

Larrytown Children's Center

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PARENT HANDBOOK

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THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TARRYTOWN CHILDREN'S

CENTER

This handbook was designed to give you information on the programs, policies, and operations of Tarrytown Children's Center. Please note that TCC policies are reviewed annually and updated as needed. We hope it is helpful. It is important for you to know that we are grateful for the opportunity to serve you and your child in a loving, safe, and caring environment. Any suggestions you have to improve our school will be welcomed and appreciated. The exceptional education Tarrytown Children's Center offers requires full cooperation between parents and the school.

Vision

Children are our only business. They come first in our hearts and dedication.

For over fifty years, TCC has been a ministry of The Sanctuary Church, which is now Tarrytown Christian Church. Our classes are open to all children regardless of race, nationality, or religious beliefs with the understanding that TCC is a ministry of the church. Christian values are taught and reinforced in age-appropriate ways. We provide classes for children aged 3 months to 5 years. We believe that children are a gift from God. We know that families have entrusted their children to us, and we take that responsibility seriously. Each and everyday matters at TCC.

We provide high quality education for every child regardless of race, religion, color, gender, and national origin.

TCC is a 4-star Texas Rising Star School. This certification is a commitment to higher standards through a quality initiative. Our teachers receive a minimum of 30 training hours annually. All staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid, with the majority of staff members holding a CDA or higher education degree.

Philosophy

We believe that as a church and school community, we are called to be a reflection of God's love and to share that love with others. Providing a nurturing environment for children and a place of support for families is one way we fulfill that mission. Our goal is to help each child reach his/her greatest potential cognitively, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. This is accomplished with the guidance of caring staff that engage children in developmentally appropriate activities. We pray that this ministry is a blessing to your family and the Austin community.

Goals

- To provide a healthy, nurturing, and safe environment
- To accept, respect, and appreciate each child and family

- To provide age-appropriate materials and equipment that supports children's learning in a fun and interesting way
- To encourage the physical development of large motor skills through outdoor and indoor play as well as fine motor development through manipulative toys, blocks, and puzzles. ● To encourage creativity by offering experiences in music, art, literature, and creative movement
- To encourage interest in language through games, stories, and conversation
- To partner with parents in the care and teaching of their children.

Curriculum

We encourage curiosity and appropriate risk-taking while teaching students to use words to solve problems. Children are given opportunities to express feelings and learn to play alone, how to confidently enter group play, and show empathy for others. We use Conscious Discipline to teach self-regulation and how to recognize emotions. Our classrooms are arranged to include various learning centers including blocks, dramatic play, art, music, science, math, reading, and writing. We have ample outdoor play time every day for children to learn and explore their environment and connect with their peers.

TCC follows the Texas Early Learning (Little Texans Big Futures) and Texas Pre-Kindergarten guidelines for goals and objectives that describe expectations, competencies, and skills across domains of learning during specific age ranges. These guidelines also provide steps educators should take to support healthy development in their students.

Every classroom at TCC works to ensure 'holistic development' of the child and reflect the inseparable nature of care and education by comprehensively addressing the need for care, nutrition, family engagement, and health and well-being of young children along with supporting the development of all domains. The holistic development approach is vital for the provision of interconnected and interrelated activities covering all domains of development.

Discipline Policy

Children are small, tough, exasperating, interesting, and loveable. To be "good" with children, we watch each face and listen to each voice. We observe what each child is like, how each is feeling, how each child plays and moves around. We get to know the weaknesses and strengths of each child and of the group. This is how good discipline begins.

The word "discipline" is derived from the word "disciple," someone who follows the teachings of another. Discipline means learning. It does not mean punishment, tears, or humiliation. It means a chance to learn how to live in a social world. Discipline is not something adults do to children. It is something they do with children.

The goals of discipline are self-control, responsibility, and self-discipline. Children need help in understanding their emotions. Most important, they need to become aware of and responsible for their own behavior and develop self-control.

Teachers are most likely to achieve the goals of discipline when they respond to the cause of behaviors as well as to the behaviors themselves. We ask, “why?” silently before reacting/responding.

Teachers may utilize a variety of discipline techniques to meet the needs of different situations:

- Let children make some decisions and choices – one good way to teach responsibility is to give the child as much responsibility as possible.
- Give reasons for rules – understanding the reasons for rules make it easier to remember and follow them.
- Be consistent in our language and behavioral response to children – consistent behavior by adults facilitates development of inner control through modeling.
- Remove children from situations they can’t handle – if a child is too young to understand, or there is no way to change the cause, it may be possible to change the situation. • Redirect children’s behavior – often there is a way to let children do something in a better place or safer way.
- Let children learn the consequences of their actions – experience is the best teacher.

Teachers WILL NOT humiliate or demean a child in any form, verbally or physically. Such actions will be cause for immediate dismissal. No punitive action toward children will be tolerated including slapping, hitting, and/or spanking. The return of negative behavior, such as biting back, is also not acceptable. Children do not like those moments when they are out of control. They need adults, at those times, to firmly, with gentleness, exert control. Returning negative behavior deepens frustration. Firmly holding and gently verbalizing, calms, and fosters control.

Conscious Discipline

At TCC, we are a School Family. Our family is made up of children, teachers, staff, and parents all working together to make TCC a safe, nurturing place to create, explore, express, and grow. At school, we use an approach called Conscious Discipline to help us strengthen our school family. The TCC staff has spent a significant amount of time being trained in Conscious Discipline.

