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Operational Policies

And Parent Handbook

Policies are reviewed annually and updated if necessary.

Revised and updated: 04/11/2023

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Miles of Smiles Learning Center #2!!

The Mission of Miles of Smiles Learning Center is to provide a warm, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for children to feel safe to explore the world around them. Our focus is to provide a stimulating environment and educational experience which provides each child's social/ emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Our promise to our families is to ensure the safety of your children while you are at work.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for enrolling in our program. We believe that the strongest partnership in a child's life is that between the child's parents and the early childhood teachers. For that reason, our staff aims to team with parents to make this experience an excellent one for your entire family. To reach this goal, we need parent participation and quality childcare teachers. We are committed to providing quality services to you. We encourage you to get involved in your children's daily learning experiences. During drop-off or pick-up, feel free to provide input on lesson plans and curriculum, and always be an advocate for your child. You are invited to visit your child at the center any time during the day.

Starting child-care is an important event for you and your child. So, please feel free to ask us questions as you get to know the center and your child's classroom. We hope that you and your child, together, will develop a lifetime of quality memories while enrolled in our program. We look forward to working with you and your child!

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- The procedure for parents to review and discuss with the childcare center director any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the childcare center.
- The procedures for parents to visit the childcare center at any time during the childcare center's hours of operation, and program activities, without having to secure prior approval.
- The procedures for parents to participate in the childcare centers operation activities
- The procedure for parents to review a copy of the minimum standards and the childcare center's most recent Licensing inspection report.
- Instructions on how a parent may contact the local Licensing office, DFPS child abuse hotline, and DFPS website.

- Method of informing the parents that under the Texas Penal code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.
- Emergency preparedness plan
- Provisions for breastfeeding
- Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children.
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- Vaccine-preventable diseases for employees.
- Parent conferences
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Hours of operation:

Miles of Smiles Learning Center's operating hours are:

6:30 am – 6:00 pm Monday – Friday

The months of operation are January-December

TUITION AND FEES:

Age group	Mon-Fri: Weekly Rates
Full Time: Newborn-17 months	\$166.00
Part Time: Newborn-17 months	\$150.00
Full Time: 18mos-35 mos.	\$158.00
Part Time: 18mos-35 mos.	\$145.00
Full Time: 3yo-4yo	\$151.00
Part Time: 3yo-4yo	\$130.00
School Calendar:6yo-13yo	\$125.00
Holidays:6yo-13yo	\$146.00

Drop-ins are \$50(Full Time) and \$35(Part-Time) per day if space allows.

Tuition is due each Monday at drop-off time. If not paid by Monday, a late fee of \$15 for the first day and \$5 for each subsequent day not to exceed \$35. If tuition is not paid by Friday of the same week, you will run the risk of dis enrollment.

Late fees: If you are running late, please call the center to notify the director. There will be a \$1 per minute you are late fee due upon arrival. If you fail to pay this fee upon arrival, you will be asked to sign a form stating this late fee will be added to the following payment.

Please remember that your child has a permanent slot available for full-time care within our operating hours. If you select to have your child miss a day, fees are still due. There will be no proration of the week.

Tuition will be paid in cash, money order, cashier's check, or checks.

CURRICULUM:

Our curriculum is theme-based and developmentally appropriate.

INFANTS: Infants need a safe, secure “home away from home” where they can learn, play, and grow. That is why we designed a nurturing, creative world for infants that help their minds and bodies develop. Our infant teachers work with you to make a smooth transition from home to our center - one that leaves smiles on your child's face and on your own. We're committed to creating bond with your child to ensure their best start in life. Our program emphasizes the importance of positive, supportive interactions between teacher and child. Our teachers sing, read, and talk with your child to help them with this critical developmental stage. Because our classrooms and equipment are developmentally appropriate in size, infants can move, explore, and play with confidence. Age-appropriate activities are individually planned to promote your child's specific cognitive and social development in a warm, nurturing environment. We expose infants to books, playing games with them, and helping them reach first-year milestones.

TODDLERS: A whole new world opens to children when they take to their feet. They walk, talk, and begin to develop relationships with one another. Our toddler program is filled with sensory experiences that emphasize the importance of a toddler's environment and relationships. Our program includes.

- Daily whole-group instruction promoting social skill development.
- balanced attention to nurturing, playtime, and learning.
- monthly thematic units that provide a variety of daily activities and experiences
- development of children's confidence, self-esteem, and love of learning
- learning areas focused on dramatic play, creative arts, language, and sensory exploration.
- regular communication between teachers and families to keep you informed about your child's day.

