

Southwestern
CHILD DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION

Revised: October 12, 2016

...excellence in early childhood education

Parent Handbook

August 14, 2009

Dear Parents,

Southwestern Child Development welcomes you and your child to our Early Education and Preschool Programs. We are very pleased that you have chosen to trust your child's care to us and we look forward to working with you.

Southwestern provides a variety of child care programs in Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain and Buncombe Counties and the Qualla Boundary serving infants, toddlers, preschoolers, children with special needs, and school age children.

Southwestern recognizes that quality child care is expensive for young families. We strive to bring a variety of scholarship programs to our families to help offset the high cost of child care. We believe that the most important part of our program is your child's teacher and the interaction between your child and his teacher. We are currently focusing major efforts on improving the educational levels of all staff who work at Southwestern centers.

Southwestern centers use Developmentally Appropriate Practice as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children as our basic classroom philosophy. Southwestern focuses upon promoting a positive self image for young children which allows a child to reach out, explore and discover a wonderful world of learning. Southwestern has chosen the Creative Curriculum to use in all of our classrooms. Teachers have materials and are trained to use this curriculum.

Research indicates that the first five years of life are the most important developmental time in a child's life. We are very happy to be playing a part with you in this developmental process. We hope you are satisfied with the care your child receives in our centers. If a problem arises, and you are unable to resolve the issue with your center director please contact your county coordinator or me.

Cordially,

Sheila Hoyle
Executive Director

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Southwestern Child Development Commission, Inc. is a private non-profit agency serving Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain and Buncombe Counties and the Qualla Boundary.

All centers operated by Southwestern meet the star rated licensing standards as defined by the North Carolina Division of Child Development, Department of Health and Human Services. The licensure requirements insure that the centers meet the highest state standards of health, fire and building safety regulations. Star license requirements insure that a higher child-staff ratio is maintained and that qualified teachers and caregivers are employed by the center. Additional space requirements and additional activity areas are part of the star licensing. Staff are required to participate in staff development activities. **Look for the Star License at your child's center.**

Southwestern's funds are obtained from various local, state and federal governmental agencies and from private parent fees. The major funding sources are the North Carolina Division of Child Development Subsidized Child Care Program and the Region A Partnership for Children Smart Start Program.

Southwestern's Main Administrative Offices are located in the old Webster School in Webster, N.C. The telephone number for the administrative office is 828-586-5561. The agency's Fiscal Office is located at 142 East Sylva Shopping Center, Sylva, NC 28779. That office can be reached at the same phone number as the administrative office. The Direct Service Manager can be reached at 828-354-0108.



OPERATIONAL POLICES

Statement of Purpose

Southwestern believes that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment which responds to the developmental needs of the children and to the needs of the families.

Non-Discrimination

Southwestern provides child care services to families in Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Swain and Buncombe Counties and the Qualla Boundary. These services are provided fairly and equally, without regard to race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, handicap, marital status, economic status, political affiliation, medical condition or physical disability. This agency respects the confidentiality of the families who receive our services.

Program Description

Southwestern Centers plan daily activities which are both age and developmentally appropriate. These activities are designed to stimulate the social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of the children. There is a balance of activities that require cooperation and consideration of others and those that encourage the child to play alone. A daily activity plan is posted at each center.

To enhance the development of the children we serve Southwestern has chosen the Creative Curriculum to be used in all classrooms.

Goals

Southwestern has the following goals for our child development programs:

1. Maintain a safe and healthy environment.
2. Encourage development which enhances each child's strengths by: building trust, fostering independence, encouraging self-control by setting clear, consistent limits and having realistic expectations.
3. Expand the child's language base.
4. Nurture and love each child.
5. Respect each child's individual needs and progress.
6. Promote healthy self esteem by helping each child to feel good about himself.
7. Enhance the child's physical, mental, social, and emotional development.
8. Provide many opportunities for the child to interact with adults and other children.
9. Respect the individual beliefs of each family.
10. Help parents to reinforce learning in the home.
11. Strive to involve parents in every aspect of the child care center.