The underlying principle behind Conscious Discipline is that self-regulation is “something we seek to instill in children, not do to children.” By creating a strong community where common routines and traditions are used throughout the school, our children feel connected, safe, and free to explore the world around them while building relationships with others. We provide them with the tools to self-regulate emotions, develop resilience, and learn to notice acts of kindness and helpfulness in others.

Conscious Discipline is evidence-based and incorporates best practices in early childhood education. It supports a deeper understanding of Christian love and care for one other. For

more information, please visit the website: www.consciousdiscipline.com.

Challenging Behaviors

TCC is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where all students learn strategies for self-regulation. In the event that a child's behavior is a chronic problem and unresponsive to these efforts to alter the behavior, the school may follow any of the following steps appropriate to the situation:

- Hold a conference with the parents, teacher, and director to discuss the situation and develop methods and a behavior plan for correcting the behavior problem.
- Ask the parents to schedule an examination with a pediatrician for their child.
- Ask the parents to schedule an examination for their child with a child guidance professional.

Parents are expected to actively participate in the resolution of the

situation. Suspension and Expulsion of Childrens

Tarrytown Children's Center takes suspension and expulsion of children very seriously. It should always be a rarity. We work with children, on an individual basis when behavior is causing concern in the classroom. When we have gone through the previous steps mentioned above for challenging behaviors with no change in behavior, the child may be suspended from Tarrytown Children's Center.

TCC will maintain a safe place for students and teachers. If a student's behavior compromises the safety of that environment, the director may always retain the right to un-enroll a child if it is in the best interest of the child or other children at the center.

Safety and Emergency Plans of Action

- Children will never be left alone or unsupervised.
- There will be a minimum of ten staff members present during the hours of operation.
- Each employee is certified in CPR and First Aid yearly.
- Fire evacuation and severe weather plans will be posted in each area that is used by the children.
- Fire drills will be held once a month and at varying times. A record of drills is kept in the office.
- Severe weather drills will be held every three months.
- Lock-down drills will be held periodically.
- In the event of an emergency when evacuation is necessary, the children of Tarrytown Childrens Center will be taken to the cottage directly across from the church by way of

walking.

- Parents will then be called and informed of when to pick up their children.

Safe Conditions Policies

Transportation Safety Policy

Tarrytown Childrens Center does not transport children for any purpose.

Safe Conditions Policy

The following steps will be taken to ensure that children are safe while at TCC. Children will be actively supervised with the required number of qualified adults (adults who have completed a comprehensive criminal history check and have completed all required trainings). TCC will not care for children in areas that are being remodeled, repaired, or painted. The director is responsible for maintaining all interior and exterior surfaces, including walls, floors, ceilings, equipment, toys and furnishings, in a safe condition, free of sharp points or jagged edges, splinters, protruding nails or wires, loose parts, rusty parts, or materials containing poisonous substances.

TCC will take the following steps to maintain the facility:

- Clean the facility daily.
- Keep the facility in a sanitary condition always.
- Sanitize toys, furniture, and other equipment used by children, daily, weekly and when they become soiled or contaminated.
- Wash all soiled items prior to sanitization.

Child Abuse Protection

The staff of TCC are mandated by law to receive Child Abuse Detection and Prevention training. All staff members are required by law to immediately notify the local child protection agency if they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

Pest Control

As part of our commitment to provide your child with a safe, pest-free learning environment, TCC may periodically apply pesticides to manage insects, weeds, or pathogens. Pesticide applications are part of our integrated pest management (IMP) program, which relies largely on non-chemical forms of pest control. Pesticide applications on TCC property are made only by trained and licensed technicians. All applications happen outside of school hours. Should you have questions about TCC's pest management program or wish to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, please contact the office.

Inclement Weather

TCC understands that our decision to open, close or delay school opening during inclement weather often disrupts family schedules. We also understand that our children are better served – academically, emotionally, and socially – by being in school. But, as always, our top priority is

the safety of our children and staff, so the decision to close or delay opening is not an easy one. For all closure or delay decisions TCC follows AISD.

We strive to make decisions on delays and closings as many hours in advance as possible, in consideration of families who require time to make arrangements. The decision will be made the night before, or in uncertain conditions, not later than 4:30 a.m. on the morning of the closing. Please remember that communications will be sent as quickly as possible following a decision, via email and Brightwheel. Please make sure your contact information is up to date in Brightwheel, so you receive accurate and timely updates. It is quite possible that building issues could arise and not be discovered until after 8:00 a.m. In those cases, decisions on center closure may be made later in the day.

Even if the weather conditions worsen, we cannot reverse our decision in the morning without endangering the children and staff. If conditions worsen throughout the school day, we may need to have an early dismissal, but we will give as much notice as possible through the previously mentioned methods of communication. However, it is very important for parents to have plans in place in case the decision needs to be made later. We encourage you to consider driving conditions. Always allow yourself plenty of time in the afternoon to pick up your child when the center closes early.

Although we do our absolute best in this process, we know that often no perfect decision exists. If you do not feel that it is safe for your child to attend, use your best judgment whether or not he or she should attend. We prefer to exercise flexibility in these situations as opposed to an inflexible policy.