PRESCHOOL: A preschooler's world opens in new ways as they improve coordination, learn complex skills, and begin to interact more with their peers. Our preschool program introduces language, math, science, and social skills in a logical, appropriate sequence that encourages learning one step at a time. We provide plenty of individual attention to support your child's unique needs. Our program includes.

- portfolio collections that capture your child's work and unique creative expression
- thematic units that encourage curiosity and self-direction and confidence
- hands-on experiences to heighten cognition and problem-solving skills.
- daily small group instruction that promotes skill development
- regular communication between teachers and families to keep you informed about your child's day.

Other activities that the children participate in, include, but are not limited to the following; books and story-time, Legos, circle-time, tumbling exercises, music and dancing and singing, dress up, play food, interactive stuffed animals, cars/trucks/planes, arts and crafts, puzzles, flash cards, animals/dinosaurs, trains, musical instruments, balls, dolls, various learning toys, various games, bean bag toss, blocks, large beads and string, song games, coloring, sing along story books, painting, science, and puppets.

All children participate in daily outdoor recreation and activities (weather permitting). Activities include climbing, sliding, swinging, jumping, running, balls, racing, parachute, catch, bubbles, follow the leader, squirt bottles, ride-on toys, wagons, safe water toys, various games, and exploring nature/weather.

We want our children to learn, play, and grow in a safe, loving environment. We want our learning center to be one that children love attending and parents love visiting. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit and participate in center activities.

SCHOOL AGE: Our program helps school-agers develop a sense of who they are and what they can do. We promote collaboration and positive group interaction, giving children a choice in daily planning while encouraging independent learning. Additionally, we offer exciting activities, hands-on exploration, and a quiet, comfortable place for your child to do their homework. Our program includes:

- Homework support
- daily fitness activities to keep your child active and healthy.
- Classroom council, which builds leadership and communication skills.
- comfortable environments to help your child build self-confidence, self-esteem, character, and social skills.
- Daily communication to keep you informed about your child's day.
- CAMPS: Summer/Winter/Spring Camp when public schools are closed. These camps are full of exciting, age-appropriate activities and lessons.

Inclement Weather

We follow **Weslaco ISD** for inclement weather closings. If **Weslaco ISD schools** close, we will also be closed. We will keep you posted through Class Dojo and on our Facebook page.

Policy for Drop Off and Pick-Up

Please make sure your child is at the center by 10:00 Am. Upon arrival, it is the responsibility of the adult dropping off the child to check-in the child and walk them to their classroom. Children are not to be dropped off in the parking lot and allowed to enter unescorted.

The parent(s) of the child shall at any time the child is in attendance be permitted access to all child care areas of the Center and shall make his or her presence known to Center Staff prior to removing the child from the Center

Each parent/legal guardian will document in the enrollment papers the people authorized to pick-up his/her child. If you want a person who is not identified as an emergency and authorized person to pick-up your child , you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The provider will require photo identification from anyone that it is not recognized. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

A child will only be released to that person with proper identification, such as a valid driver's license or picture identification. Please keep in consideration that although someone may be on the pick-up list, staff may still ask for I.D if the person picking up is not recognized. We thank you for your help in this matter. We must focus on your child's safety.

In order to protect your child, we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as emergency and authorized pick-ups. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 2 hours we have not been able to reach you or a person listed on an emergency and authorized pick-up, we will call the local child protective services agency.

WITHDRAW POLICY:

If you need to withdraw your child, we require two weeks' written notice prior to leaving and submit it to the director.

Sometimes children or families may not adjust to the center environment. In these cases, we may ask a parent or guardian to withdraw his or her child. If we make that decision, we usually notify the family one week in advance to permit them to find alternative care. Certain instances may require an immediate withdrawal.

Termination of Services

Because we provide childcare and education in a group setting, we must be concerned for the welfare and safety of all children and staff. We act when a particular child or parent's behavior threatens the safety of — or becomes abusive toward — the other children, parents, or center staff. As a result, we may disenroll the child immediately. We reserve the right to disenroll any child or terminate services as deemed necessary or appropriate at our sole discretion, with or without notice.

Satisfaction and Resolution

We are fully committed to your child's well-being and your satisfaction with our programs. Experience has taught us that open communication is the key to maintaining a positive relationship. We continually look to your input on how we can improve our programs. We want to be sure we are meeting the needs of your child — and that you are confident in the care and education we give your child.

- Please share your ideas, suggestions or concerns with a staff member. Staff members will make every effort to be available to discuss topics regarding your child or classroom schedules and activities.
- If you have concerns that cannot be resolved or answered by a staff member, please speak with your Center Director.
- When you have a concern that has not been resolved or answered by staff members, communicating to your Center Director gives us an opportunity to improve our programs; more importantly, it allows us to better meet your needs.

