



Policies and Procedures

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About Us

The Edutainment Zone is a state licensed daycare center, providing care to children from 6 weeks old to 12 years old. We accept drop-ins from 6 months to 12 years old. Our goal is to create an environment that encourages the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children in our care. Our holistic approach combines play-based learning with age-appropriate academics to foster and develop the unique set of skills and interests of each child.

Admission Requirements

The Edutainment Zone accepts children ages 6 weeks to twelve years of age. We accept drop-ins from 6 months to 12 years old. To enroll in our center, you must provide the center with the following required documents: enrollment registration, current immunization records (or name of the school where they are filed) or notarized letter of exception, and an acknowledgement of drop-in policies.

If during your child's stay with us, there is a change of employment, home address, or telephone number, it is the parent's or legal guardian's responsibility to notify the daycare management in writing of such changes. Our management must be able to contact the responsible parent/guardian at all times during the hours of operation of the center.

Toddler and Infant Care

Parents must provide diapers and wipes for their children ages 6 months - 24 months. Diapers can be brought daily (at least 6 per day). Diapers will be changed every 2 hours or as needed when soiled. Parents must provide pull-ups for their children ages 24 months – 36 months who are not potty trained. We recommend all children to bring at least 1 change of clothes in case of accidents.

Hours of Operation

<u>Monday – Thursday</u>	<u>9 am – 8 pm</u>
<u>Friday – Saturday</u>	<u>9 am – 9 pm</u>
<u>Sunday</u>	<u>10 am – 7 pm</u>

Parental Involvement

Parental Access

Parents may visit the center unannounced and at any time that their child is in care. Concerns about any aspect of our program, or your child's care, may be expressed to the center director. For longer discussions or particular concerns please schedule an appointment.

Any information requested by the parent concerning the operation of the child care center or the care of the child will be provided to parents. The parent(s) will be provided daily communication (verbal/written/electronic) regarding the care of the child, especially with toddlers and nonverbal children.

Nursing parents have a right to visit us to breastfeed their child while in our care. A comfortable seat will be provided. Having an open-door policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Parental Notifications

Proper communication between our parents, tutors, and staff is extremely important. All communications will be carried out through the ProCare app, with the exception of incident report forms. Parents without internet connection will receive hard copies of all notifications and communications. Parents must request to be added to the *Parent Print-Out List*.

Important time stamps

Meals

Breakfast

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Lunch

1:30 PM – 2:00 PM

Snack

5:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Diner

8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Nap or Rest Time

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
For students over
18+ months

Our center will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Milk or juice is served with all the meals and snacks, and water is offered throughout the day. The meals and snacks for each week constantly vary to ensure the children receive a well-balanced diet. The children are offered the food, but they will not be forced to eat. It is our goal to offer nutritious meals and snacks to the children in our care, as nutrition is a vital part of a child's health. All meals provided by The Edutainment Zone will comply with the United States Department of Agriculture's nutritional guidelines. Children should not bring food except in case of allergies or special diets prescribed by a physician. A doctor's note is required for all food brought from home including special milk and snacks. Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician. Weekly menus are posted on the bulletin board and are available at the beginning of every week.

Policy for Drop Off and Pick-Up

Children must be accompanied by an adult into the lobby, checked in on the computer / iPad, and received by a teacher before the adult leaves the building.

Children records, including people authorized to pick-up, will be stored on the secure app ProCare. Only the individuals listed in the ProCare system will be allowed to leave with a child. The staff is expected to request a picture I.D. for all drop-ins' pick-ups.

All doors leading to the outside of the building are secured with an access control system for the safety of the children. Parents are required to ring the doorbell to gain entrance to the lobby.

Any person arriving at the center to pick up a child in an impaired manner, due to alcohol or drugs, will be asked to find alternative transportation. Upon refusal staff, being mandatory reporters, will call 911 and report possible child endangerment. The parents'/ guardian's home address will be provided to law enforcement.