Infant Safe Sleep Policy

All TCC personnel will follow these safe sleep recommendations to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome:

Infants will be placed to sleep on their backs on a firm mattress with a tight-fitting crib sheet only (blankets, other bedding, pillows, stuffed animals, or other objects should not be placed in cribs). If an infant is able to roll back and forth between front and back, they will be placed in cribs on their backs and will be allowed to assume a preferred sleep position. Infants will not have their heads or faces covered and may not use sleep positioning devices.

The Infant sleeping area will be kept at a comfortable temperature. If extra warmth is needed, parents may provide sleepers or footed pajamas to be used. Swaddlers are not to be used in the classroom. Pacifiers may be provided by infant parents. If an infant falls asleep in a bouncy chair, swing, or other restrictive device, then the caregivers will move the child to a crib for sleeping. All infants will be actively observed by sight and sound when sleeping. In addition to sleeping time, infants will have actively supervised "tummy time" several times daily to strengthen their muscles and develop normally.

Modifications to this Safe Sleep Policy may only be made if there is an Infant Sleep Exception Form on file signed by the Infant's health care professional.

Admission/Enrollment/Termination Policies

Eligibility for Enrollment

- Children that are 8 Weeks or older are eligible to be enrolled at TCC, provided enrollment space exists.
- The parent is responsible for submitting all enrollment forms prior to the students first day.
- We cannot provide service to any child whose needs we cannot adequately meet or whose behavior endangers other children. TCC is committed to supporting all children and families but realizes there are children who may be better served through the support of other local agencies. Parents will be notified if concerns arise.

Caring for Children with Special Needs

Childcare programs must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are committed to meeting the needs of all children, regardless of special health care needs or disabilities.

- Children with special needs will be accepted into our daycare under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- All families will be treated with dignity and respect for their individual needs and/or differences.
- TCC will be responsible for ensuring that confidentiality about special needs is maintained for all families in the program.
- TCC will ensure all health forms and other important information regarding the individualized needs of the child will be completed by the health care provider and/or other providers for the child.
- Children with special needs will be educated in the least restrictive environment as possible. To accomplish this, TCC may work in coordination with other agencies and/or health care providers as needed. No contact with outside organizations will be made without written parental consent. Inclusion of staff on IEP (Individualized Education Program) and IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) meetings is desired to ensure the childcare program provides the most supportive and least restrictive environment.
- It is important that parents keep TCC apprised of any changes or needs that their child may have regarding their special need.

Enrollment Forms

All enrollment forms will be sent via Brightwheel and can be accessed via a web browser. Forms to be completed and submitted to the center director prior to admission include: 1. Child Information Form

2. Medication Consent (if needed)
3. Proof of immunizations and a physical exam (well child check-up)

4. Handbook Acknowledgement Signature Form

Waiting List

In cases when enrollment space is unavailable, children will be placed on a waiting list. Enrollment will then take place as space becomes available. Priority will be given to families with currently enrolled children.

Registration Fee

Upon registration, the family must pay the \$400 registration fee. This fee is non-refundable should the family decide not to attend.

Termination of Care

TCC reserves the right to terminate childcare for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay invoices as they are due
- Failure to complete required forms, as required
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property by a child and/or parent that is not corrected by an improvement plan set by the director and the parents.
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- False information given by parent either verbally or in writing
- Disciplinary reasons as outlined previously

TCC also understands that life circumstances may arise that would require families to remove a child from our care. In that instance, we request the following:

- 30 days advance written notice stating when care will be ending.
- Payment for the last month of care
- If the child is pulled without a 30 days' notice, payment is to be made immediately for the final weeks.
- **No tuition refunds will be issued if the 30-day notice is not observed.**

Operational Policies

Advisory Board

- TCC has an Advisory Board made up of members chosen by the director.
- The Board meets once a month to review the director's report, the financial report, enrollment information, and other information.
- The Advisory Board assists the director in areas of policy, budget preparation and management, and other facility operations.

Hours of Operation

Tarrytown Childrens Center is open from Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 2:30 pm.

Holidays

- TCC follows the same closure schedule as AISD; our yearly closures are listed on our annual calendar which can be found on our website.
- There may be additional days throughout the year when TCC will close (weather related), but notice will be given whenever possible.
- When possible TCC will try to make up for unplanned closures, but make-up days will depend on many factors and are not guaranteed.
- TCC does not offer refunds for closure days.

Emergency Policies

Bad Weather

TCC will make every effort to be open in bad weather. We will close when AISD chooses to close or when it is otherwise deemed necessary (i.e. extremely low student numbers, power outage, and/or for the safety of staff and families). A decision to close is a difficult one to make and there are occasions when the facility will be open despite AISD closure if the director feels the roads are safe enough for travel. Parents will be notified through Brightwheel.

Relocation of Children in the Event of Building Emergency

- In the event of a major emergency, such as a fire or other event that would make the building unsafe, the children will be relocated to a safe facility.
- The children will be moved to the cottage across from the church.
- Parents will be notified that they must pick their children up immediately from the safe location.