NUTRITION and MEALS

Good nutrition is vital to children's overall development and well-being. In an effort to provide the best possible nutrition environment for the children in our facility, Miles of Smiles Learning Center has developed the following childcare nutrition policies to encourage the development of good eating habits that will last a lifetime.

Miles of Smiles Learning Center follows the childcare nutrition guidelines recommended by the USDA CACFP (child and adult care food program) for all the foods we serve. To provide a healthy and balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and limits food and beverages that are high in sugar, and/or fat, our nutrition policy includes the following:

Fruits and Vegetables:

- We serve fruit at least 2 times a day
- We offer a vegetable other than white potatoes at least once a day.

Grains:

- We serve whole grain foods at least once a day

Beverages:

- We limit juice intake to once per day in a serving size specified for the child's age group. When served, the juice is 100% fruit juice.
- We do not serve sugar sweetened beverages.
- We serve only skim or 1% milk to children age 2 years and older.

Fats and sugars:

- High fat meats, such as bologna, bacon, and sausage, are served no more than 2 times per week
- Fried or pre-fried vegetables, including potatoes, are served no more than once per week.
- We limit sweet food items to no more than two times per week.

Role of staff in Nutrition Education:

- Staff provide opportunities for children to learn about nutrition 1 time per week or more.
- Staff act as role models for healthy eating in front of the children.

Meals and snack times are planned so that no child will go more than four hours without being offered food. We provide a variety of nutritionally balanced, high-quality foods each day so please do not send child with outside food/drinks. If you wish to send your child with a packed lunch/snack, please let director know. Your child will be given a plate from the center as well.

Please notify staff of any allergies your child may have. Forms will have to be provided by a licensed physician and they will be posted in the classroom and the kitchen. Food is commercially prepared in a kitchen that has been inspected by our Weslaco Health officials and our Hummingbird CACFP Director.

Miles of Smiles provides 4 nutrition meals throughout the day.

-Breakfast 8:00 am- 9:00 am

-Lunch: 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

-Snack 2:30 pm - 3:00 pm

-Supper: 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Weekly Menus:

We have a weekly meal plan set up on our boards. Our menus are designed to provide a variety of nutritious foods that are different in color, shape, size and texture. All of our menus include foods that are culturally diverse and seasonally appropriate. Menus are rotated on a 5 weekly menu rotation. If you need a copy of the weekly menu, please feel free to get an updated version on the parent corner resource section. \\

Nutrition and Punishment:

Staff will never use food as a reward or as a punishment.

Professional Development:

Annual nutrition training is required to ensure that all staff understand the importance role nutrition plays in the overall well-being of children.

Celebrations:

From birthday parties to holidays there are many opportunities for celebrations in our childcare center. A birthday party will be held monthly in each classroom. If you would like to recognize your child's actual birthday, we request that you let us know in advance so we can plan accordingly.

Daily Procedures:

All staff and children are taught to wash hands before and after each meal.

Cook and servers are to wear gloves when preparing and serving food to children.

Lead teacher/Cook counts every meal on our "My Simple Meal" portal.

To accommodate those with food allergies, please ask your Center Director for details. Our menus are planned weekly by our Chef and satisfies all applicable federal and state nutrition guidelines. Mealtime promotes healthy eating patterns

and fuels your child's readiness to learn. If your child is not ready for table food, please review the meal service details with your Center Director.

Our caregivers will do the following when serving meals to children

- Do not touch ready-to-eat foods with your bare hands, always use gloves, tongs, or utensils.
- Wash fruits and vegetables under running water before you cut and serve it.
- Make sure if you prepare raw meat, including frozen meat products, that it does not come into contact with other foods.
- If preparing foods in advance, make sure they are covered with a lid or cling wrap until it is time to serve. Keep in mind it should not be left out too long and warm foods should be served at a temperature of at least 140°F.
- Always check foods for the best before dates before serving, and toss anything beyond its date.
- If cooking food from scratch cook it until it reaches above 140°F using a food probe thermometer to check doneness.
- When using a probe thermometer ensure it is in the center of the food and wait until it is finished and stabilized to ensure you get an accurate reading.
- If storing cooked food, wait until the food stops steaming before putting it in the fridge.
- Stored food should be clearly labelled with what it is and when it was prepared.
- When reheating prepared food, it must be heated right through until steaming and reaches a temperature of at least 140°F (be certain to avoid serving steaming food to children to reduce risk of burns).
- Always heat food in the microwave with microwave-safe containers or dishes.
- Food should be served wearing gloves and with tongs to avoid touching the food with bare hands.
- Perishable foods left out of the fridge longer than four hours must be tossed, with cold foods requiring a temperature of no more than 40° F.
- Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach at all times.

UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

Our number one priority is the safety of all our students. Enrollment paperwork is fundamental for us to meet this. If any information in your child's contact changes throughout the course of your child's enrollment, please use the parent update form from the parent resources files and give it to the director. Director will then update the information on your child's portfolio, so it is accurate.

ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

Miles of Smiles Learning Center caregiver will do a quick health check on your child upon entry to the childcare center. If a child feels feverish, his/her temperature will be taken, or is lethargic, has a rash, vomiting, or has diarrhea, a parent may be asked to take the child home until the child can participate in childcare activities or is fever-free, vomiting free or diarrhea free for 24 hrs. or a remittance form will be required for your child to return to care.

If your child becomes ill while at the center, parents will be called immediately. You will have 1 hour to pick up your child from the childcare center. Your child will be separated from the other children and supervised until the parents arrive. Your child may return to the childcare center with a re-admittance form from a licensed physician stating that your child can return to care.

Listed are the illnesses and exclusion criteria:

- An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in childcare center activities including outdoor play.
- An illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- The child has one of the following unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that the child can be included in the child care center activities:
 - Oral temperature is above 101 degrees and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
 - Rectal temperature of above 102 degrees and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
 - Armpit temperature of above 100 degrees and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness or,

- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hrs., a rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill or,
- A health care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

To find a full list of communicable diseases that will require exclusion and a medical statement from a licensed physician to return to child care, please visit the Department of State Health Services at www.dshs.TEXAS.gov

In the event of a communicable disease outbreak, the local health department will be notified. The Childcare center will follow the communicable disease exclusions required for schools as defined by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Parents will be notified via courtesy call as well as in writing at pick-up time. Any child who has been diagnosed with any communicable illness can return to the childcare center when deemed safe for others by a licensed physician.

MEDICATIONS:

Medication will only be administered if they are prescribed by a licensed physician. All medication must be in the original container, labeled with the actual name of the medication, the physician's name and telephone number, the route to be given, the dosage, the name of the child, and the date prescribed must be within a month. A form for dispensing medication must be filled out by the parent before medication can be administered. Parents or guardians must give Morning doses and evening doses at home. A child must have taken the first dose at home to ensure no side effects occur. If a dosage is missed at the childcare center, a phone call will be made to parents immediately.

PROCEDURES FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/PARENT NOTIFICATION/GLOVE USAGE

If your child becomes critically ill or injured and required immediate medical attention, 911 will be called immediately and medical attention will be sought. First aid/CPR will be administered as needed until paramedics arrive. Parents will be called immediately and the child's physician listed on the admission form will be contacted. For less severe illness/injury parents will be notified via a courtesy call and an injury/incident report will be filled out and given to parents at pick-up time.

All staff must wear gloves when handling blood or bodily secretions. Gloves must be thrown away after use. Hands must be washed immediately after removing gloves. 911 must be called if a child is reacting to a food or insect bite

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Every employee will have training on discipline and guidance before they start working in a classroom. Discipline is a learned behavior and must be individualized and consistent for each child. Discipline will be appropriate to the child's level of understanding and will always be directed in teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. Positive praise and redirection will always be used as a form of guidance. To ensure the safety of all children, if a child becomes aggressive, a brief supervised separation will be used as a form of positive redirection and a personal "cool down" time will be issued (time will be the age of the child in minutes) During this time, a child will be given soothing activities to help a child self soothe.

There must be no 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; and

(9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods for the child's age, including requiring a child to remain in a restrictive device.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Miles of Smiles Learning Center RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SUSPEND OR EXCLUDE A CHILD FROM CARE.

If a child is posing a threat to another person, child, or children in care (physical or verbal) these are the following steps that will be taken:

1st offense - An incident report will be filled out and parents will have to sign it.

2nd offense Parent will be notified of undesired behavior. An incident report will be filled out and signed by a parent. The parent will have to pick the child up and will not be able to return for 24 hrs.

3rd offense child will be excluded and withdrawn from care.

INFANT'S NEEDS and BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

We encourage nursing mothers to come to the center to nurse their infants when possible.

1. Breastfeeding mothers and employees will be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.

Breastfeeding mothers and employees shall be provided a private and sanitary place (other than a restroom) to breastfeed their babies or express milk. If a place is not available, a portable divider/partition will be used to create a place. This area will have an electrical outlet (if needed for pumping), comfortable chair, and nearby access to a "clean sink" for washing hands and cleaning breast pump equipment.

NOTE: A "clean sink" is defined as a sink that is not used for diapering/toileting or a sink that has been disinfected.