Physical Activity

Daily physical activity promotes young children's gross motor development and provides numerous health benefits, including improved fitness and cardiovascular health, healthy bone development, improved sleep, and improved mood and sense of well-being. At the Edutainment Zone we encourage physical activity indoors and outdoors through extracurriculars and free play.

Our studio and interactive floor projector ensure children are physically active on days that extreme weather conditions prohibit or limit outdoor play. Indoor physical activity will range from 30 minutes to 1 hour per day.

Additionally, children have scheduled outdoor play. Free play, active play, and outdoor play are essential components of young children's development. During outdoor play, children learn about their environment, science, and nature. Outdoor play is scheduled for 60 minutes per day, weather permitting.

Toddlers and preschoolers generally accumulate moderate to vigorous physical activity over the course of the day in very short bursts (15–30 seconds). Children may be able to learn better during or immediately after these types of short bursts of physical activity, due to improved attention and focus.

Parents are encouraged to send appropriate clothing and footwear that will allow their child to freely and safely in physical activities, as scheduled in our activity plan. An example of appropriate clothing is comfortable tennis shoes and weather-appropriate clothing.

Guidance and Discipline

Our goal for the classrooms is that children be well cared for. All children will be happy, clean, and fed nutritiously. Our learning program is especially geared towards fun while the child learns.

The Edutainment Zone will explain the rules of the child care facility to all children under its care, as appropriate. When a child understands the rules, but chooses not to follow the rules, then The Edutainment Zone will use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:

Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements

Redirecting behavior using positive narration

Using praise and encouragement of good behavior

A time out that is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age

We will also notify the parent of the behavior and ask for reinforcement at home. We will keep you updated with any approach we attempt with your child and with the results of said approach. The child may be dismissed if the behavior continues. Dismissal is determined by the Director and at the Director's discretion.

At no point will there be harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
2. Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
5. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
7. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
8. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet
9. Placing a child in a restrictive device for time out
10. Withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out
11. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age, including requiring a child to remain in a restrictive device

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers-and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once. When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child that was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting. Supervision and prevention will be the number one way we help change the behavior. Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

The same discipline and guidance standards apply to all our students. Including those enrolled only in after school or drop-in care.

Dismissal Policy

The director reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child at his/her discretion, or for the following possible reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments of tuition and fees.
- Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parent agreement.
- Child has special needs that we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.
- Expired or non-immunizations and/or physical

Medical Policies

Administering of Medication

The Edutainment Zone will administer prescription and over-the-counter medication to full-time students only.

Adverse Reaction to Medication or Allergy

If our staff or your child's teacher notices any type of adverse reaction to any medicine or your child has any type of allergic reaction to food or to insect stings, you will be notified as soon as possible. A form will be filled out by our staff indicating reactions and you will receive a copy.

Immunization Records / Letter of Exemption

All children who attend a child care center in Texas must have a certificate of immunization or a notarized letter of exemption. Parents must submit either document at the time of enrollment. This is a state requirement and must be enforced. We ask that each time your child has an immunization; you bring in a new form with current dates and shots. The correct immunization form can be obtained from your pediatrician or local health department.

- (A) The child's name and date of birth
- (B) The type of vaccine and number of doses
- (C) The month, day, and year the child received each vaccination; or
- (D) Clinic contact information, if the immunization record is generated from an electronic health record system.

Breastfeeding

Our infant rooms are equipped with comfortable adult sized seats for mothers that wish to breastfeed at our center. In addition, you are welcome to provide breast milk for their child while in care.

Communicable Diseases

According to the communicable disease chart posted on our bulletin board, there are certain infectious illnesses that must be reported to licensing. We are required by law to report any suspected case of notifiable communicable diseases to the local health department. It is the parent's responsibility to inform us of a notifiable communicable disease their child or children may have been exposed to. If your child is exposed to a notifiable communicable disease, our center will notify the appropriate parents/guardians that their child may have been exposed as well and recommend proper action be taken.