Child Attendance, Arrival, and Departure

Arrivals and Departures

- Drop off is 9:00 AM. We ask that children arrive no later than 9:15 AM, as we start our preschool day at that time. If your child is to arrive later than 9:30 AM, please notify the classroom teacher, with the understanding that your child may miss some lesson time. Appointments (i.e. doctor, dentist, etc.) are the exception to this. Again, please contact the director so he/she is aware of an approximate arrival time.
- For your child's protection, only persons authorized by the parent/guardian are permitted to take the child from the facility.
- Parents/guardians must list the names of anyone allowed to pick up the child as well as the names of anyone denied permission on the Emergency Information Sheet.
- Individuals listed in the child's file may be asked for photo identification to confirm their identity.
- If someone other than the listed individuals will be picking up your child, you must notify the director. Staff will ask for photo identification before the child is handed over to them. •

In the case of court-ordered custody decisions that would affect drop off or pickup, documentation must be on file.

- Under no circumstances will the facility allow a child to leave without these provisions.
- Please notify the director if, due to some emergency, you are unable to pick up your child on time.
- Overtime charges of \$1 per minute will apply after the scheduled pick up time.
- If a child has not been picked up by 30 minutes after their scheduled pick up time, and there has been no contact by the parent/guardian, or another authorized person, the local Department of Child Services will be called with a report of child neglect

Early Care

- Attendance at early care must be pre-approved by the center director.
- Early care begins at 8:00 am, students attending early care may be dropped off in the front office with the director who will then take them to the classroom designated for early care that morning or be dropped off directly in the classroom with the teacher.
- Early care is charged at the rate of \$15 dollars per day.

Reporting Children's Absences

TCC staff plan the day based upon the number of children expected. We ask that parents notify the classroom teacher as early as possible if their child is going to be absent, late, or if they plan to pick up their child unusually early.

Traditions to ease separation anxiety

Whenever a child begins school, it can be an exciting but difficult period for both the child and parent. The child may appear eager in the beginning but may suddenly realize that you will not be there and balk at your desire to leave. This is entirely normal. Here are a few tips to ease separation anxiety:

- Prepare your child in advance by having discussions in which you talk about school.
- Teachers will ask for a family picture to add to their classroom Friends and Family wall. It is often comforting for children to see their family photo alongside their classmate's family photos.
- Encourage your child to play upon arrival.
- Once you decide to leave, give your child a hug, and let them know you will be back later. It is important that you do so without the temptation of staying if the child begins to cry.
- It is desirable that you do not wait after drop-off with an expectation that your child will cry. He/she will feel your apprehension and respond as you fear. You may, however, call the Director and ask the Director to check on your child.

Adjustment Period

Tarrytown Children's Center will make every effort to help each child adjust to school and group experiences. There are times when some children are not ready for preschool. If separation from a parent continues to cause disruption of the class after a six-week adjustment period, parents and teachers will meet with the Director to decide the best action plan.

Tobacco, Alcohol, Firearms and Drugs

TCC prohibits the use of tobacco, alcohol, firearms, and drugs on the premises while children are in our care. A copy of the policy may also be requested at any time.

Payment and Fee Schedule

All tuition payments are due on the 1st of the month, regardless of your child's attendance. TCC reserves the right to change these fees with a minimum of 60 days' notice.

Billing

- Invoices will be delivered by the last week of the month and will include the fees due for the following month. Payments are due by the 1st.
- If the bill is unpaid by 10th of the month at the close of business, a late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed each day there is an outstanding balance, with a maximum of \$100. • Any late fees will be included on the next invoice, if not paid prior to when it is sent. • If the account becomes 15 days overdue, the child's enrollment will be suspended, and not allowed to attend until the bill is paid.
- Billing will continue during this time.
- If the bill is not paid within one week of the suspension, the child will be removed from enrollment and their place could be filled with another child.
- There is no reduction in fees if parents choose to send their children less than the specified number of days.
- \$40 returned check fee (Subject to change, based on the bank charges)

Late Pick-up Fee

- Failure to pick up your child/children by the end of the day will result in a charge of \$1 per minute per child.
- Please make every effort to pick up your child at the specified time.
 - It is understood that circumstances may come up to prevent getting to the facility on time. If you are unable to pick up your child on time, please notify the director. • If you will be more than 30 minutes late, please make arrangements with someone on your pick-up list to pick up your child to avoid a call to CPS for a child neglect report.

Accommodating Families and Children

TCC supports families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, special needs/differing abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Accommodations include but are not limited to:

- Various language translations for literature and parent resources
- Bulletin board with policies for TCC regarding cultural inclusiveness
- Designated space for intervention sessions/therapies when needed
- Documented lesson plan strategies that meet the needs of the children in care needing

accommodations

Process/Accommodations for Differing Abilities

All children have unique needs. Even children identified as needing special education vary greatly in the types and levels of assistance, they need to be successful. Their needs are ever changing, and supports/interventions may need to be adjusted depending on the activity, goal, time of day, preferences, etc. TCC is committed to working with families and children to provide accommodation for children with differing abilities.

Examples of adaptations for children with differing abilities that TCC may provide:

- Modifying the physical environment

- Adapting materials
- Simplifying the activity (breaking it down, decreasing the number of steps)

Using child preferences (favorite toy, favorite activity)

- Using special equipment or adapted devices
- Using adult support
- Using peer support

Process for accommodating students with special needs:

- Teacher will document and gather information on student needs
- Teacher will discuss with administration and develop strategies for adaptations/accommodations that can be made for the child
- Teacher, director, and parents will meet to discuss and create a plan for the child that details accommodations, classroom adaptations, and family support that is needed
- Teacher, director and parents will meet regularly to update plans and stay in touch about student progress.

