdoor play. Sandals, Jellies, crocs, and flip flop hinder the child's ability participate and can often create safety hazards.

Jewelry is strongly discouraged. The wearing of jewelry can lead to safety issues and small jewelry can pose a choking hazard. If children have pierced ears, the backs should be screw-on. The Coalition teachers and staff are not responsible for any lost or damaged jewelry, and teachers will not maintain requirements for recent piercings.

2.20 Mealtimes

Parents are responsible for providing meals and snacks. The Children's Coalition is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting the children's daily food needs. We encourage that you provide meals and snacks with adequate nutritional value. Coalition can provide sample menus for healthy lunches and snacks.

In the event that a child is enrolled at the CCG with a severe food allergy, you may be asked to not send specific food items with your child. Some reactions to allergens can be severe enough to elicit a response simply by being in proximity of the allergen. All staff are educated on food allergies and the take precautions to ensure children's safety. Coalition can provide information about foods that may cause allergic reactions. If you child has a food allergy, please be sure to let the director and your child's classroom teacher know about the allergy and provide documentation from a physician referencing the reaction should be treated.

Any liquids and foods hotter than 110 degrees F are kept out of the reach of children.

Water is provided in each classroom and outdoors all day long.

Parents will be allowed to remove their child from the center for lunch purposes during their room's scheduled lunch hour. Parents must sign their child in and out during lunch periods if they plan to physically remove their child from the premises.

Lunch is currently offered to children at a cost of \$55.00 per month. This is subject to change based on our vendor, The Kitchen, located in Galveston, TX. Please make checks payable to The Coalition. Menus are displayed at the school for your convenience. Every Friday, your child will receive two slices of pizza from Papa John's the cost is \$11.00 per month per child. To ensure a healthy balanced lunch each Friday please send a nutritional choice.

2.21 Class Transitions and Promotions

Classes at the Children's Coalition transition each year in August. The transitions are completed over the course of a two-week period, with the class spending more time in the new class each day until fully transitioned to the new classroom and teachers.

Although the classes are designed to meet the needs of children in specific age ranges, some children may develop more rapidly than others. Children will be promoted to new classes when the Coalition Director, in collaboration with the child's teachers, determines that a child is developmentally ready to be promoted depending on availability in the classroom.

2.22 Classroom Routines and Curriculum

Each classroom has a daily schedule planned to provide a balance of activities: indoor/outdoor, quiet/active, individual/small group/large group and child initiated/staff initiated.

All curriculum activities are selected based on the knowledge that play is the activity from which children learn. The primary goal of the curriculum is to enhance play opportunities. Children learn from creating and interacting with their environment; consequently, our concentration is on process, rather than product. Children are learning at every moment and staff will capitalize on all opportunities as they occur, making adjustments throughout the day as needed.

All curriculum activities are selected based on the knowledge that play is the activity from which children learn. The primary goal of the curriculum is to enhance play opportunities. Children learn from creating and interacting with their environment; consequently, our concentration is on process, rather than product. Children are learning at every moment and staff will capitalize on all opportunities as they occur, adjusting throughout the day as needed.

Children's Coalition strongly believes and supports the need for physical activity each day.

When children participate in physical activity every day, multiple health benefits accrue. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk for developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop through a dynamic interaction. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

Infants will be given opportunities for physical activity, including supervised tummy time.

Toddler age children will participate a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten children will participate a minimum of 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

School age children who are in attendance for a full day will participate a minimum of 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day. School age children who are only in attendance after-school will participate a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

Opportunities for active play may overlap with outdoor play when weather permits.

Children's Coalition will promote all children's active play every day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping, to the extent of their abilities.

All children will participate each day in:

- Two occasions of active play outdoors when weather permits.
- Two or more structured or teacher-led activities or games that promote movement over the course of the day.
- Continuous opportunities to develop and practice age-appropriate gross motor and movement skills.

Physical activity may take place in the classroom or on the playground when weather permits.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose and not too tight) that enables full participation in active play. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Hats may be worn to protect children from sun exposure.

Examples of appropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Gym shoes or sturdy shoe equivalent
- Clothing for the weather, such as a lightweight, breathable jacket without any hood and neck strings.

Examples of inappropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Footwear that can come off while running or that provide insufficient support for climbing.
- Clothing that can catch on playground equipment, such as those with drawstrings or loops.

When weather conditions prohibit outdoor play, physical activities will occur in the classroom during the scheduled outside time. Classroom teachers have 90 mins of physical activities planned for "rainy days".

2.21 Screen time

Children under age two do not have access to television or other media at the Children's Coalition. For older classes, TV or movies may be used to support other curriculum activities that are included in daily lesson plans, but not more often than two 30-minute increments twice a week.

2.21.2 Child Guidance Policies

All child guidance techniques used by the teachers and director at the Children's Coalition will be positive and non-punitive. Staff members will use techniques such as redirecting the child to participate in another activity, anticipating and eliminating potential problems, providing positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors, talking, and providing reflective listening with the child and temporarily removing the child from a stressful situation.