Mothers and employees are welcome to breastfeed in the classroom as well.

2. A refrigerator/freezer will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk.

Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breastmilk in the refrigerator and in the freezer. Bags of breastmilk will be stored separately for each child. Bags of breastmilk for each child will be placed in a separate labeled sealed plastic bag or in a separate labeled hard-sided container as bags

tend to spill or leak. Mothers must provide their own containers, clearly labeled with the child's name and date milk was expressed. Unlabeled containers of breastmilk will not be used or accepted. Breastmilk will be stored in the refrigerator/freezer according to the guidelines from the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine:

Milk Storage Guidelines

Freshly expressed milk may be kept at room temperature (up to 77°F/25°C) for 6 to 8 hours. Temperatures greater than 77°F/25°C) may not be safe for room temperature storage. Containers should be covered and kept as cool as possible; covering the container with a cool towel may keep milk cooler. Milk may be stored in an insulated cooler bag with ice packs for 24 hours. Milk may be safely refrigerated (39°F/4°C) for up to 72 hours. Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator, where the temperature is the coolest. The type of freezer in which the milk is kept determines timetables for frozen milk. Generally, store milk toward the back of the freezer, where the temperature is most constant.

- o Freezer compartment located inside the refrigerator (5°F/−15°C): 2 weeks
- o Refrigerator/freezer with separate doors (0°F/−18°C): 3 to 6 months
- o Chest or upright manual defrost deep freezer that is opened infrequently and maintains ideal temperature (−4°F/−20°C): 6 to 12 months

3. Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

We will work with parents prior to their infant's first day in child care to transition their infant to a bottle or cup feedings. We will work with parents to make an emergency plan for feeding their infant in the unexpected event that there is no breast milk available at the child care program. We will develop a feeding plan with each family including feeding infants on demand as we observe hunger cues and coordinating the last feeding of the day to meet the mother's feedings needs (either to feed or await mother's feeding), with the understanding that we will feed

the infant if the infant is inconsolable and in distress. Infant formula and solids foods will not be provided unless requested by the mother. We will feed an infant in a way that mimics breastfeeding. Infants will be held closely and upright. We will switch infants from one arm to the other midway through a feeding to provide equal eye stimulation and facial muscle development, help pace feedings, and prevent infants from developing a preference for one side. Bottles will never be propped.

We will communicate the infant's changing schedule so a mother can adjust her schedule for pumping and/or visiting to feed her infant. We will provide daily communication sheets for parents that document times/amounts of each feeding, along with diaper changes, naps, etc.

4. Staff will be trained in handling, storing, heating, and feeding breastmilk. We will follow the breastmilk guidelines from the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (www.bfmed.org) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov): Gloves are not required when handling breastmilk, but are recommended if staff have open wounds on their hands. Waterproof bandages can also be used to cover open wounds. Staff will prepare a clean work space to prepare a bottle by sanitizing the counter or by placing a clean paper towel on the counter.

Staff will wash their hands at a “clean sink” before and after handling or feeding breastmilk.

NOTE: A “clean sink” is defined as a sink that is not used for diapering/toileting or a sink that has been disinfected

Thawing or Warming Milk

The oldest milk should be used first.

The baby may drink the milk cool, at room temperature, or warmed to body temperature. Thaw milk by placing it in the refrigerator or in cold water. Heat breast milk separately from other bottles in a container of warm water or in a bottle warmer. Microwaves and crockpots will not be used. Milk may be kept in the refrigerator for 24 hours after it is thawed.

Swirl the container of milk to mix the cream back in, and distribute the heat evenly. Do not shake the milk.

Milk left in the bottle after a feeding should be discarded and not used again.

Do not refreeze breastmilk once it is thawed or partially thawed

Basic care for infants must include:

- (1) Care by the same caregiver regularly, when possible;
- (2) Individual attention given to each infant including playing, talking, cuddling, and holding;
- (3) Holding and comforting an infant who is upset;
- (4) Prompt attention given to physical needs, such as feeding and diapering;
- (5) Talking to infants as they are fed, changed, and held, such as naming objects, singing, or saying rhymes;
- (6) Ensuring the environment is free of objects that may cause choking in infants or toddlers; and
- (7) Never leave an infant unsupervised

Restrictive devices

Here at MOS, we do not allow an infant to sleep in a restrictive device. If an infant falls asleep in a restrictive device, the infant must be removed from the device and placed in a crib as soon as possible. Infants may sleep in a restrictive device if they have a completed Sleep Exception Form that includes a signed statement from a healthcare professional stating that the child sleeping in a restrictive device is medically necessary.