School communication and parent involvement

Classroom news will be posted in your child's classroom on the bulletin board with weekly lesson plans and class schedules or through teacher communication via email or Brightwheel. Please read and review this communication carefully, enable notifications on the app on your phone to ensure timely receipt of all notifications. Parent-teacher communication is vital for the best care of your little one.

The school e-mail address is tarrytownchildrenscenter@gmail.com and the school phone number is (512) 477-5851. The following methods may be used to distribute information from the school to parents and families:

- Notifications sent through the Brightwheel app.
- school-wide emails from the director;
- emails from class moms.
- school-wide or classroom newsletters.
- or direct phone calls from the director or child's teacher.

In case of an emergency or unplanned closure, parents will be notified through an alert on Brightwheel.

Parent participation

Parent participation is highly encouraged. Parents should feel that they are a vital part of Tarrytown Children's Center and parents and teachers are working in partnership for the best development of the child. We have many ways parents can volunteer in our program.

You may choose to help with parties, special events or celebrations, share your skill, interest, or hobby with children in your child's classroom. Other opportunities include being a guest reader during story time, participating in the TCC advisory council, volunteering in the classroom, coordinating/ helping with teacher luncheons, providing office support.

Teacher/Family conferences

TCC has two Parent Teacher conferences each year, in the Fall and Spring, for all classrooms. Parents or teachers may also request additional meetings as needed throughout the school year. Conferences may also be scheduled with the director as needed.

Parent education & resources

TCC offers a Parent Orientation session at the beginning of the school year. TCC also has a lending library of resources on various child rearing topics. Through our association with the Austin Half Day Director's Group, we are also able to offer parenting classes during the year. Additionally, we host parent coffees with opportunities to learn more about Conscious Discipline and Kindergarten Readiness. We are happy to recommend child specialists that we have worked with successfully in the past. Please know that we want to be a resource for you during this important time in your child's life. Additionally, community resources for individual and family needs can be located on our school website.

Medical Policies

Immunizations and Physical Exam

- Every child must be current on immunizations and verification of a physical exam (well child check-up) within the last 12 months prior to their attendance. These records must be provided prior to your child's first day of attendance.
- Without this documentation, your child may not attend.
- If your child receives new immunizations and/or has an updated physical, please update the record on file in the office or via Brightwheel.
- Immunizations exemptions for medical or religious reasons must have proper documentation on file to be approved by a state consultant.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

We are required to have a record of a vision and hearing screening for any child that will turn four years old by September 1st of that school year. You may have the screening done during your child's well check appointment and submit a copy of the report to us.

Medication

- Medication can be administered while in attendance provided a prescription is documented (pharmaceutical container and/or physician's signed instructions).
- Over the counter, non-prescription medication CANNOT and WILL NOT be given without a written physician's order. This order must be updated annually.
- A physician may write an order giving blanket permission for the child to have any over the-counter medication, but it must state the amount of medication to be given.
- Medication will only be administered if the child's name is written on a medications form with the amount of dosage (including the appropriate measuring device) and time to be given along with the parent's/guardian's signature.
- Notify staff members of all medication, so that it may be locked in the medicine box or refrigerated as needed.

Communicable Diseases

- Staff members are trained in the signs and symptoms of illnesses and in proper hand washing procedures to prevent the spread of communicable disease.
- Every means will be taken to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.
- Please do not send your child if he/she is ill or has been ill in the last 24 hours. If your child is too ill to go outside or participate in activities with their class, they are too ill to attend.
- You will be called to remove your child if any of the following symptoms exist:
 1. Vomiting (more than twice in two hours)
 2. severe coughing
 3. temperature of 100 or higher
 4. diarrhea
 5. suspicious rash

6. difficult or rapid breathing
 7. lice (may only return when deemed “nit free”)
 8. red, encrusted, or runny eyes
 9. lethargic behavior
- Parents are expected to have the child picked up within an hour of being notified that the child is ill to minimize the spread of illness.
 - Every effort will be made to separate a sick child from the rest of the class while they are waiting to be picked up.
 - Children should be free of all symptoms for 24 hours, without medication, or have a note from the doctor stating that return is permissible before returning to TCC
 - Please do not give your child medication and send them to school if they have been ill through the night.
 - Parents should have a backup plan of care established if a child is sent home with an illness.
 - If a staff member has a communicable illness, parents will be notified. A substitute caregiver will be assigned in his/her place as needed.

Reoccurring Medical Issues

- If a child has a medical issue that is reoccurring, such as a rash, runny eyes, or an allergy, TCC must have documentation from a physician stating that the issue is not contagious, and that the child may attend when symptoms are present.
- Please refer to the Communicable Disease section for suspicious rashes or conditions.
- If documentation of the medical issue does not exist, the condition will be treated as a potential communicable disease and the child will be excluded until documentation is presented.

Accidents

- Parents/guardians will be notified of accidents as soon as possible.
- The staff member who has observed the accident will fill out the accident report. A copy will be kept for the files and a copy given to the parents/guardians.
- In non-life-threatening instances, the staff will provide on-site first aid.
- If the child requires medical attention, the parent will be called, informed of the injury, and asked to pick up the child.
- Parents are asked to report any instances of the child being treated by a physician, clinic or hospital. Any injury that has been treated at a medical facility must be reported to the state of Texas Childcare Licensing. Parents will receive a copy of the accident report that is mailed to the state.
- If the injury requires immediate medical attention, 911 will be called.