Days of Operation

Mark your calendar! This list of holidays will allow you, the parent, to make necessary arrangements as we close for holidays. The daily operation schedule for most Southwestern centers is Monday through Friday. Southwestern centers are closed for the following holidays:

New Years Day

*Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday

Easter

*Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

*Veterans Day

Thanksgiving (2 Days)

Christmas (3 Days)



*Most centers will remain open on these scheduled holidays unless posted otherwise at an individual center. These holidays may be observed in conjunction with the other holidays. Not all centers observe these holidays on the same basis. Each center will post closings well in advance.

Centers may also be closed for professional development activities throughout the year.

Monthly fees **ARE NOT** adjusted for scheduled holiday closings.



Inclement Weather Policy

Each center has an inclement weather policy which is unique to that center, based upon the services they provide. The center director will share the inclement weather policy for that center with parents. Parents should listen to local radio or TV stations for closings. If public school does not operate, transportation will not be provided on those days. **Parent fees ARE NOT adjusted for routine inclement weather closings.**

Parent fees will not be adjusted for emergency closings beyond our control. This would include closings due to the center being without water, heat, electricity or anything else beyond our control.

Arrival and Departure

Upon arrival at the center the parent/responsible adult must accompany the child into the center and notify the staff of the child's presence. Before removing the child from the center, the parent/responsible adult should notify the staff of their presence and the departure of the child. Centers use a sign in/out sheet. Parents/responsible adults are required to sign the child in and out and notify staff of the child's arrival and departure.

Children will be released to no one other than their legal parents or guardians and the people listed on the Emergency Release Form. Children cannot be released to individuals under the age of 18. When someone other than the parent is to pick up a child, he or she may be asked to provide identification.

All legal parents have the right to pick up their child unless there is a legal court document stating otherwise and the document is on file at the center.

In case of emergency: Children will be released only to those people listed on their application form as being allowed to pick them up. Please be sure you have listed at least three people who may pick up your child. Any changes to your instructions must be made in writing. **For your child's protection, there will be no exceptions made to this policy.**



On Time Pick-Up

Our staff are hired to provide child care services for a specific number of hours each day. It is important for parents to pick up their children at a designated time daily. Children miss their parents if the day is long. Fatigue can stress your child. For your child's well-being, we urge all parents to come and pick up their child on time. If parents find that they are going to be detained, they should notify the center immediately so that staff can assure your child that he/she has not been forgotten.

During the enrollment process, parents should identify the hours that they need care for their child and after placement, notify the center director of changes that occur. In order to allow Southwestern to staff the center to provide the most optimum quality for the children, we ask that parents pick up their children at the designated time. Centers may assess fees for late pickup.

Application and Registration

1. Parents must meet with the Center Director for a pre-enrollment conference prior to attendance in the program.

2. Parents will be expected to complete an application form, discipline policy, emergency release form, and a food service form. All forms must be completed and turned in to the Center Director prior to enrollment in the program.
3. Parents will be given a medical examination form and immunization record which must be completed by a doctor or their representative. This form must be returned to the center at enrollment time. Your child's health is very important to us. Additionally, we require an updated copy of all immunizations and well child check-ups that are obtained for the duration of the child's enrollment.
4. Parents of infants need to provide a written feeding schedule so that we can coordinate with the child's home feeding schedule. All children under (15) fifteen months old must have a current feeding schedule on file at the center. Parents are responsible for making changes in their child's schedule as eating habits change.

Registration Fees

Initial Registration Fee

A \$25.00 initial registration fee will be charged at the time of enrollment. If a child is withdrawn from the program for any reason, a subsequent \$25.00 registration fee will be charged to re-enroll the child in the program. If a child transfers to another Southwestern center at the parent's request, the parent may be required to pay an additional \$25.00 fee.

Annual Registration Fee

A \$25 annual registration fee will be charged each September. This fee is due with the September fees.

Private Fees

Fees will be charged based on the current fee schedule approved by Southwestern's Area Board. Fees must be paid in advance prior to the child's attendance in the program. Fees are assessed by enrollment, not by attendance days. Fees are due on the first working day of the month. For example, the fee for August will be due on August 1st. A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed for fees not paid on the first working day of the month.