If Children's Coalition should need to address a child with a challenging behavior. We will make every effort to help the child remain successful in the classroom. We will arrange a meeting with parent or Guardian, child's teacher and director. The meeting will have details on the child's behavior. We will discuss what is best for the child and how to remain positive environment for the classroom. Parents will be provided with a written daily report on any ongoing challenging behaviors. Children's Coalition will have a no tolerance in the event a child becomes violent, destructive, or puts themselves or others in danger. The parent or guardian will need to make immediate arrangements for the child to be picked up.

The Coalition has a no corporal punishment policy. Staff members will also abstain from using frightening or humiliating discipline techniques. Parents are asked to follow the same disciplinary guidelines with their children while they are at the Children's Coalition. Please feel free to talk to the director or your child's teacher about positive child guidance techniques.

2.22 Hygiene

Children's Coalition staff will always practice good personal hygiene and will assure the children do the same. Staff will take all measures, including frequent hand washing and using gloves when appropriate, to prevent the spread of infectious disease.

2.23 Naps

Infants nap as needed at the Children's Coalition, as sleep patterns are varied for young babies. We understand the important role of sleep, and we meet the needs of each infant in our care by allowing each infant's sleep needs to determine their nap schedule.

All children at the Coalition rest after lunch. Toddlers, threes, and preschool classes have a designated nap time from 12:30-2:30 p.m. Please provide your child with a crib size sheet and blanket. Be sure to label your child's belongings. While napping during this time is encouraged, it is not required. Quiet activities (books or puzzles) will be available for those who do not go to sleep.

2.24 Water Play Activities

Water play activities will include playing in sprinklers and water tables during the warm months of the year, but for safety reasons, wading pools are not used at the Coalition. Water play is offered year-around with indoor water tables. During summer months splash day information will be provided by classroom teachers.

2.25 Incident Reports

Parents will be notified by their child's teacher if the child was involved in an incident/accident during the day. Parents are required to sign the completed incident report form the day of pick up, acknowledging they have been notified with details of the incident. If an incident report involves an interaction with another child, staff will not disclose any personal information regarding the other child.

If a parent wishes to discuss an incident further, they may schedule an appointment with the teacher. The staff must supervise the remaining children in care, so they are unable to have a longer discussion during pick-up.

2.26 Field Trips

Field trips will be offered on limited occasions for older children. All state licensing rules will be strictly enforced, including signed and dated permission slips for each trip, appropriate adult supervision, all children's emergency information, a cell phone, first aid kit, and list of all children participating carried by the lead teacher. When children are transported by vehicle, each child will have an appropriate seat belt. Proof of insurance and driver licenses will be checked to assure current compliance with state rules for each trip. Any field trip other than short walks or buggy rides within the facility's immediate area will be posted at least 24 hours in advance.

2.27 Celebration of Birthdays

Birthdays can be celebrated following nap time in the afternoons. Parents are welcome to join their child for the celebration, or send cupcakes, cookies, etc. for the class. Please schedule celebrations with your child's teacher in advance. **Invitations for birthday parties may only be distributed at the Coalition if all children in the class are invited.**

2.28 Toys and Items from Home

Children are encouraged to share books, tapes, educational games, or items found in nature that will be interesting and enlightening to all. Please refrain from sending toys. All items from home must be labeled with the child's name.

3. Parent Involvement

Children's Coalition is currently following COVID-19 Pandemic Policy until further notice.

Parents and staff will communicate daily concerning each child's day.

Parent conferences can be scheduled as needed at least twice a year to afford parents and teachers an opportunity to discuss each child's developmental progress and adjustment to the program. Parent conferences also provide an opportunity for parents to evaluate the services of the Children's Coalition. Parents are welcome to request a conference with their child's teacher or the facility management at any time.

The staff will conduct training and informational programs for parents. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the activities at the Children's Coalition and are invited to share their talents with the children as classroom volunteers. Parents with special skills and/or interests may wish to act as staff trainers and parent education trainers as well.

3.1. Family Notification Board

Families will be able to find the following items posted on the **Family Information Areas (in front hallway):**

- Child Care Center's License,
- Most recent Licensing Inspection or Investigation,

- Licensing Notice *Keeping Children Safe*,
- Staff List
- Emergency telephone numbers, and
- Any other licensing notices with specific instructions to post the notice.
- Classroom supply list
- School Supply list
- Parent Information
- Events sign-up sheet
- Current Lunch Menu
- Community resources

3.2 Babysitting

Many of our CCG teaches offer their childcare services as babysitters outside of our normal operating hours. Please note that should you make arrangements for this to happen, the teachers are acting as individuals and not as CCG staff members. Such arrangements are not subject to the guidelines set forth by this handbook. Due to restrictions set forth by our insurance and possible liability, such babysitting arrangements cannot take place on CCG property. However, the Coalition may offer special hourly rates for events to be held on the property such as our bi-annual parent meeting, regularly scheduled board meetings, and fundraisers. The availability of this service is at the discretion of the CCG Director and the Board of Directors.

3.3 Volunteerism/Fundraising

As a parent with an enrolled child(ren) in the Children's Coalition childcare facility, you are automatically part of our (co-op) organization. Parents are encouraged to attend at three events during the school year. Any special skills or time you must help the Center is appreciated (**and highly encouraged!**) as it may also help decrease our expenses, which in turn will create a healthier fiscal situation for our daycare.

Fundraising is an integral part of the sustainability of our organization and is required to compensate for budget deficits. Fundraiser participation is mandatory and may be fulfilled by participating in each sale or simply paying the opt-out fee. Should a family choose not to participate, they will be invoiced for the amount of the opt-out fee. Payment is expected on time, and this charge will fall under the same posted in the buildings. This daycare belongs to all of us, and your participation is very much appreciated!

3.4 Parent Evaluations

Parents will be provided with a written yearly evaluation and or survey. The evaluation will be used to provide input that may influence the program.

4 Health Policies

4.1 Smoking

The Children's Coalition has a strict NO SMOKING policy. Smoking, vaping, or the usage of any form of tobacco should not take place anywhere on Westminster Presbyterian's property. Any teacher that smokes should plan on changing clothes and washing their hands before returning to work to reduce the



introduction of 3rd hand smoke to the classroom environment. Any teacher who comes to work smelling of smoke may be asked to change clothes

4.2 Communicable Diseases

To prevent and control the spread of communicable illnesses among the children and staff, the Children's Coalition must adhere to strict health policies. Cooperation between staff and parents is essential to ensure a safe and healthy environment for everyone. Many of our parents work in the UTMB hospital and have direct contact with patients. It is important that we minimize the risk of transmitting infection to individuals in their care.

Before entering the infant rooms (6 wks. – 12 mos.), everyone is required to remove shoes.

All children will be visually screened by staff upon arrival each day for obvious symptoms of illness. Children displaying symptoms of contagious illness and children who are not well enough to participate in routine daily activities will not be admitted to the center. Parents are required to inform staff members about any symptoms of illness the child has been exhibiting at home and to inform the staff whether the child received any medication before arrival.

A hearing and vision screening performed by your regular pediatrician will be required of all children at age four. **Results of the screening must be provided** and will be added to the child's folder.

Parents are also required to notify the staff if their child has been exposed to a communicable illness so that appropriate precautions can be taken to prevent the spread of the illness. Communicable diseases that will exclude a child from our care are defined by the Texas Department of Health. You can access this information from the Director or from the Texas Department of Health.

Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill and will be expected to pick the child up within 45 minutes. Efforts will be made to isolate the sick child from the other children until the parent arrives and takes the child home.

4.3 Vaccination

All children are expected to be kept current on all immunizations and **an up-to-date copy should be turned in to the center Director**. We believe it is our responsibility to provide the healthiest possible environment for the children in our care. We will require a certified copy of your child's immunization chart. If your child is medically exempt, please speak to the director about providing the appropriate paperwork. The Children's Coalition will not accept any exemptions based on religious belief or personal preference. In addition, staff are strongly encouraged, but not required to keep their own immunizations current.

4.4 Criteria for Exclusion Due to Illness

Children's Coalition is currently following COVID-19 Pandemic Policy until further notice.

Exclusion will be based on whether there are adequate facilities and staff available to meet the needs of both the ill child and the other children in the group.

Children may be excluded if:

- The child's illness prevents him/her from participating in routine activities.
- The illness requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group.
- Keeping that child at the center poses an increased risk to the child or to the other children or adults with whom the child will come into contact.

Children will be excluded, without exception, based on the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees F (forehead)
- Impetigo - red, oozing erosion capped with a golden yellow crust that appears "stuck on."
- Scabies - crusted wavy ridges and tunnels in the webs of the fingers, hands, wrist, and trunk.
- Ringworm - flat, spreading, ring-shaped lesions.
- Chicken Pox - crops of small blisters on a red base that become cloudy and crusted in 2 to 4 days.
- Head Lice - nits (white dots) attached to the hair shafts.
- Culture-proven strep throat that has not been under treatment for at least 24 hours.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) - red, watery eyes with thick yellowish discharge.
- Pinworm - Intestinal round worm. Itching near anal area. Worms may be observed in the child's stool.
- Persistent vomiting - Parents will be notified if their child vomits. Parents will be required to pick their child up immediately if the child vomits a second time during the same day.
- Unexplained or unusual skin rashes, skin eruptions, or discharges.
- Severe cold symptoms accompanied by persistent coughing, fever, sore throat, or yellow or green mucous discharge from the nose or mouth.
- Any contagious disease such as mumps, measles, etc.
- Persistent diarrhea - a noticeable or sudden increase in the number of stools, a reduction in the stool consistency with an increase in the fluid content, and tendency for the stools to be greenish in color. Parents will be notified if a child has two abnormal stools in one day and will be required to pick the child up immediately if the child has a third abnormal stool in one day.

The facility manager, with the concurrence of the child's physician, may allow infants ranging in age from 6 weeks to 12 months to remain at the center following three abnormal stools if there are no other symptoms of gastroenteritis or viral diarrhea such as fever, vomiting, irritability, dehydration, or lethargy. This exception is made because young infants frequently exhibit symptoms of diarrhea when adjusting to dietary changes in formula and food, have been on medication, and when teething. The infant's condition must not cause a sanitation problem or cause the staff to neglect the care of the other children if the infant is to remain at the Children's Coalition.

4.5 Re-admission Following Illness.

Children may be re-admitted after an illness only when their presence will not endanger the health of the other children and when they are well enough to participate in regularly scheduled daily activities.

A "Return-To-School Slip" signed by the child's physician may be required upon re-admission. A child may return to the Children's Coalition when:

- Fever has been 100.4 degrees F or below for 24 hours, without fever-suppressing medication.

- Lesions from impetigo are no longer weeping.
- Child with scabies has been seen by a physician and treatment has begun.
- Child with ringworm has been seen by a physician and treatment has begun.
- Chicken pox lesions are crusted, usually 5-10 days after onset.
- Medicated shampoo treatment for head lice has begun. (After first treatment, a lice check will be conducted again. If lice are seen, the child will be sent home. If no lice are found, the child may remain at school).
- Four to eight doses of an antibiotic have been given over a 24-hour period for known strep infection, and the child does not complain of sore throat pain.
- Conjunctivitis treatment has occurred for 48 hours, and the eyes have only a clear, watery discharge. The child does not have fever, eye pain, pus coming from the eye, or eyelid redness.
- Pinworm treatment has occurred 24 hours before time of requested readmission.
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours.
- The child has completed the contagious stage of the illness as defined by the center manager.
- The child feels well enough to participate in the daily activities at Children's Coalition, including outdoor play.

Children may not be re-admitted following a communicable illness unless the above-mentioned criteria have been met or unless the circumstances of the illness have been reviewed by the Manager, and she has given permission for the child's re-admission. If medication must be administered at the center, parents must follow the criteria below.

4.6 Administration of Medicine

All medications and procedures for administration shall **be provided by the parent**. Because **administration of medication poses an extra burden for staff and having medication in the facility is a safety hazard, parents should check with the child's physician to see if a dose schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is in the facility**. Parents may come to administer medication to their own child during the childcare day.

The child's Teacher will administer the prescription.

The state requires that we must have a statement from the child's physician before we can administer any over-the-counter drug, for example, Tylenol, which states "before giving to any child under the age of 2, consult physician". This statement must contain the dose to be given and how often. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure the medication is placed in the hands of the teacher or the director upon arrival.

Prescription medicine must be in the original container and include:

- Child's name
- Type of medicine
- Dosage administration requirements
- Physician's name
- Purpose of medicine
- Prescription number and date



Parents must complete a **Medication Consent and Log** form in order for caregivers to administer medication.

4.7 Storage of Medication

All medication must be current and stored in the original container labeled with the child's name. Parents must clearly mark medication that requires refrigeration.

4.8 Emergency Medical Treatment

The Children's Coalition will not admit any child whose parents have not completed the Medical Emergency Authorization form, authorizing administration of emergency medical care to the child in an emergency where the child's health condition represents a serious or imminent threat to life, health, or well-being. Every effort will be made to notify a parent prior to such action.

Children who develop conditions that require immediate medical attention will receive emergency first aid from trained staff members, or emergency medical personnel.

Serious injuries requiring emergency first aid will be reported to the parents immediately. The parent will be notified of the injury details and summoned to the center or summoned to meet the staff member and injured child at the hospital designated on their Emergency Authorization form or the UTMB Emergency Care Room.

4.9 Minor Health Problems

Minor injuries such as small scratches, cuts, scrapes, bruises, or discolorations of the skin will be reported to the parents at the end of the day. If an injury is minor but significant, the staff will notify the parent by telephone so that the parent can come and observe the child's injury. All injuries, occurring at the center will be documented by the facility Manager or designee and filed in our records for three months. Parents will be provided with a copy of the incident report if needed.

4.10 Special Needs for your child and Specialized Services

In order to support the Coalition staff's efforts to meet the needs of children and families to participate fully in the program (including children with disabilities, behavior challenges, or other special needs) the program has accessibility to consultants through reputable agencies such as Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (ECI) and Collaborative for Children. Any consultant utilizing the Coalition to access the children must meet the Texas Department of Family Protective Services criteria for background checks and fingerprinting. Additionally, the Coalition maintains a confidential copy of the licensing information and all informational documentation concerning the child.

If your child has any special needs while in our program, you will need to complete a care plan form so that we may better meet his/her needs. This plan includes information for dietary, health or special learning needs. Please see the director for more information.



5 Emergency Preparedness

The Children's Coalition will begin preparations to close in accordance with the Galveston Independent School District announcements during the official school year. All parents are expected to pick up their children immediately so that staff may secure the facility and prepare to evacuate. Parents should listen to radio stations KIKK 96 FM, KNUZ 1230 AM, KTRH 740 AM, or KPRC 950 AM in Houston for announcements of closings. The Galveston Independent School District website is www.gisd.org and can be accessed for information on closures.

During the summer, the Children's Coalition Management will follow GISD summer school closures, if provided. In the absence of any GISD announcements, we will make closure announcements in accordance with the City of Galveston. The City of Galveston website is <http://www.cityofgalveston.org/> and can be monitored for announcements.

Upon the decision of closure, parents will be notified via email, and Bright Wheel. Please leave your email address and text preferences with the director.

Emails and phone number can be updated on bright wheel without staff assistance. All closure decisions will be made with the safety of both children and staff in mind and are final.

If the center will be closed for an entire day, beginning in the morning, the announcement will be made by 8pm the previous evening.

Weather, shelter in place, fire, and relocation drills are practiced frequently during the year.

The responses for most emergencies generally involve sheltering in or evacuation. The exception to this is providing emergency medical care and use of fire extinguishers for small fires.

5.1 Evacuation Procedures

The director and the teachers are responsible for moving the children to the designated rooms which are located in the back of the building. In the event that we have to relocate and leave the building, we will walk over to Westminster Presbyterian Church, 5127 Ave U (next door). Upon relocation to alternate safe area, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 5127 Avenue U, the teachers will have classroom sign-in sheets to verify attendance of the children and we will once again count the children upon entering the designated area(s).

Each classroom teacher is responsible for maintaining and accounting for emergency documents which include emergency contact number for each child in care, authorization for emergency care for each child in care. staff will continue to care and activates for the children at remote location until each child has been released. Children will remain until they are reunified with parents. Parents will use the Bright wheel system of a paper sign out system to make sure each child is reunified with parents. As the children with their parents as the evacuation, relocation, or sheltering/lock-down is lifted. Children who are under 24 months of age, who have limited mobility, will be transported by the buggy. Children over the age of 24 months with limited mobility will be assisted by the teacher in his or her classroom.

5.2 Communication

During an emergency we will contact parents using the telephone number(s) on file. Please make sure all phone numbers are current and up to date in center and on the Bright Wheel App. At this time, we will also contact local authorities (fire, police, and emergency services) by using 911. During the event of a communicable disease outbreak, we will also contact the local health department. After all parents and local authorities have been contacted, we will notify childcare licensing.

5.3 Specific Threats and Emergency Situations

Immediate Area Threat

Examples: Bomb threat, fire, flood, or other major building problems.

Action: Leave the building and gather in a predetermined location. The **Next in Charge** will wait for information from Director on the severity of the situation and the actions that will be taken.

5.3.1 Widespread Threat

Example: Sponsor evacuation, or widespread fire.

Action: Follow instruction from Galveston Police (911).

5.3.2 Mass Ordered Evacuation

Example: Declared state of emergency.

Action: Leave the building and evacuate to a mass shelter as determined by the City of Galveston.

Emergency personnel will be notified if we are in need of transportation. Appropriate numbers of staff will go with children to maintain supervision.

5.3.3 Evacuation Areas

- The designated evacuation areas for the Children's Coalition are the farthest points from the building within the fenced outside playgrounds and the center parking areas. If the Coalition's Director determines that the designated evacuation areas do not provide adequate protection for the children, a previously determined alternate evacuation assembly area will be utilized.
- The designated transportation will be sent to the Coalition for assisting in the transportation of the children.
- If an evacuation is ordered by the city emergency response organization, the Incident Commander for the City will identify the route and location of the nearest evacuation shelter.

5.3.4 Sheltering Areas

In the event of a natural emergency, i.e., tornado, severe storms, or hazardous airborne chemicals incident outside the Coalition's facility, the children and other occupants of the building will shelter in place in the prearranged designated areas as necessary.



Evacuation Assembly area within walking distance: Outside the fence area further from the main building (in front of the sanctuary)

Evacuation area at a distance for secured evacuation: The Sanctuary (next Door), 5127 Avenue U

Evacuation away from the center: The Sanctuary (next door), 5127 Avenue U

Transportation arrangements: We will walk/use buggies for any walking distance evacuation.

Any child with limited mobility will have a pre-determined evacuation plan based on their individual needs. In addition to being assigned to a designated employee for assistance, this plan could include necessary medical equipment as provided by family.

Shelter (in-place):

Classroom 1 Safari Kids	Fellowship Hall
Classroom 2 Sea Gulls	Parlor
Classroom 3 Lil Monsters	Fellowship Hall
Classroom 4 Monkeys	Parlor
Classroom 5 Sea Turtles	Choir Room
Classroom 6 Cosmos Kidz	Choir Room
Classroom 7 Dinosaurs	Parlor
Classroom 8 Rainbow Fish	Fellowship Hall

In the event of an emergency requiring an evacuation away from Coalition premises, the Coalition shall coordinate necessary provisions for the transportation and continued care of children until parent/guardian or an authorized individual picks up the child.

Our relocation designated area is located in the Westminster Presbyterian Church (Sanctuary) next door at 5127 Avenue U. In the event of an emergency that requires us to evacuate the building, staff and children will walk to that area. It is an enclosed area with access to water, bathrooms, telephone, and space for staff and children to wait for parents and guardians to pick-up children. An emergency bag and our daily bag will be taken over with each classroom to this area that includes diapering supplies, first aid supplies, and other materials we might need in an emergency. Staff members bring all the emergency records during the evacuation procedure. Children are accounted for upon arrival and throughout their stay. Families will be required to sign-out children at this location. No child will be released to anyone not on the Emergency Information Form. We will follow proper procedures of releasing each child to the person picking up.

5.4 Fire

All center staff are familiarized with the emergency procedure and will maintain their areas so that all paths to exits are always unobstructed.

In the event of fire/smoke, all children and staff will evacuate the building according to routes posted. Teachers will bring children, attendance sheets, and emergency **AND** daily bags and follow the route to our designated “meeting” place (the breeze way).

The building will NOT be re-entered until the authorities deem it to be safe. If the building is not safe for return, all children and staff will safely proceed to the alternate evacuation location at Westminster



Church, 5127 Avenue U. All will remain until children can be safely released to families. No child will be released to anyone not on the Emergency Information Form. We will follow the proper procedures of releasing each child to the person picking up.

5.5 Tornado/Severe Storm

Sheltering is conducted in response to tornadoes and severe storms. Children and staff will move to designated shelter area as quickly and calmly as possible. Children will be comforted and made comfortable for the duration of the stay. Teachers are responsible for preparing and maintaining their emergency bags. All will remain in shelter areas until notified by the emergency response authorities. If the building is unsafe, children and staff will be moved to our alternate evacuation area in Westminster Church at 5127 Avenue U, if safe. No child will be released to anyone not on the Emergency Information Form. We will follow the proper procedures of releasing each child to the person picking up.

5.6 Hurricane

The Children's Coalition will close when a Hurricane Warning is in effect for this area. The Director and teachers will notify families immediately. Children will remain inside the building and follow normal activities until families arrive. No child will be released to anyone not on the Emergency Information Form. We will follow the proper procedures of releasing each child to the person picking up.

5.7 Gas Leak from Inside the Building

All staff and children will immediately leave the building and evacuate following fire evacuation plan. We will follow subsequent instructions given by authorities.

5.8 Chemical Leak from Outside the Building

All staff and children will remain inside the building in their regular classrooms and continue with regular activities as normally as a possible unless otherwise instructed by local authorities.

5.9 Power Failure

Each room has a flashlight for light. Classrooms with no windows will move into the "core" meeting area (the Fellowship Hall) with adequate lighting. Children will remain inside the building and follow normal activities until families arrive. No child will be released to anyone not on the Emergency Information Form. We will follow the proper procedures of releasing each child to the person picking up.

5.10 Water

Every effort will be made to remain open; however, if there is a risk of health and well-being to children and staff, the Coalition will close. Director and teachers will begin calling/texting families to inform them of the situation after one hour of disrupted service. Parents and guardians will be called, and immediate response will be expected. Children will remain inside the building and follow normal activities until families arrive. No child will be released to anyone not on the Emergency Information Form. We will follow the proper procedures of releasing each child to the person picking up.

5.11 Bomb Threat

In the event of a bomb threat, children and adults will be evacuated as quickly as possible to the alternate evacuation location and wait for instruction from authorities. Families will be notified of altered location and advised of release of children.

5.12 Suspicious Article

If any article that appears suspicious is found it should be brought to the Director's attention. Galveston Police will be called. **The article should not be touched or brought into the Center.**

5.13 Potentially Violent Situation

Galveston Police will be called immediately if a potentially violent situation occurs. Adults and children will be moved out of harm's way as quickly as possible and will wait for information from authorities to determine a location for release of children.

5.14 Random Acts of Violence

If the Coalition is affected by random acts of violence (e.g., drive by shooting), implement the following:

- Remain calm
- Immediately call 911
- Staff members will alert other staff personnel of the problem
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility and have the children lay on the floor
- Classrooms with windows will evacuate rooms and move into the "core" meeting place (fellowship hall).

5.15 Hostage/Intruder Situation

The Children's Coalition may be subject to hostage situations either from disgruntled employees, parents/guardians, parents/guardian's authorized representative, or other people. In the event of a hostage situation:

- Remain calm
- Remain polite
- Do not resist; follow the hostage taker's instructions
- **ANY** available staff member will immediately call 911
- Staff members will alert other staff of the problem if time permits –
- Alerted staff members will close the doors to their rooms until further notice
- If staff members believe it is safe, evacuate children from the Coalition moving in the opposite direction from the incident.

5.16 Perimeter Issues

Procedures for Playground Clearance (i.e., suspicious parked vehicles, loiterers)

- Call local authorities to investigate the situation.
- If the situation is of marginal concern or greater, require that the children remain inside.
- Immediately require any groups outside to come inside.

- Consider moving those classrooms with windows in site into the “core” (fellowship hall) play space or another classroom/area until the situation is resolved.
- Be prepared to fully evacuate the facility should emergency services make this request. Consider whether existing evacuation routes will suffice or if an alternate route must be taken due to the location of the incident. Make staff aware of any changes to their evacuation routes if necessary.
- Coordinate our actions with any other support services (police, fire dept., and bomb squad) based on the nature of the incident.

5.17 Missing Child

- Immediately notify the police once an initial search of the facility has been made and attempts have been made to confirm whether a family member may have picked up the child.
- Search all areas of the facility and the immediate surrounding area.
- Make all other required notifications.
- Continue searching while waiting for the police to arrive.

The Director is to remain at the center as the point person and to gather information/description of the child to share with authorities.

5.18 Signs and Postings

The floor plan is posted in all classrooms and common areas indicating the primary and secondary routes for evacuation of each classroom.

Emergency phones numbers shall be prominently displayed by all telephones in the building.

6. Reporting Child Abuse

The Children’s Coalition will comply with Texas statutes requiring child abuse reporting by bringing suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the attention of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. According to Chapter 261 of the Family Code (recodifies in 1995), child abuse is an act or omission that endangers or impairs a child’s physical, mental, or emotional health and development. Child abuse may take the form of physical or emotional injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical neglect, medical neglect, or inadequate supervision.

It is vital that the Children’s Coalition creates a culture where child abuse is discussed, addressed, and prevented. Please be aware of the staff and family’s responsibility of reporting “child abuse or neglect”. It is the responsibility of the staff and families to report any suspected abuse or neglect to Children’s Protective Services. The Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

Senate Bill 471, passed by the 82nd Legislature, requires the Coalition to:

- Have at least one hour of annual training for staff members in prevention techniques for and the recognition of symptoms of abuse and neglect as well as the responsibility and procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect.
- Adopt and implement a policy addressing sexual abuse and other abuse/neglect of children.

6.1 Signs of Child Abuse

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes.
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school.
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home from school.
- Shrinks at the approach of adults; or
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver.

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury.
- Describes the child as "evil," or in some other negative way.
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child; or
- Has a history of abuse as a child.

6.2 Signs of Child Neglect

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- Is frequently absent from school.
- Begs or steals food or money from classmates.
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses.
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor.
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather.
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs; or
- States there is no one at home.

Consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child.
- Seems apathetic or depressed.
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner; or
- Is abusing alcohol or other drugs.

6.3 Prevention Techniques of Child Abuse and Neglect

Ways to Help Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

1. Be a nurturer.
2. Children need to know that they are special, loved, and capable of following their dreams.
3. Help a parent, friend, neighbor, or relative.
4. Being a parent or teacher is not easy. Offer a helping hand to take care of the children, so the parent(s) or teacher can rest or spend time together.
5. Help yourself.
6. When the big and little problems of your everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control – take time out. Do not take it out on your kid.

7. It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby will not stop crying. Never shake a baby – shaking a child may result in severe injury or death.
8. Get involved.
9. Ask your community leaders, clergy, library, and schools to develop services to meet the needs of healthy children and families.
10. Monitor your child's television and video viewing.
11. Do not allow young children to watch violent TV or play violent video games.
12. Volunteer at a local child abuse prevention program.
13. For information about volunteer opportunities, call 1-800-CHILDREN.
14. Report suspected abuse or neglect.
15. If you have reason to believe a child has been or may be harmed, call the Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

6.4 Actions for Parents of Abused Children

In this situation, parents should contact their local police department or a child advocacy center such as The Texas Department of Family and Protective Service to identify the best location for a medical examination with professionals who are specially trained to look for indicators of sexual abuse, including injuries that may not be visible. Parents can also contact a therapist who specializes in working with children to meet with their child. It is important to remember remaining calm and supportive of the child. During this time of trauma, your child will need your comfort and reassurance.

6.5 Reporting and Coordination between the Coalition and the Texas Department of Family Protective Services

The law requires any person who believes that a child or person 65 years or older or an adult with disabilities is being abused, neglected, or exploited to report the circumstances to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Abuse Hotline. A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Any person who suspects abuse and does not report it can be held liable for a Class-A misdemeanor.

Additional reporting requirements apply to teachers and other professionals. A professional must report suspected abuse or neglect of a child within 48 hours of suspecting the child has been or may be abused or neglected [TFC 261.101 (b)]. A professional cannot delegate this duty to another person to make the report. Reporting suspected child abuse makes it possible to protect the child and for a family to get help.

FOR LIFE THREATENING OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS, IMMEDIATELY CALL YOUR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY OR 911, AND THEN MAKE A REPORT TO TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES.

There are two options for reporting abuse, neglect, and exploitation to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

By Phone: Call the Abuse Hotline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free **1-800-252-5400** from anywhere in the US to report abuse or neglect that occurred in Texas.

By Secure Internet Website: From your internet browser, go to <https://www.txabusehotline.org>. When you get to the web site, there will be directions to the links to report abuse or neglect against children or to report abuse against elderly or disabled adults. Recent improvements to the site include a registration page, ability for the user to print the report, left side navigation, and spell check. If you have trouble or questions about making a report on the website, call (512) 929-6784 or **1-800-252-5400** for help. ***(You MUST include the "s" in "https://" to access the site.)***

7. Gang Free Zone

The Children's Coalition is a gang free zone. The purpose of gang free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties. Under the 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 penalty.

8. COVID-19 Pandemic Policy

In response to COVID-19, Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHS) provided specific Guidance to Childcare Facilities. Children's Coalition will operate based on best practices that are consistent with new requirements in accordance with state law, state disaster declaration, and federal guidance.

1. BUILDING ACCESS

Any person, except the following, are prohibited from accessing ChilCo: staff; persons with legal authority to enter, including law enforcement officers, HHSC Child Care Licensing staff, and Department of Family and Protective Services staff; professionals providing services to children; children enrolled at the operation; and parents or legal guardians who have children enrolled and present at the operation.

- Pickup and drop-off of children is required to take place outside of the operation, unless it is determined that there is a legitimate need for the parent to enter an operation.
- Before allowing entry into the building, all individuals listed above will be screened, this includes taking the temperature of each person upon arrival at the operation each day and participating in answering questions.
- Social distancing and face masks are required by parents and staff during the screening process.
- Persons will be denied entry who meet any of the following criteria.
 - A temperature of 100.4°F or above.
 - Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection (cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, body aches, low-grade fever, fatigue, headache, and chills.), or GI symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting) within the past hours.
 - In the previous 14 days has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19; is under investigation for COVID-19; or is ill with a respiratory illness; or any symptoms of the above.
- All students and staff will be required to wash their hands and sanitize all belongings upon entering the building.

2. SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Staff will comply with social distancing standards when waiting on screening, taking breaks, and eating lunch.

- To assist students to maintain social distancing.
 - Keep each group of children in a separate classroom with classroom doors closed.
 - Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.
 - Ensure, if possible, that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Students will be allowed to arrive as needed, not all by mandated 10:00 a.m.

3. STUDENT PRACTICES

- Students' hands will be washed upon entering the classroom. All personal belongings will be sanitized upon entering the classroom.
- Small groups will be kept together throughout the day, and we will not combine groups. In addition, we will maintain the same groups from day to day.
- Social distancing will be practiced by keeping a distance of six feet and not sharing items (pens, paper, electronics, etc.) as much as possible. Wash hands immediately following any interaction and sanitize shared items.
- No large group activities or events under any circumstances.
- When using the water tables and sensory tables, have children wash their hands before and immediately after using these play stations.
- Minimize time standing in lines while also keeping children at least six feet distance apart from each other.
- Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children.
- Increase the distance between children during table work.
- Incorporate additional outside time.
- **Each classroom will be assigned outdoor times to limit interaction.**

4. HYGIENE PRACTICES

- All children, staff, and volunteers should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
 - Arrival at the facility.
 - Before and after breaks.
 - Students and staff will wash their hands after interactions.
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food or feeding children.
 - Before and after administering medication or medical ointment.
 - Before and after diapering.
 - After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom.
 - After contact with bodily fluid.
 - After playing outdoors or in sand.
 - After handling garbage.
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
- Hands will be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Children over 2 and staff may use hand sanitizer if hands are not visibly dirty when soap and water is not available. Staff will supervise children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion.

CLASSROOM SANITIZING AND CLEANING

- Classroom surfaces including doorknobs, handrails, faucets, electronic keyboards and touchscreens, tables, and chairs will be sanitized hourly.
- Staff will be careful not to expose children in the near vicinity to cleaning and disinfecting materials.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside until they are cleaned by a staff member. Toys will be cleaned with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and air-dried.
- Machine washable cloth toys or dress up items will not be used.
- Toys will not be shared with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfecting procedures.
- All bedding, highchair/swing/bouncy seat covers will be laundered weekly and returned to the classroom.
- We will use products that are recommended by the CDC as effective against COVID-19.
- **Restrooms will be cleaned at least two times per day.**
- Classrooms will be disinfected every night after closing.

5. CARING FOR CHILDREN

- When diapering a child staff member will follow the CDC and Texas Childcare Licensing safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures will be posted in all diaper changing areas.
 - Steps include:
 - Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
 - Clean the child
 - Remove trash (soiled diaper and wipes)
 - Replace diaper
 - Wash child's hands
 - Clean up diapering station
 - Wash own hands
- After diapering, staff will wash their hands and the child's hands, then disinfect the diapering area with a 10% bleach water solution. If the surface is dirty, it will be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- If reusable cloth diapers are used, they will not be rinsed or cleaned in the facility. The soiled cloth diaper and its contents (without emptying or rinsing) should be placed in a plastic bag or into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered diaper pail to give to parents/guardians.

6. STAFF PRACTICES

- Staff will be trained on cleaning standards and expectations. Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations employees will follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines regarding the cleaning, sanitation, and disinfection of all district facilities.

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER IF A CHILD, STAFF, OR PARENT HAS CONTACT WITH A POSSIBLE COVID-19 PATIENT BUT HAS NO SYMPTOMS

- If staff members or parents believe that they or their child have had close contact to someone with COVID-19 but is not currently sick, they should not go to work or school and should avoid public places for 14 days.
- They should monitor their health and the child's health for fever, cough, and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the individual with COVID-19.



ACTIONS TO TAKE IF A CHILD, STAFF, OR PARENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 BUT DO NOT HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS

Contact center director for current guidelines.

- **ACTIONS TO CONSIDER IF A CHILD, STAFF, OR PARENT HAS SIMILAR SYMPTOMS, DEVELOPS OR TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

Contact center director for current guidelines

- **RETURNING TO A CHILD CARE FACILITY AFTER COVID-19 OR SIMILAR SYMPTOMS**

Contact center director for current guidelines.



Any exceptions to the above-stated policies must be approved by the
Children's Coalition Board of Directors

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Child's Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Printed Name: _____

I have been provided a parent handbook, and I accept and agree to follow those policies regarding children. The Coalition's discipline policies are stated in the handbook, and I understand and accept those policies.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

I [do / do not] (please circle one) give the center permission to photograph my child(ren). I understand that by giving this consent, these photographs may be used on the Children's Coalition's website.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

The Children's Coalition has my permission to apply insect repellent and sunscreen that I will furnish.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

My child(ren) has permission to take supervised walks or buggy rides near the center.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

I have read and understand the food policies.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

I understand the childcare center is not responsible for its nutritional value of my child(ren)'s meals or for meeting my child(ren)'s daily food requirements.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

I have read and understand all emergency preparedness plans for the Children's Coalition as outlined by the Parent Handbook.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date