Health and Nutrition

Physical activity and Screen time

Apart from extreme weather days, each class will have outside time during the day for physical activity. During this time, children are encouraged to develop their gross motor and fine motor skills through running, jumping, swinging, pushing, peddling, etc.

In addition to outside play time, children participate in movement and music activities throughout the school day. In the case of inclement weather, children 3 years of age and older may view a short (30 minutes or less) video that relates to the themes they are learning about that week and/or participate in indoor physical activities that are appropriate for the classroom. There is no screen time for students under the age of two.

"The best exercise for the brain is exercise." - Dr. Becky Bailey

For more resources on screen time for your family visit:

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx

Oral Health

Cavities (or tooth decay) are one of the most common chronic diseases of childhood in the U.S. Untreated cavities can cause pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing, and learning. Children who have poor oral health often miss more school and receive lower grades than children who do not.

All children with teeth should brush or have their teeth brushed with a soft toothbrush of age appropriate size at least twice per day. Tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste to reinforce oral health habits and prevent gingivitis and tooth decay is recommended.

For more oral health resources please visit: <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en>

Breastfeeding

- Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care. • TCC will follow all Health department and childcare licensing guidelines for accepting, storing, and serving expressed human milk for feedings.
- Breast milk must be in ready-to-feed sanitary containers labeled with the infant's name and date. TCC will store it in a refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than three months;
- TCC ensures that staff gently mix, not shake, the milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in human milk; and
- That there is an adult sized seat for breastfeeding located in the office, the door can be

closed to allow for privacy for the mother. Teachers will work with the parents to coordinate feedings.

Farm to ECE

TCC is committed to providing families with resources that help parents to teach their children about the importance of farm to table nutrition. Families can visit Austin Farmers Market for information on how to create a home garden, benefits of eating farm fresh food, and a list of local farmer's markets.

Nutrition Consultation

TCC is committed to the healthy nutrition of all the students, in an effort to ensure that our policies align with the most up-to-date health and nutrition guidance we have an annual health consultation. The annual health consultation involves a review of all our health and nutrition policies and an update if needed.

Snacks and Lunch

TCC requires that children have a nutritious snack at mid-morning and lunch at mid-day. Each child will need to bring his/her own snack, lunch, and water bottle in a labeled lunch box. The children and teacher will eat together at designated times. The class may choose to eat lunch on the playground when the weather is nice. Since parents provide children's meals and snacks, the school is not responsible for their nutritional value or for meeting the children's daily food needs. We want to support you in helping your child achieve a healthy lifestyle and a well balanced diet. We recommend that the snacks and lunches you send to school include healthy foods.

Examples of healthy foods include:

- Protein: chicken, turkey, hard-boiled eggs, tuna, beans, etc.
- Grains: whole wheat bread, whole grain cereal, crackers, tortillas, noodles, mini bagels, pretzels, etc.
- Fruit & Vegetables: grapes, apple slices, orange slices, carrots, celery sticks, raisins, etc.
- Milk & Dairy: cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, milk, etc.
- Drinks: water, milk, or 100% fruit juice
- Desserts: fresh fruit is always a good choice

Specific goals during lunch and snack time in addition to eating a nourishing meal are encouraging and guiding growth in expressive language development and promoting thoughtful conversational sharing times.

For more information on nutrition for children and healthy meal planning please visit:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/habits.html>

Lunch Requirements

Parents are asked to send healthy lunches.

Excluding Infants, lunches should promote self- help skills:

- Toddlers: Finger foods that are cut in bite size portions, sippy cups
- Preschoolers: Foods that are easily handled with forks or spoons, containers that children can easily open by themselves (please provide any utensils needed)

There is not enough storage space in our refrigerator to keep children's lunch boxes. Food should be packed by the parents in appropriate containers and include materials to keep lunches in the temperature safe zone (i.e. . thermos for hot foods / ice packs for perishables). We are not able to warm food, as it would require staff members to leave the classrooms and limit class supervision.

Infants: There is a refrigerator for Infants' lunches/bottles/breast milk only. There is a bottle warmer in the infant room. **See Breast Feeding for additional details.*

Birthdays and Special Occasions

If you would like to bring a special snack or treat for your child's birthday or special occasion, we ask that you notify the teacher the week prior so other parents can be informed. Due to allergy and nutrition concerns all outside food brought in to be shared with the children must be commercially prepared and inspected. This ensures that health and safety policies are met.

Allergies

If your child has allergies (including food allergies) please inform your child's teacher AND the office so that we can properly post allergy information in the classroom. Parents are required to complete an Allergy Action Plan. TCC staff members are educated on food allergies and take precautions to ensure children are protected.

Allergy Restrictions and Procedures:

The intent of this policy is to minimize the risk of any child suffering allergy- induced anaphylaxis whilst at TCC. An allergic reaction to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy, and as such demands more rigorous controls throughout the policy.

The underlying principles of this policy include:

- The establishment of effective risk management practices to minimize the student, staff,

parent and visitor exposure to known trigger foods and insects.