Exclusion of Sick Children

If a child exhibit any of the symptoms listed below, the child will not be allowed to attend the child care facility until the symptoms are no longer present

- a. Fever of 100 degrees F
- b. Persistent diarrhea
- c. Continuous coughing
- d. Unusual rashes
- e. Vomiting
- f. Yellowish color to the eyes or skin
- g. Swallowing difficulty
- h. Persistent and/or excessive crying
- i. Discharge from eyes or ears
- j. Excessive drowsiness
- k. Lice
- l. Communicable diseases

If a child exhibit any of these symptoms while present at the child care facility, the parent will be notified and must immediately remove the child. The child may be isolated from the other children at the child care facility until the parent arrives.

The parent is expected to inform The Edutainment Zone of any illness or problem of a child that might affect other children at the child care facility.

Child care fees will not be adjusted for the days that a sick child does not attend the child care facility.

Television / Digital Media

Television viewing is only done on Fun Fridays, no more than a half an hour at a time, and is limited to educational programs. Children are never required to sit and watch TV, and TV is not offered in place of free play or learning activities.

Students over 2 are not allowed screentime.

Special Needs Children

If your child has any type of special needs, please notify the front desk or director. We as a daycare center provide for special needs children whenever possible. Please bring a written statement from the doctor that states the type of special needs the child requires.

Accommodations

This document outlines our program's policy and process in supporting families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, differing abilities and cultural backgrounds. Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in a language easily understood by the general public and in the parent's primary language. Please notify the Director if you or your child require accommodations and we will ensure that we do our part in making sure your needs are met. Below are ways that our program will partner with families:

1. If specific therapies are needed during the day while the child is in our care, we will provide space to accommodate sessions.
2. Participation in all comprehensive care meetings if needed
3. Complete supporting documentation from authorized medical professionals for any accommodations related to the child's physical or developmental needs.
4. Provide materials and resources in parent's/child's primary language.
5. Provide opportunity for cultural inclusiveness by hosting cultural events throughout the year.

Medical Emergencies

The staff makes every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. Unfortunately, accidents may occur. Teachers and Center Staff are trained in CPR and basic first aid procedures. We have implemented the following procedures, should your child experience an injury while at our center:

The teacher will immediately advise the administrative staff. The administrative staff will determine the severity of the injury (i.e., scrapes, bumps, bruises, etc.) We will administer first aid and forward an accident through the ProCare application

In case of a serious accident or injury, EMS (911) will be contacted first. Within the limits of their ability, the staff will administer first aid. We will make every attempt to contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the person you have indicated on the forms to make medical decisions for your child. If we cannot reach you, we will release your child into the custody of the emergency paramedics to transport your child for immediate medical care. Staff is prohibited from transporting an injured child. A staff member will remain with your child until you arrive. Any medical bills that may arise from an accident are the responsibility of the parent.

Licensing Standards and Inspection Records

Parents who wish to review a copy of our most recent inspection or the minimum standards for licensed child care centers can visit:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care>.

If you wish to contact the local licensing office you can visit or call Child Care Licensing Division at Texas Health and Human Services Office:

2520 N. Closner Blvd.
Edinburg, TX 78541
956-316-8275

Alternatively, notifications to licensing can be made:

Online 24 hours a day at:

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_Us/report_abuse.asp

By phone 24 hours a day to the Texas Abuse and Neglect

Hotline 1-800-252-

5400

Or by visiting the HHSC website:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child->

Prohibited Substances

No person shall smoke, use tobacco or prohibited substances on the premises during operating hours.

Staff Qualifications

Our teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. All staff will pass criminal history records check and have current CPR & First Aid certification. All will participate in orientation and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

Postings

We have posted for public viewing the following items: State License, copy of rules, review of evaluation report, communicable disease chart, statement of parental access, names of persons in charge, current weekly menus, emergency plans for severe weather and fire, statement for visitors.

Required Notifications

Under the Texas Penal Code any area within 1,000 feet of a child -care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.

Abuse and Neglect Prevention

We are required by law to report any suspected child abuse, child neglect, exploitation, or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children's Services. If you suspect a child is victim of child abuse, make a report by calling 1-800-252-5400 or online through the Texas Abuse Hotline:

<https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx>.