SLEEPING INFANTS

Here at MOS, infants not yet able to turn over on their own must be placed in a face-up sleeping position in the infant's crib unless you have a completed Sleep Exception Form that includes a signed statement from a health-care professional stating that a different sleeping position for the child is medically necessary.

CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Dress your child in appropriate clothing for playtime. This includes shoes. Please provide 1 change of clothing to stay at the center always. If your child is in diapers, provide a week's supply of diapers and wipes. Please provide a small blanket for nap/quiet time. Please refrain from

sending toys or animals to the childcare center. We will not be responsible for any lost or broken toys. Your child will be assigned a small space for their personal belongings.

IMMUNIZATION AND TUBERCULIN(TB) REQUIREMENTS (children and staff)

Parents must keep their children's immunizations current. State law requires a current immunization record to be in your child's file upon admission. Along with immunizations, a listing of any special health needs, your child's physician, and a health statement must be provided at admission.

Staff at Miles of Smiles Learning Center is not required to have a flu shot but is recommended due to working with young children. Hidalgo County is not a required TB test county; however, all staff will be required to have a current TB test on file.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Parents must complete the enrollment application (form 2935) before or on the first day of the child. A current immunization will be needed, and a health statement from a physician will be needed that states your child can attend child care. If there are any policy changes, parents will be notified via newsletter at pick-up time 30 days in advance of the policy change.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Children who are 4 yrs. of age or in the 1st, 3rd, 5th, or 7th grade, but complete screening or exam within the school year. The parent must check and sign the Parent statement on the admission form(form2935).

TRANSPORTATION

Miles of Smiles Learning Center does provide transportation to and from school. Our transportation services are not included in our enrollment fee. There is a fee of \$10.00 a week per child.

WATER ACTIVITIES

There will be no water activities at this time. There will be notified via newsletter if policy changes.

FIELD TRIPS

There will be no field trips at this time. There will be notified via newsletter if policy changes.

ANIMALS: Miles of Smiles Learning Center does not allow any animals in the center.

INSECT REPELLENT/ SUNSCREEN: Miles of Smiles Learning Center will apply insect repellent seasonally. The brand **Cutter Insect Repellant** will be used be sure to inform staff of any allergies your child may have. If you wish for your child to use sunscreen you may apply it before drop-off.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS REQUIRING MEETING WITH THE DIRECTOR:

If there are any questions or concerns regarding policy and procedure, you may call the director or feel free to stop by the office to speak to the director. If you are requesting a conference, feel free to call the center and make an appointment. I do ask for an appointment time to ensure that your time is uninterrupted.

PARENT VISITS TO THE CENTER:

Parents are welcome to visit the child care center at any time during normal operating hours or program activities without having to schedule an appointment. Parents may observe their child, the center's activities, premises, buildings, and equipment without having to secure an appointment.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION:

Parents and guardians are always welcome at the center. We encourage you to visit and join in our activities. Your participation and involvement are important to us as we work as partners to provide the best care and

education possible for your child. Anyone authorized to pick up your child will be let in and escorted by center staff following ID confirmation. If you wish to volunteer, you must meet the state of TEXAS licensing requirements. We will have activities throughout the year that will involve your presence if you'd wish to participate. We will send out flyers, post on our FaceBook and on your child's ClassDojo portal.

PARENT VIEW OF MINIMUM STANDARDS:

Parents have the right to request and review Childcare Licensing Minimum Standards at any time. A copy of the Minimum standards will always be available upon request. A copy of the most current Licensing inspection report will always be posted on the "information wall" for any person to view.

LOCAL LICENSING OFFICE:

Parents may contact the local Licensing office, DFPS child abuse hotline, and DFPS website as needed.

Child care Licensing

601 W. Sesame Dr.

Harlingen, TX 78550

Licensing intake line (956)316-8275

WEBSITE:

Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1(800) 252-5400

Abuse & Neglect reporting: www.txchildcaresearch.org

GANG FREE ZONE:

Miles of Smiles Learning Center will abide by the Texas Penal Code, which states that any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone. Gang-related activity is prohibited.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN:

In the event of a relocation, evacuation, or lockdown, the director or person in charge will call the local authorities (police, fire dept., emergency medical services if needed) child care licensing and parents via a telephone number that is listed with the child care licensing: (956)650-8081.

The director will take the emergency folder with all phone numbers and emergency contacts as well as the sign-in and the clipboard for parents to use for signing out.