- Staff training and education to ensure effective emergency response to any allergic reaction situation.

This policy applies to all members of the TCC community:

- School Staff
- Parents
- Volunteers
- Students

DEFINITIONS

Allergy – A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (eg. food and drug) also known as hypersensitivity.

Allergen – A normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

Anaphylaxis – Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is a sudden, severe and potentially life threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines. Epipen – Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug Adrenalin,- which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

Minimized Risk Environment – An environment where risk management practices (eg. Risk assessment forms) have minimised the risk of (allergen) exposure.

Health Care Plan – A detailed document outlining an individual child's condition treatment, and action plan for location of Epipen.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALLERGY

MANAGEMENT General

- The involvement of parents and staff in establishing individual Health Care Plans.
- The establishment and maintenance of practices for effectively communicating a child's healthcare plans to all relevant staff.
- Staff training in anaphylaxis management, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.
- Age-appropriate education of the children with severe food allergies.

Medical Information

- The Pre-School school will seek updated information via medical form at the commencement of each calendar year.
- Furthermore, any change in a child's medical condition during the year must be reported to the school.
- For students with an allergic condition, TCC requires parents to provide written advice from a doctor, which explains the condition, defines the allergy triggers and any required medication.

- The Director will ensure that a Health Care Plan is established and updated for each child with a known allergy.
- Teachers and key staff are required to review and familiarize themselves with the medical information.
- Action Plans with a recent photograph for any students with allergies will be posted in relevant rooms.
- Where students with known allergies are participating in school excursions, the risk assessments must include this information.
- The wearing of a medic-alert bracelet is allowed by TCC.

EpiPens

Where EpiPens (Adrenalin) are required in the Health Care Plan:

- Parents/ guardians are responsible for the provision and timely replacement of the EpiPens.
- The EpiPens are located securely in relevant locations both in the classroom and front office.

Parents Role in Allergy Plan

Parents are responsible for providing, in writing, ongoing accurate and current medical information to the school.

Parents must provide a allergy action plan including details pertaining to the nature of the allergy, including:

- The allergen (the substance the child is allergic to)
- The nature of the allergic reaction (from rash, breathing problems to anaphylactic shock)
- What to do in case of allergic reaction, including any medication to be used and how it is to be used.
- Control measures – such as how the child can be prevented from getting into contact with the allergen.

If a child has an allergy requiring an epipen, or the risk assessment deems it necessary, a “healthcare plan” must be completed and signed by the parents and the child’s physician.

It is the responsibility of the Parent to provide TCC with up-to-date medication/ equipment clearly labelled in a suitable container.

In the case of life saving medication like Epi-pens the child will not be allowed to attend without it. Parents are also required to provide up to date emergency contact information.

Snacks and lunches brought into pre-school are provided by each child’s Parent. It is their responsibility to ensure that the contents are safe for the child to consume.

Parents should liaise with Staff about appropriateness of snacks and any food- related activities (e.g., cooking)

Staff Role in Allergy Plan

Staff are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the policy and adhering to health & safety regulations regarding food and drink.

If a child's Enrolment Form states that they have an allergy, then a "healthcare plan" is needed. It must be in place before the child starts attending sessions. A risk assessment should be carried out, and any actions identified to be put in place. The Assessment should be stored with the child's healthcare plan.

Upon determining that a child attending TCC has a severe allergy, a team meeting with parents and all necessary staff will be set up as soon as possible where all concerned attend to update knowledge and awareness of the child's needs.

All Staff who come into contact with the child will be made aware of what treatment/ medication is required by the director and where any medication is stored.

All staff are to promote hand washing before and after eating.

All snacks and lunches brought to the classroom are monitored by Staff and are peanut, nut free and other allergens depending on the children attending. All staff will know the procedures at snack and lunchtime to ensure the safety of children with allergies. However, Staff cannot guarantee that foods will not contain traces of nuts.

All tables are cleaned with an approved solution. Children are not permitted to share

food. As part of the Staff first aid course, EpiPen use and storage has been discussed.

We may ask the Parent for a list of food products and food derivatives the child must not come into contact with. Staff will liaise with Parents about snacks and any food-related activities.

Action in case of an Allergic reaction

In the event of a child suffering an allergic reaction:

- We will delegate someone to contact the child's Parents.
- If a child becomes distressed or symptoms become more serious telephone 911
- Keep calm, make the child feel comfortable and give the child space.
- If medication is available, it will be administered as per training and in conjunction

- with the health plan provided by the child's physician.
- If Parents have not arrived by the time ambulance arrives, a member of Staff will accompany the child to hospital.

Role of Other Parents in Allergy Plan

TCC may ask that children in a classroom with another child who has an allergy refrain from bringing Snacks and lunches that contain the substance the child is allergic too. TCC will ensure that parents are regularly reminded and will monitor the contents of lunchboxes and snack.

Parental Responsibilities

Naps/Rest Period

- Children who stay until 2:30 PM (except for Pre-school and Pre-K 4) will participate in a rest period after lunch each day.
- Children are not required to nap but will be asked to stay quietly on a cot to help their bodies rest. Quiet activities will be provided for them after a period of time.
- Please provide a small pillow, blanket, and a security item (stuffed animal), if needed.
- Each Friday, the child's nap items will be sent home to be washed and returned on Monday.

Field Trips

- Permission slips are required for each field trip.
- Notice of field trips will be posted at least 48 hours before the activity. TCC does not currently transport children in vehicles.
- Children who do not have a signed permission slip on file may not participate in the planned field trip.

Files

- Keep all information (addresses, phone numbers, work phone numbers, immunizations, emergency phone numbers, etc.) current. Parents may update records with any changes, such as address, phone number, or emergency contact information, at any time by updating your child's profile on Brightwheel, or emailing tarrytownchildrenscenter@gmail.com. In addition to changes, updated immunization records may also be emailed. We are required to have updated immunization records at all times. If your child has a well check during the year, you will need to have his/her immunization record updated at that time.
- If information is requested for the child's file, and is not received, care may be discontinued.

Clothing

- Dress your child in clothing that is comfortable for a variety of active, and sometimes messy, activities as well as outdoor play. We do go outdoors as often as possible. • Accidents happen. In case of a toileting accident, crafting accident or spill, please provide a complete set of clothing that is appropriate for the season (i.e. no shorts for winter weather).
- Mark your child's name clearly on all articles of clothing.
- If your child is sent home in a change of clothes that belongs to TCC or another student, please wash and return it as soon as possible.
- Tennis shoes or some other comfortable shoes are preferred for daily activities and playing, both in and out of doors.
- As the weather changes, be sure to send sweaters, jackets, coats, gloves, hats, boots, etc. as warranted.
- Children will be expected to go outside to play (even if just for a short period of time) when the weather permits.
- Children without proper clothing for outdoor play (i.e. winter coat, jackets), will not be allowed to participate.
- Sunscreen must be provided by the parent if they would like us to apply it.

Toys & Electronic Devices

TCC is well stocked with a variety of toys and materials for the children to play with. Personal toys are often the cause of arguments among children. No toys shall be brought to TCC from home except when permission is given from their teacher (i.e. show and tell) or as a security item for napping. If your child brings a toy, they will be asked to put it in their backpack until time for show and tell or the end of the day.

Electronic devices (phones, gaming systems, tablets, laptops) are not allowed.

Lost and Found

- Items often get misplaced or put in the wrong backpack. Please put your child's name on items that the child may remove (coats, sweatshirts, gloves, hats, etc.). • Check with your child's teacher if an item comes up missing.
- TCC is not responsible for items that the child has misplaced.

Afterschool playground rules*

We are happy for TCC families to use our playground areas after hours, provided the following rules are observed.

- Children must be always supervised by an adult.
- Absolutely no climbing on the outside/ roof of playground structures.
- Swings should only go in a front-to-back motion; not side-to-side or twisting. • Please keep children a safe distance off the swing path.

- Please do not allow children to handle or pull-on tree branches, vines, or other plants.
- Please take all snack wrappers, drink containers, etc. with you when you leave (ants and other critters love these).
- Do not enter the playground area until any TCC classes have completely vacated the areas. The playgrounds will be reserved at 1:30pm for Late Stay use.

**If these rules are not adhered to, TCC will be forced to close the playgrounds before and after school hours.*

Tarrytown Christian Church Involvement

On occasion, you will receive information about Tarrytown Christian Church via Brightwheel or email. This will keep you informed of Tarrytown Christian Church activities. Please accept our warm welcome to attend any service or program. The church has a pastoral staff to serve you. If you are not part of a church family, please consider making yourself a part of the family at Tarrytown Christian Church. Everyone is welcome.

Service times:

The Church meets every Sunday at 10 a.m. They also meet throughout the week for Bible studies or midweek services, depending on the season. Email them at tarrytownchristian@gmail.com for more information.

As part of the ministry of Tarrytown Christian Church, chapel is conducted weekly for children in our program.

Questions, concerns, complaints, policy changes

We welcome your ideas and want to be responsive to any question or concern you may have about the policies and procedures of the center. If you have an issue that requires immediate attention, please contact the director by phone, in person, or by email. If you need to schedule a conference with a teacher, please contact the office, and we can facilitate that for you. Drop-off and Pick-up times are not ideal for these conversations, as it takes attention away from the supervision of children. Please feel free to bring any issue to the director at these times. TCC believes that communication is key. Parents will be provided with any policy changes in writing. Parents will be asked to sign that they have received, read, and understand any such changes.

Safe and Healthy Zone

Our school property is a tobacco free, alcohol free, drug free, weapon free, and bully free zone. For all persons other than peace officers, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows. and other

weapons are prohibited on the premises of a childcare center. (746.3707 Texas Licensing)

TDFPS CCL Inspection Report

A copy of our most recent licensing inspection report is posted outside the director's office for your review.

Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers

A copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services' Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers can be retrieved online: <https://hhs.texas.gov/>

Department of Family and Protective

Services You can access the DFPS website at <https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline

You can call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 for situations including but not limited to:

- Serious injuries
- Any injury to a child 5 years or younger
- Immediate need for medical treatment (including suicidal thoughts)
- Sexual abuse where the abuser has or will have access to the victim within the next 24 hours
- Children age five and under are alone or are likely to be left alone within the next 24 hours
- Anytime you believe your situation requires action in less than 24 hours

Austin Child Care Licensing Office

You can contact the Austin Child Care Licensing Office at (512) 834-3426. For more information visit the website: <https://hhs.texas.gov/>