The following were identified as signs of abuse and neglect by the DFPS:

Signs of Neglect

- Poor hygiene, odor
- Inappropriately dressed for weather
- Needs medical or dental care
- Left alone, unsupervised for long periods
- Failure to thrive, malnutrition
- Constant hunger, begs, or steals food
- Extreme willingness to please
- Frequent absence from school

Signs of Physical Abuse

- Bruises, welts on face, chest, back
- Injuries in the shape of object (belt, cord)
- Unexplained burns on palms, soles of feet, back
- Fractures that do not fit the story of how an injury occurred
- Delay in seeking medical help
- Extremes in behavior: very aggressive or withdrawn and shy
- Afraid to go home
- Frightened of parents
- Fearful of other adults

Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Pain, swelling, or itching in genital area
- Bruises, bleeding, discharge in genital area
- Difficulty walking or sitting, frequent urination, pain
- Strained or bloody underclothing
- Refusal to take part in gym or other exercises
- Poor peer relationships
- Unusual interest in sex for age
- Drastic change in school achievement
- Runaway or delinquent behavior
- Regressive or childlike behavior

Risk factors of neglect and signs of physical and sexual abuse are discussed during the mandatory employee orientation. Additionally, annual training on the subject is part of the required training. Parents and employees who wish to learn more about the prevention and identification of child abuse can visit the Children's Advocacy Center of Hidalgo and Starr Counties website: <https://cachsc.org/>.

Emergency Plans

The Center shall conduct drills for fire, tornado and other emergency situations. The fire drills will be conducted monthly and tornado and other emergency situation drills will be conducted every three months.

We have a written plan for handling emergencies, including but not limited to severe weather, loss of electrical power or water and death, serious injury or loss of a child, a threatening event, or natural disaster which may occur at the Center. The Center has in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, and continuity of operations. A copy of our emergency plans are available upon request.

Safe Sleep Practices for Infants

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the sudden and unexplained death of an infant, is the major cause of death in babies between 1 and 4 months old. After 30 years of research, scientists still cannot find a cause for SIDS; however, research has found the risk of SIDS may be reduced by placing a healthy infant on his or her back to sleep. We follow the recommendations of Child Care Licensing and the CDC to ensure we follow safe sleep practices for infants. Some of their guidelines includes:

- a. Each infant must have a supervised nap period that allows the infant to maintain his or her own pattern of sleeping and waking periods.
- b. An infant must sleep in a designated crib, cot, bed, or mat. An infant may remain in the crib for up to 30 minutes after awakening, as long as the infant is content and responsive.
- c. If we do not have a Sleep Exception Form that includes a signed statement from a health-care professional stating that the child sleeping in a restrictive device is medically necessary:
 1. We will not allow an infant to sleep in a restrictive device
 2. If an infant falls asleep in a restrictive device, you must remove the infant from the device and place the infant in a crib as soon as possible.
- d. Infants arriving at the center asleep in a car seat must be removed from the car seat and placed in a crib.
- e. Infant in a face-up sleeping position in the infant's own crib. An infant who is developmentally able to roll from back to stomach and stomach to back may do so independently after they have been placed in a face-up position for sleep.
- f. Infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing at any time.
- g. You may not lay a swaddled infant down to sleep or rest on any surface at any time unless you have a completed Sleep Exception Form that includes a signed statement from a health-care professional stating that swaddling the child for sleeping purposes is medically necessary.

Infants sleeping in restrictive devices are at risk for strangulation, injury, and positional asphyxiation. Documentation from a healthcare professional is required for an infant to sleep in a device other than a CPSC approved crib. If applicable, a copy of the Sleep Exception Form should be kept in the infant's classroom for easy review by caregivers and licensing staff.

If the infant was born with special care needs, has gastroesophageal reflux, often spits up after eating, or has a breathing, lung, or heart problem, a doctor or nurse may recommend a different sleep position to use.

For additional information, see the CDC webpage [Safe Sleep for Babies](#).