If one of the following types of emergencies occurs in this area, such as floods, tornados, or hurricanes, our first responsibility is to move the children to designated safe areas in the center. A relocation diagram is posted at the entrance of each classroom. The director will have on hand a binder with the daily sign-in sheet, the emergency binder will have parent contact information, and emergency contact numbers for every child who is registered at the childcare center. At this point, the director or person in charge will contact parents to give them the location of their children. As the lockdown, relocation, or evacuation is lifted, parents will be contacted via telephone call or text message to allow them to start the pick-up process. Each parent or authorized person can pick the child up and sign out on the sign-in/out sheet. Infants and children who are immobile will be placed in a rolling crib to be moved with other children. If we must relocate outside of the center, we will move children to the empty lot next door or across the street to the Sheriffs Police Department, if the shelter is needed. Parents will be notified as soon as children are moved to a safe place.

ORDERLY MOVEMENT OF CHILDREN:

Each caregiver will be in charge of moving their classrooms. The classrooms have a rope that is knotted for children to hold while walking.

This will ensure that there is an orderly movement from one place to another.

We will ask law enforcement for assistance to transport if necessary. Staff will prepare for children in the class and prepare personal needs such as formula, diapers, bottles, and blankets. The kitchen staff and director will get a first aid kit, water, food, medication box, flashlights, trash bags, and re-sealable bags. An emergency bag is prepared in each class with emergency contacts for each child enrolled, coloring activity books and crayons, snack crackers, hand sanitizer, and wipes. Caregivers will keep children calm by singing with them, coloring, and reading stories while waiting for parent pickup.

Parents should contact Miles of Smiles Learning Center for updates, delays, or closing in the event of severe weather.

Severe weather plans will be updated as needed and parents will be notified accordingly. Severe weather practices will be held every 3 months. Staff will be trained during monthly staff meetings and upon hiring.

Fire drills will be practiced and documented monthly. A fire evacuation route is posted at the entrance of each room at the childcare facility.

INTRUDERS:

In the event of a lockdown in the vicinity of a childcare facility, Miles of Smiles Learning Center will issue a code blue lockdown. All doors and windows will be locked and children will remain in a central classroom with quiet activities. Parents will be notified via phone call if children are in immediate danger.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

If any child shows evidence of abuse or neglect the Department of family and protective services will be notified.

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

All employees are required to take at least one hour of annual training in preventing and responding to abuse and neglect. This will allow them to understand child abuse prevention and what to do when children are at risk. Information will also be distributed periodically to inform parents on how to identify abuse and warning signs of abuse and neglect.

RECOGNIZING ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

To help prevent child abuse, one needs to understand what it consists of. Child abuse consists of mistreatment of a child that results in harm or injury. There are four basic types of child abuse.

- Physical abuse includes actions such as beating, burning and punching a child.
- Emotional abuse involves criticizing, insulting, rejecting, and withholding love from a child.
- Sexual abuse involves rape, touching or fondling, involving a child in pornography
- Neglect involves failure to provide a child with basic physical or medical needs.

Children who are abused might show physical signs or sudden changes in their behavior. These signs may not always indicate abuse, but they could signify that the children or family need help. We encourage all staff and parents to visit the Helpandhope.org website for prevention techniques.

ALL STAFF AT Miles of Smiles Learning Center

- All staff at Miles of Smiles Learning Center are screened via 3 different background checks. An FBI criminal background check, a central registry (DFPS) screening, and a Department of the public safety background check will be done on each employee.

- Education is verified and on file.
- Work experience will be verified via telephone.
- All staff are CPR/First aid certified.
- All staff will have a center orientation which involves learning minimum standard guidelines.
- All staff will be responsible for acquiring 30 hours of in-service training each year.
- All staff shall have a current TB test on file (every 12 months)

Parent Conferences

Two or more times a year, we'll sit down with you and talk about your child's achievements and accomplishments in the classroom. This is a time to partner with you. Because of that, we ask for your help: please bring observations about your child's development at home, as well as any questions or relevant information you want to discuss.

We'll refer to your child's portfolio and most recent developmental checklist during this meeting. This is a time to talk about what your child has learned, and what he or she must look forward to at the center. If you wish to set up a conference before/after the schedule one, please communicate via ClassDojo so we can accommodate.

Absences

Regular daily attendance is very important for your child to benefit from the program.

Regular attendance allows a trusting relationship between the child and educators as well as gives the child ample and consistent learning experiences. If a child is to be absent the parent is required to call the center/provider to notify them of the child's absence. Sometimes this may be difficult; therefore, we will make every effort to attempt to call you.

If your child is part of CCS and he/she is absent for more than 5 consecutive days, we will have to report. Please note this might affect your child care assistance.