All fees must be mailed to Southwestern Child Development Commission's Fiscal Office at 142 E. Sylva Shopping Center, Sylva, NC 28779. Payment can also be made in person at the above location only. Fees may also be paid by credit/debit card by calling the fiscal office or setting up a monthly plan to automatically be taken on credit/debit card. If you have questions about fees call 828-354-0365.

Subsidized Care

Subsidized Child Care assists parents in helping pay for child care and is available for families who meet eligibility requirements. All parents who feel they may qualify for subsidized child care, or are having difficulty paying for their child care fees, should contact their local child care subsidy specialist in your county. Parents must furnish the social worker with proof of their family income. The child care subsidy specialist will determine if there is a fee and how much it will be. Fees assessed by the child care subsidy specialist will be on the child care Voucher/Action Notice and are due on the first working day of the month. In the event of a change in family income or size, parents are required to notify their child care subsidy specialist immediately.



Food

Southwestern Child Development employs good nutritional practices because of the recognized importance of nutrition in the growth and development of preschool children.



Southwestern recognizes that the developmental growth of a child is very much dependent on the child's diet. Southwestern centers provide children with a nutritious breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Our menus meet the guidelines required by the United States Department of Agriculture Child Care Feeding Program in nutritional content and serving size for each age level of child. Children need to be present at the centers by designated times (specific to each center) to participate in these meals.

Parents are requested to not bring any additional food into the center. Special dietary considerations should be discussed in advance with the center director and approved in writing by a physician.

The feeding policy for infants is as follows: Infants shall be held by the caregiver while the child is taking a bottle. Bottle propping by the caregiver is not permitted. This type of feeding of infants and toddlers can lead to inner ear infections and Baby Bottle Tooth Decay. Mobile toddlers will not be permitted to carry their bottle throughout the classroom. If the child is able to sit alone, the child shall sit in an age appropriate chair, at an age appropriate table, to feed himself/herself. Parents are encouraged to inform the staff of any change in eating habits, such as, introducing solid foods, weaning from the bottle, food allergies, etc. as soon as possible.

Southwestern will provide Parent's Choice with Iron formula. If your child requires a different formula, you will need to provide it in bottles labeled and dated with your child's name.

Bottles that contain formula, milk or juice shall be refrigerated until the child desires to be fed. All contents remaining in the bottle, after each feeding, will be discarded. This is a sanitation regulation in child care. This makes it important for parents to bring the smaller bottles with the approximate amount of a feeding that your baby needs.

BREAST FEEDING...A special bond is formed when a mom breastfeeds her baby. She is also giving her new baby special antibodies and nutrients not available in regular formula. We promote breastfeeding in our centers. Moms are welcome to come into the center and breastfeed their baby. Bottles of breast milk shall be dated and labeled with the child's name. All breast milk shall be used only for the intended child.



Field Trips

Southwestern centers occasionally participate in field trips. If a center plans any field trips, parents will be notified for permission prior to departure. Parents should feel welcome to participate with their children on field trips. Volunteers are always welcome!



Clothing

Parents need to bring an extra change of clothing for their child. This includes pants, shirts, socks, and under clothes. These extra clothes should be labeled with the child's name. Parents should dress their child comfortably in play clothes and according to the weather. During changing seasons, it may often be cool in the morning and warm in the afternoon. Parents should bring extra clothes or dress their child in layers as needed.

Active children playing indoors and outdoors will get their clothes dirty. During a day's activities the children will usually have the opportunity to be involved in sand or water play, painting and other art activities. These "messy", creative activities allow children to participate in many valuable learning experiences. Children should be dressed for involvement in these fun, learning activities.

Diaper Bags

The only items allowed in a diaper bag are diapers, clothing, wipes and baby toys. It is the parent's responsibility to remove all medications and bottles upon arrival and give them to the caregiver. The parent also needs to collect medications and bottles at the end of the day.



Toys

Southwestern centers are adequately equipped with appropriate toys and materials, and we recommend that children not bring personal toys from home. Parents are requested not to allow children to bring personal toys into the center. Staff cannot be responsible for these toys, and they are

often lost or destroyed. Special consideration for security or sleep toys should be discussed with the center director.

Child/Staff Ratios

Parents are encouraged to look for the star rating at each center. The child/staff ratio for each group will be posted at the center. Each classroom should have the appropriate child/staff ratio according to that center's star rating.

Professional Development of Staff

Career development and training for our staff is very important. All lead teachers have current Introduction to Early Childhood Education and all other staff are encouraged to obtain these credentials. Many of our lead teachers hold an A.A. Degree in Early Childhood or a Bachelor's Degree in Birth to Kindergarten, while the others are continuing to work towards obtaining their degrees in the Early Childhood field. All staff are required to maintain current certification in CPR and First Aid. Our centers will be closed from time to time for our staff to attend training sessions. Parents will be notified in advance of center closings so that they may arrange for other child care. Parent fees will not be refundable for those days.

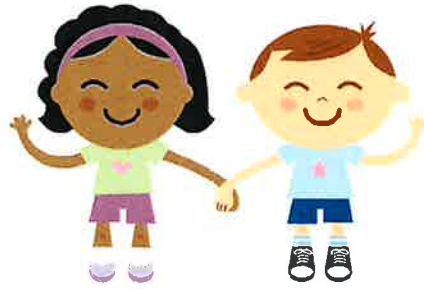


DISCIPLINE POLICY

The goal of effective discipline is to teach the children self-control. That is, to teach each child how to live usefully and happily with himself/herself and others. Good discipline results in a child who conducts himself/herself in an appropriate manner even when adults are not present. We, at Southwestern, believe the benefits of respect, consistency and positive reinforcement are more effective than corporal punishment. As such, no form of corporal punishment will be used in Southwestern centers. Southwestern's discipline policy is consistent with the policy of the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education.

When the need presents itself, the following methods of discipline will be used by classroom teachers:

1. Model appropriate behavior.
2. Redirect the child from an unacceptable activity to a more acceptable activity.
3. Provide alternative activities.
4. Give praise for appropriate behavior.
5. Ignore behavior that would best be ignored when possible.
6. Distract children from inappropriate behavior.
7. Allow a child to get away from the situation briefly. This respects the fact that the child may be overly stimulated or upset and need an opportunity to be apart from the group.
8. Give the child time to consider his behavior. There will be a specified place (in full view of the caregiver) where the child will be allowed to sit for no more than 3 minutes of quiet time. This will be used as one of the last options for controlling a child's behavior. When a child's ability to understand that he/she is being asked to sit for quiet time is impaired by disabilities or young age, his/her behavior will be dealt with by distraction or redirection.
9. If these methods of discipline fail to bring about the acceptable behavior necessary for safe and happy relationships with the other children in group care, a conference with parents will be requested.



Southwestern employees will follow these guidelines, at all times, about the discipline of children:

1. No child shall be subjected to any form of corporal punishment by the owner, operator, director, or staff of any day care facility. For the purposes of this statement, “staff” shall mean any regular or substitute caregiver, any volunteer, and any auxiliary personnel, such as cooks, secretaries, janitors, maids, vehicle drivers, etc.
2. No child shall be handled roughly in any way, including shaking, pushing, shoving, pinching, slapping, biting, kicking, or spanking.
3. No child shall ever be placed in a locked room, closet, or box.
4. No discipline shall ever be delegated to another child.
5. Discipline shall in no way be related to food, rest, or toileting;
 - a. No food shall be withheld, or given, as a means of discipline.
 - b. No child shall ever be disciplined for lapses in toilet training.
 - c. No child shall ever be disciplined for not sleeping during rest period.
6. Children will be spoken to with a respectful tone of voice at all times.
7. Caregivers will not put hands on children for anything other than gentle and appropriate intentions.
8. A caregiver will never physically force a child to a specified place for quiet time, raise her voice, or place her hands on a child’s face to force eye contact.

BITING

Young children may bite for different reasons. The end result is not pleasant...Biting hurts! Southwestern centers are required to document biting incidents and give a report to parents of the child bitten and the child who has done the biting. We DO NOT send children home for biting. The staff are encouraged to move about the room so that many biting incidents can be prevented. If documentation shows a particular child to bite more than once a day, the teachers and teacher assistants will take necessary steps in aiding the child to express himself/herself in a different way. EXAMPLE- providing a child a teether. It is hard on the child that has been bitten, and the majority of children will bite, only if it is one time. One day your child may be bitten, and the next day you receive a report that your child has bitten another child. The fact is...biting does happen occasionally in centers where infants and toddlers are enrolled. Why? There are several reasons:

1. Young children explore by placing objects in their mouths. Sometimes children almost “accidentally” explore just a little too vigorously. Some children actually respond with shocked looks when a bitten child cries.
2. Children do not have a well-developed sense of cause and effect relationships. They are just learning that if they bite someone, it hurts that person.
3. Young children do not have verbal skills to express angry feelings. Biting is a very powerful way to get one’s way, fight back, or release frustration. Studies show that almost all biting disappears by age three, the age at which most children begin to be able to say, “No” and acquire other more complex skills for dealing with anger or frustrating feelings.
4. Being an infant or toddler has to be frustrating. Think of how many times infants and toddlers fall down while struggling to reach an attractive object only to have it snatched away by another child or adult. We know that biting and other forms of aggression, result frequently from an accumulation of frustrating experiences.
5. Children are often teething, and it may just feel good to bite. (Remember cutting wisdom teeth?)

What do we do to prevent and treat biting incidents? We do not like them to happen either, so we work hard to minimize the number of such incidents by doing the following:

1. We plan activities and supervise the center carefully so that biting hopefully will not occur. We provide activities to release frustration, and we have ample toys so

that children do not have to fight over toys. We maintain a good child/staff ratio in our infant-toddler groups so that staff members can always be close to groups of infants and toddlers playing together.

2. When bites do occur, we react firmly by telling children, “NO.” We provide simple explanations to help children understand why biting cannot be allowed.

We provide objects that can be bitten, and we redirect children to appropriate activities to vent strong feelings.

3. We may isolate a child for a few minutes to give them time to calm down. (The child will never be totally isolated from the group. An adult will always be in the presence of the child, and the isolation time is very short for young children.)
4. We console the child who has been bitten and move quickly to clean the bite. We place ice on the bite to minimize swelling and bruising. We have secured current advice for first-aid treatment for bites from the county health department, so practices are in line with recommendations for health safety.
5. If your child is bitten we will notify you immediately if you so desire so that you can determine if further medical attention is needed. (In most cases, the skin is not broken, and no additional medical attention should be needed, but we want you to have the option to make that decision.)
6. We “shadow” the child who has done the biting so that we can prevent any follow-up incidents.

There are some things we do not do, and you should know those too:

1. We will not bite children back, nor will we encourage children to bite each other back. This practice only models and encourages further aggressive behavior.
2. We will not “expel” a child with a biting problem, under normal circumstances. If a child reaches the age where biting is uncommon (past three, and certainly four years of age), and the child is still biting persistently, a careful examination of the situation is needed. We may wish to secure an additional evaluation for the child to determine why more mature forms of communication are not being used.

Acknowledgements to
Dr. Sharon Teets
Carson Newman College



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Infectious Disease Policy

Child care centers, because of their nature, are places where children are frequently exposed to contagious diseases. In order to reduce the risk of giving an infection to other children, and for your own child's protection, the following policy will apply:

CHILDREN MAY NOT ATTEND WHEN:

- Child does not feel well enough to participate in daily activities.
- Staff cannot care for sick child without compromising care of the other children.
- Child has any of the following **symptoms**, until a health provider determines that the child is well enough to attend and that the illness is not contagious. To return sooner, a health provider's note is needed.
 1. Fever (101 degrees F. or greater and accompanied by behavior change and other signs or symptoms of illness).
 2. Signs or symptoms of possibly severe illness (e.g. persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, lethargy).

3. Diarrhea: Changes from child's usual stool pattern, such as increased frequency of stools, looser/watery stools:
 - A. Diarrhea stool runs out of diaper/unable to make it to the bathroom-can stay **IF** no other symptoms.
 - B. After a second diarrhea stool child must go home regardless of accompanying symptoms.
 - C. Diarrhea that is contained but is accompanied by other symptoms the child needs to go home.
4. Vomiting more than once in the previous 24 hours.
5. Mouth sores with drooling.
6. Rash with a fever or behavior change.
- Child has been **diagnosed** from a health care provider, until treated and/or no longer contagious with the following:
 1. Infectious conjunctivitis/pink eye (with eye discharge) – until 24 hours after treatment started.
 2. Scabies, head lice, other infestations- until 24 hours after treatment started and child is **FREE OF ALL NITS.**
 3. Impetigo- until 24 hours after treatment started and all sores have crusted over.
 4. Strep throat, scarlet fever, or other strep infection- until 24 hours after treatment started and child is free of fever.
 5. Pertussis- until 5 days after treatment started.
 6. Tuberculosis (TB) – until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious.
 7. Chicken Pox- until 6 days after start of rash or all sores have crusted over.

8. Mumps- until 9 days after start of symptoms (swelling of “cheeks”).
9. Hepatitis A- until 7 days after start of symptoms (e.g., jaundice).
10. Measles- until 6 days after start of rash.
11. Rubella (German measles) – until 6 days after start of rash.
12. Oral Herpes (if child is drooling) – until lesions are dry.
13. Shingles (if lesions cannot be covered) – until lesions heal.

FRESH AIR AND EXERCISE SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCES THE HEALTH AND GROWTH OF A CHILD. Parents who feel their child is TOO ILL to participate in outdoor activities, should keep their child home an extra day to insure a complete recovery.

If any child develops a contagious or infectious disease while at the center, the parents will be informed. **Parents will be required to come to pick up a sick child immediately.**

If any child has been exposed to a contagious or infectious disease while at the center parents will be informed in writing. Parents, in turn, should inform the center of any contagious or infectious disease which their child develops at home or to which the child has been exposed.



Medications

Occasionally a child will need to have medicine administered while he or she is at the day care center. In order for the center staff to be able to administer this medication the following regulations will be implemented for reasons of safety:

1. Parents must provide prescription medicine in its original container bearing the pharmacist’s label which lists the child’s name, date the prescription was filled, the physician’s name, and directions for dosage.
2. NO medication can be administered at the center without the written permission from the parent. A “Medication Permission Form” must be completed and signed by the parent with:

Child's name
Name of medication
Exact dosage
Time(s) of day to be given
Day(s) to be given

3. Over the counter medications shall be administered as authorized in writing by the child's parent, not to exceed the amounts and frequency of dosage specified in the printed instructions accompanying the medication. Parents should be sure the medication is appropriate for your child's age or we require a doctor's prescription which specifies exact dosage. The child's name should be written on the medicine container.
4. All medications can be kept at the center only for the length of the prescribed course of treatment. NO medications can be kept indefinitely, to be given "as needed".
 - a. A written statement from the parent may give blanket permission for up to 6 months to authorize administration of medication for asthma and allergic reactions.
 - b. A written statement from the parent may give blanket permission for up to 1 year to authorize the administration of sunscreen and over the counter diapering cream.
5. All medications must be given directly to the teacher by an adult. Parents MUST NOT bring pre-measured medication in a syringe.
6. If only two doses are given during a 24 hour period, we prefer the parent/guardian administer medication before and after child care services.

Accidental Injury or Emergency Health Problem

In case of emergency (accident, severe pain, etc.), the center director or a lead teacher will take appropriate action. If needed, 911 will be called or the child will be transported to get medical care. Parents or guardians will be contacted immediately.

The center will maintain a parent's signed consent form agreeing to emergency medical care (see child's application). Emergency phone numbers will be posted by the telephone and the staff will be instructed in the procedures to follow in case of illness or injury. A

first aid kit will be available at a central location at the center and personnel will be trained in first aid procedures and CPR.

It is very important that we have a telephone number where you may be reached in case of emergency or illness. Parents should keep the center staff continually updated with emergency contact information.



Smoke Free Environment

Southwestern provides a smoke free environment for our children. We request that all adults refrain from smoking in the center, on the playground, or near the windows of the center.



PARENT PARTICIPATION

1. We respect parents as the prime educators of their children.
2. All parents are expected to:
 - A. Visit the center before the child's first day of attendance to help the child become familiar with the program.
 - B. Obtain a medical examination and immunization record for the child and complete the medical information form.
 - C. Complete the additional forms necessary, such as the Emergency Release Form and Discipline Statement.

3. Staff will meet with parents on a regular basis to discuss their child's needs, progress, and to exchange information.
4. Parents will be given the opportunity to participate in center activities and to observe their child and the center program.
5. We also encourage parents and staff to work together to provide the best child care for their children.

It is important for all parents to become familiar with their child's center and program. Parents are welcome to visit our centers at any time. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved with the children, or to observe. Parents are also encouraged to share information about the changing needs of their child (cutting teeth, change in sleeping and/or eating patterns). Our staff will work with parents to make sure their child is cared for to the best of our ability.



COMPLAINT POLICY

One of the most important aspects of our program is our staff/parent relationships. Parents possess a wealth of information about their child. The staff are trained to notice individual characteristics and patterns of development in children. By developing a positive and friendly relationship, parents and staff are able to share information and to work together to provide a quality child care program.

As in any program, questions and problems will arise from time to time. Parents should feel comfortable addressing questions to their child's teachers. If teachers are unable to answer the parents' questions, they will refer parents to an appropriate staff member.

Questions and grievances are best handled at the center level. The center staff are the best informed about the children in their care. However, should parents need to take their concerns and/or grievances elsewhere, the recommended procedure to follow is:

1. Discuss with your child's teacher.
2. Discuss with the Center Director.
3. Discuss with your area Direct Service Manager.
4. Discuss with the Executive Director.



INFANT TODDLER SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected death of a seemingly healthy baby for whom the cause of death can be determined based on an autopsy, an investigation of the place where the baby died and a review of the baby's medical history.

The Child Care Law requires that child care providers caring for children 12 months of age or younger implement a safe sleep policy, share this information with parents, and participate in training.

Southwestern Child Development Commission believes all families have a right to safe and healthy child care and will practice the following safe sleep policy.

Southwestern Child Development will observe these Safe Sleep Practices to provide a safe sleep environment:

1. All child care staff working in the infant room, or child care staff with scheduled hours in the infant room, will receive training on our Infant Safe Sleep Policy and SIDS risk reduction.

2. Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep, unless there is a signed sleep position waiver on file as allowed by law. A copy of the waiver will be posted for quick reference near the infant's crib, playpen, or bassinet.
3. Infants will be placed to sleep in a crib, playpen, or bassinet with a firm mattress.
4. Infants' heads will not be covered with blankets or bedding. The tops of infants' cribs will not be covered with bedding.
5. Room temperature will not exceed 75 degrees F.
6. Only one infant will be in a crib at a time, unless we are evacuating infants in an emergency or in practice drills.
7. No smoking is permitted in the building.
8. Awake babies will be given supervised "tummy time."
9. Caregivers will visually check on sleeping infants by visually observing the child for breathing and chest movements. All sleeping infants will be checked every 15 minutes and the observations will be documented on a chart placed by the crib.
10. Each infant will have no more than one blanket in the crib. If blanket is used, then it will be tucked in on 3 sides. No other items will be located in the crib unless requested in writing by parents. We implement best practice, and best practice recommends that there are no blankets in cribs.
11. When an infant changes position during sleep, we will leave them unless otherwise specified by a health care provider.
12. All parents/guardians of infants cared for in this facility will receive a copy of this policy and information about SIDS risk reduction before enrollment.

**WELCOME TO SOUTHWESTERN CHILD DEVELOPMENT!!
WE ARE GLAD THAT YOU CHOSE A SOUTHWESTERN CENTER
FOR YOUR CHILD'S CARE.**