Clothing Guidelines

- **Clothing should be practical and comfortable.** Comfortable clothes that fit properly will ensure that your child isn't distracted by what they are wearing, and can focus on playing and learning. Clothes should also be easy to clean and free from hazards such as dangling strings or beads.
- **Ensure clothing is easy to get on and off.** Diaper changes and potty breaks are frequent, and sometimes urgent. Make sure that your child's outfit for the day will help avoid frustration for your child.
- **Shoes should be safe.** Footwear such as flip-flops or backless sandals are generally not appropriate since we go outdoors, if weather permits, twice a day. When running and playing, these shoes could increase the risk of injury.
- **Label your child's clothing.** Label your child's clothing with their name, particularly items that will be removed. Items of clothing are often misplaced, forgotten, or accidentally put on a different child.
- **Send along an extra set of clothing.** Outdoor activities, arts and crafts, and food can cause clothing to become soiled during the day. Make sure to send along an extra set of clothing – including socks and underwear – in case things get messy.

Physical Activity

Here at MOS, we recognize the importance of physical activity for young children. Implementation of appropriate physical activity practices supports the health and development of children in care, as well as assisting in establishing positive lifestyle habits for the future.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in care are supported and encouraged to engage in active play, develop fundamental movement skills and to have limited screen time. Our center encourages all children to participate in a variety of daily physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun and that offer variety.

Please bring your child ready to play and have fun each day. Your child will participate in both indoor play and outdoor play. Therefore, play clothes and shoes which can get dirty and allow for free and safe movement are most appropriate. We expect parents to provide children with appropriate clothing

for safe and active outdoor play during all seasons. For safety, children cannot wear open-toe shoes, sandals or flip flops. In winter, provide a warm Jacket, hat, mittens and boots. In spring and fall, provide a Jacket or sweater, boots and rain Jacket on rainy days. In summer, provide light clothing, swimsuit, towel, hat and sunscreen. Please label all clothing with your child's name. It is our expectation that children will go outside EVERYDAY! If you feel your child is too sick to go outside then he/she is too sick to be at the child care center. We request that you keep him/her at home until they are well enough to go outside.

Screen Time Policy

Because we care about the health and well-being of the children in our care, we follow best practice recommendations on screen time:

- Children under 2 should have no screen time
- Children age 2 and over should watch less than 1 hour per week at child care.

Screen time includes the use of television, videos, computers, and video games during care.

Accommodations for Families:

As required by TITLE VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Hence, here at Miles of Smiles, we support 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 to appeal in a language easily understood by the public and in the parents' 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:

- If specific therapies are needed during the day while the child is in our care, we will provide space to accommodate sessions.
- Provide accommodations for children with differing abilities.
- Provide materials and resources in parents/child's primary language.

Challenging Behavior

When a child demonstrates inappropriate or disruptive behavior, it becomes necessary for staff to intervene. The following actions will be taken in addressing challenging behaviors at our center to ensure the safety of everyone.

1. The child will be told that behavior is inappropriate. The teacher will first talk to the child about the behavior and try to guide the child into using more appropriate ways to communicate.
2. The child will be redirected and, if necessary, given a short time away from the rest of the class.
3. Parents will be notified about the behavior. If repeated incidents occur, staff will develop a plan of intervention that includes shadowing the child and a conference with the parents. All incidents should be documented on the incident report.
4. For incidents involving biting or aggressive behavior, the staff follows detailed policies based on common methods to address these potentially harmful behaviors.
5. Follow-up will be made with the parent daily until the issue is resolved.

Dear parent:

Miles of Smiles Learning Center is developing marketing materials that will show the children and staff in the childcare facility. Miles of Smiles Learning Center is requesting the use of your children's photographs on the website, social media sites, and any other form of marketing materials.

The photo will be used to highlight the activities of the child care program on the website or other materials. No other information about you will be given.

If you are willing to allow us to take pictures or videos of your children, please sign the authorization form below. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Program Director -----

Release for Use of Photograph

I hereby consent to the photographing of my child,

_____ (child's name)

and the use of these photographs for advertising, publicity, commercial, or other business purposes. Further, I understand that the photograph will be used only for the purposes stated in the above request letter and I may withdraw my consent to use the photograph, through written notification, if the ended use is, in my opinion, deemed inappropriate or harmful to my child. In signing this consent, I hereby release Miles of Smiles Learning Center and any of its associated or affiliated companies, their directors, officers, agents, employees, and customers, and appointed advertising agencies, their directors, officers, agents, and employees from all claims of every kind on account of such use.

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

Miles of Smiles Learning Center

Date: _____

I, _____, parent or guardian of,
_____, have received a copy of the Operating
Policies

of Miles of Smiles Learning Center. I fully understand the operations of
this facility and will abide by these policies.

Parent signature:

Director signature:
