

Family Handbook 2026-2027



Trinity Child Development Center
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Austin Texas 78723

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Trinity Board of Directors: Board@trinitycdc.org

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday 7:00 am-5:30 pm

Welcome!

We are honored that you have chosen Trinity Child Development Center (TCDC) for your child's early childhood experience. We offer one of the finest programs available for children 12 months through 5 years in Austin, TX. Trinity Child Development Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for forty-eight children. For over fifteen years TCDC has been a Texas Rising Star 4 Star (highest rating) Provider with Texas Workforce Child Care Solutions. Trinity is also Recognized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and committed to working towards Accreditation with NAEYC.

History of Trinity

Our center originated in September of 1964, when interested church members saw a need for a special kind of nurturing, educational opportunity for preschool children in Northeast Austin. In 1988 Trinity became its own entity, separate from the church and with a secular approach to early education. Since that time, the Board of Directors and Staff have continued to uphold that same mission of providing quality, affordable early care and education to children within our economically and ethnically diverse community. We strive to provide stability and support to the children in our care and to their families, so that together we can truly impact future generations. We admit applicants without discrimination in favor of or against any child on the basis of race, national origin, religion, or challenging conditions.

Mission

The mission of Trinity Child Development Center is to provide quality, affordable early care and education to children within our economically and ethnically diverse community. We strive to provide stability and support to the children in our care and to their families, so that together we can truly impact future generations.

Philosophy

Trinity Child Development Center purposefully focuses on the developmental levels and needs of young children. We recognize the essential connection between social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language, creative and spiritual development as parts of each individual. We honor and celebrate diversity and the uniqueness of each individual, and plan for differences in abilities, interests, learning styles and experience.

We believe that:

- ★ The early years are critical learning years which offer the opportunity to maximize potential brain development in young children.
- ★ Responsive, nurturing relationships are key to quality early education and care

- ★ Safe, predictable environments help children to develop trust
- ★ Positive guidance methods build competence and self confidence
- ★ Children learn through active play
- ★ Parents and families are important teachers of children
- ★ Learning must be tied to positive emotions.
- ★ All children need advocates.

Trinity CDC offers:

- experienced staff with extensive training in early care and education
- consistent, comforting and fun routines that meet the needs of each age group
- positive guidance methods including clear limits, redirection, modeling, opportunities to make choices, and positive expectations of each child
- planned activities and experiences to develop self help skills and independence
- extensive opportunities to actively use all five senses
- a myriad of experiences to explore and discover our world and how it works
- an environment that fosters the ability to work cooperatively within a climate of unity and interdependence
- support of parents and staff for the important work that they are doing
- opportunities for everyone to develop, practice, and model happy, healthy behaviors
- small classes and low child to teacher ratios
- community building activities which lead to an extended family atmosphere where children feel at home

Goals

- To appreciate the individuality of oneself and others
- To be self-confident in one's abilities
- To develop and demonstrate self-regulation
- To develop positive relationships with others
- To develop and demonstrate pro-social attitudes
- To develop and demonstrate conflict resolution skills
- To develop and demonstrate independence skills
- To develop and demonstrate gross and fine motor physical skills
- To develop a healthy lifestyle
- To nurture creativity
- To develop and demonstrate communication skills
- To acquire academic skills

Background

Trinity CDC has always been more than just a child development center; it is a community of people from many generations devoted to learning and growing together. We value our history. In the mid-1960s the school was started by a Presbyterian church. In addition to the children's instruction, the founders felt physical, spiritual, and social-emotional development was instrumental to the holistic growth of a child. In 2001, when the Presbyterian Church could no longer support the center, the leaders decided it should become a stand-alone non-profit center. In 2015, the leadership worked to develop a statement of values to replace the original religious statement. They felt it was important to continue the legacy and state what is important to Trinity CDC.

Trinity Child Development Center's Core Values

THE WHOLE CHILD

- We work to build a strong foundation for every child's body, mind, and spirit.
- We strive to build a child's self-esteem by developing competence and confidence.
- We provide and teach unconditional love.

COMMUNITY

- Trinity CDC is an extension of a loving family. · We care for one another: the children, the parents, the alumni, the teachers, the administrators, and the supporters.
- We stay small to keep a sense of family.
- We work as a team for the benefit of the families in our care.

INTEGRITY

- We are honest with one another and with the children.
- We celebrate each person's contributions and listen to all points of view.

QUALITY

- We hire teachers of the highest quality who seek new ways to grow in their profession.
- We strive to be the best child development center by maintaining the highest standards.

RESPECT FOR THE WORLD

- We care for the earth and are aware of the ways we can affect our environment.
- We teach the love of and curiosity about our natural world through

hands-on learning experiences.

HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

- We appreciate who we are and take care of ourselves.
- We work to develop our physical skills and take part in daily, joyful physical activity.
- We practice good nutrition because we understand that what we put in our bodies affects our health.
- We practice resolving conflict by listening to each other and by using our words to share feelings and ideas.

SPIRITUALITY

- We value connections with people, with animals, with nature.
- We believe that gratefulness is important every day.
- We believe in the power of love.

DIVERSITY

- We know that Trinity CDC is better because our families, staff, and supporters are diverse racially, economically, and spiritually. We value all of these differences and work to be inclusive.
- We strive to maintain racial and economic diversity.
- We rejoice in each person's uniqueness.

These values permeate what we do every day and reflect who we are.

Curriculum, Lesson Planning, and Activities



Through Trinity Child Development Center's partnership with Texas School Ready, TCDC has adopted the Circle Curriculum, created by the Children's Learning Institute Circle. Research conducted by the Children's Learning Institute (CLI) serves as the foundation of all of their programs and initiatives. CLI's research faculty are recognized for advancing research in brain behavior, especially with children and adolescents who have learning differences. CLI researchers are published extensively in the fields of child development, learning disabilities, neuroscience, psychology, and developmental psychology.



The Circle curriculum is comprehensive, flexible, and engaging, and is designed to meet all early childhood education needs. Circle Infant and Toddler and Pre-K curriculum ensure children receive a high-quality education from birth to pre-k by supporting language, cognitive, and social and emotional development.

The Circle Infant and Toddler Curriculum is grounded in research and designed to support

responsive caregiving from birth to 36 months. With flexible guidance for each stage of development, educators are equipped to foster secure relationships, encourage exploration, and build foundational skills through everyday routines.

Circle Pre-K Curriculum equips educators with a research-based foundation for nurturing kindergarten readiness in PK-3 and PK-4 classrooms. Through hands-on learning, rich language experiences, and structured routines, children build essential skills across developmental domains.

The curriculum planning focuses on all areas of a child's development (physical, emotional, social, cognitive, communicative, self-help, creative, and spiritual) through the integrated approach. Children are encouraged to explore, create, and learn at their own pace. Children learn about the importance of physical activity each week through stories and/or interactive activities like outdoor play. Each year, all staff and teachers will also participate in training on nutrition topics.

Teachers' plans, therefore, are based on regular observation and assessment of children's activities, interests, needs, and developmental levels. Materials are selected that seem to match those particular children's interests and needs. The teachers recognize the fact that individual children are our program and with each group of children come different needs, challenges, and strengths. We make every effort to communicate our observations with parents at conference times and throughout the year.

The classrooms include centers such as home living and creative dramatics, blocks, science, manipulatives, listening, art, library, language arts, sensory, and discovery. This environment in the individual centers is changed regularly to hold the children's interests and to offer them different ways to explore and experiment. Group activities include music and movement education, food preparation and enjoyment, transition activities (finger plays, songs, and creative dramatics); visitors in the classroom, trips to the library next door and story time.

Children learn throughout the day from everything they do. Learning experiences are not isolated to one period of the day. Children are encouraged to make choices, practice self-help skills, express their feelings, and respect others. Over our forty years of existence, Trinity CDC has provided a strong foundation to hundreds of children's future learning experiences.

Every classroom has a Parent Bulletin board where parents can read such things as daily schedules, lesson plans, field trip notices, and other important information. Lost and Found items can be discussed via Brightwheel or with teachers. We strive to work together with families so that when a child leaves our facility, they are ready emotionally, socially,

physically, and intellectually to thrive in their next endeavor.

Texas Rising Star

Our center participates in the *Texas Rising Star (TRS)* program, a statewide quality-rating system that supports high standards in early childhood education. Trinity CDC is a 4-star provider, which is the highest available star level. All employees are expected to understand and follow TRS guidelines, including maintaining safe environments, using developmentally appropriate practices, and engaging in required professional development. By working together to meet these standards, we ensure high-quality care for children and help our program maintain and improve its TRS rating.

Classroom Transition

We create an environment of consistency, accountability, and clear structure, allowing both students and teachers to focus on educational goals and development while minimizing unnecessary disruptions during the school year. The goal is to maintain consistency, foster strong relationships between students and teachers. Teachers remain in the same classroom throughout the entire school year.

Daily Schedules

Each class has a slightly different daily schedule, which is posted in each room. These schedules are planned with the different age groups in mind and to balance indoor and outdoor, quiet and active, individual and small group, large and small muscle movement, and child and adult initiated activities.

Walking Field Trips and Visitors

Teachers often plan for visitors to share their expertise in different areas, thus enriching the curriculum. They may play an instrument, read a book, share a pet, help children with an art project, tell a story, or share a hobby or skill.

Trinity does not provide transportation for field trips. Upon enrollment Parents must sign the field trip permission box on the Application Information Form. TCDC does a walking field trip to the Windsor Park Library next door each Tuesday for storytime (10:15-10:45 am). Families will be notified 48 hours in advance of any additional field trips via Brightwheel. When we are away from the Center, teachers carry cell phones, first aid equipment, and emergency information at all times and have discussed specific potential problems before they leave. During transitions teachers will conduct a name-to-face to ensure that each child is present and accounted for. It is our number one responsibility to ensure the utmost safety of the children in our care.

Animals in the Classroom

Children in licensed childcare are not able to have contact with chickens, ducks, reptiles, and amphibians due to the danger of salmonellosis, nor tigers and monkeys

(it's a Standard). Visiting animals are required to have statements from a veterinarian stating that they are in good health and have the necessary vaccinations. TCDC has a resident therapy dog–Birdie—who comes to work with the Director. Her veterinary paperwork is on file. Classrooms may have pets, as long as they are approved by the Director. If we have special animal visitors, we will send out information on Brightwheel. There is a generic permission statement on the admission information form.

Rest and Nap Times

All children are required to have a rest period after lunch during their school day. The teachers play soft music and turn the lights off during nap time, and they actively supervise at all times to ensure every child's safety. After no more than one hour of resting on their mats, children are allowed to do quiet activities until everyone in the classroom is awake. Families are welcome to send quiet activities (coloring books, puzzles, fidget tools, etc.), but screen time during the rest period is prohibited by Child Care Regulation.

TCDC provides a sleeping mat for each child that is specific for the individual. Parents provide a clean sheet and blanket every Monday, or an all-in-one nap roll. The teachers sanitize nap mats each week and send bedding home on Fridays.

Developmental Assessments and Child Development

Teachers treat each individual child as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth and development. Teachers acknowledge individual interests, cultures, and experiences when planning the weekly theme activities and remember that each class is also unique. Different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted, and used to design appropriate activities.

Teachers always take into account: self-help and practical skills, social-emotional skills, physical skills (both large and small gross motor), healthy habits, language skills, cognitive skills, and creative skills. Teachers and families together are encouraged to think in terms of strengths, areas of focus, and action steps for school and home. conference

Teachers will work in connection with families with opportunities to share observations from home and discuss observations from school. Teachers will remember that information regarding specific children is to be considered confidential. This means that it will only be discussed with staff that “needs to know” about the particular child and that before information is shared with any professional, families will give consent.

The purposes of assessment are to:

- Use all of the gathered information to ensure that each child is making progress in all areas of their development and to describe such progress

- Identify children's interests and needs
- Improve our curriculum and to adapt our teaching practices and environment to the particular individual and collective group of children
- Plan for program improvement
- Communicate specific information about children to their families
- Address serious concerns about a child's development or behavior. If there are such, we work as a team to help find solutions for the child's behavior or developmental delays. This teamwork includes conferring with the families, with any specialists with whom we have access (such as the ACGC Family Consultant), or referral to ECI, pediatricians, etc.

Each child will have an individual portfolio that will include these things at a minimum:

- The Developmental History of each child filled out by a parent and a yearly updated development sheet.
- Progress Checklists
- Samples of each child's scribbling, writing, &/or drawing
- Photos of children accomplishing a milestone or participating in daily activities
- Anecdotal records especially those that document developmental milestones
- Summary and dates of formal teacher-parent conferences

Special Care Needs and Accommodations for Children Policy

Our program is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all families and children feel welcome, supported, and able to fully participate. We work closely with families to identify any individual needs related to health, learning, behavior, language, culture, or accessibility. When a need is identified, staff collaborate with the family to develop appropriate accommodations, which may include modifications to the learning environment, individualized support strategies, communication adjustments, or referrals to community resources and specialists.

Families are encouraged to share any information that will help us better support their child. All accommodations are handled respectfully and confidentially. Our goal is to partner with each family to ensure that every child has equitable opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed in our program. TCDC does not discriminate and will attempt to meet the requirements of children with special needs by being in conversation with parents at all times. This includes initial visits and once enrolled, we will create an individual plan with appropriate strategies.

Parents must provide a statement of the child's special care needs, which must include:

- Any limitations or restrictions on the child's activities

- Special care the child requires, including:
 - Any reasonable accommodations or modifications
 - Any adaptive equipment provided for the child, including instructions for how to use the equipment
 - Symptoms or indications of potential complications related to a physical, cognitive, or mental condition that may warrant prevention or intervention while the child is in care
- Any medications prescribed for continuous, long-term use

Resources for Children with Developmental Delays and Disabilities

Early Childhood Intervention Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is a statewide program within the Texas Health and Human Services Commission for families with children from birth to 36 months with developmental delays, disabilities or certain medical diagnoses that may impact development. ECI services support families as they learn how to help their children grow and learn. ECI providers work with the child and family where they live, learn and play. Though most ECI services are provided at home, they can be provided in other places where the child goes regularly, such as a childcare center, park, library or other community setting.

Local ECI Provider: Easterseals Lonestar Central Texas; Easterseals ECI

8001 Centre Park Drive, Suite 130

Austin, TX 78754

Referral Number - (512) 615-6898

Fax Number - (855) 212-9474

Email: ecireferrals@eslonestar.org

Web: eslonestar.org/educational-development-programs

If your child is 3 or older, they may be eligible for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services from your local school district. Parents, guardians, and/or community agencies with suspicions that their early childhood student may have a disability as recognized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and may need specialized instruction and services should contact your local Independent School District.

Local ISD: Austin Independent School District (AISD)

Referral Number - (512) 414-SPED

Evaluation Request Form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdKg1FdjzPLMcUxhi1k8OKI-9VRZGMvfsg1htM6330UV03kQQ/viewform>

Communication

We believe that home-school communication is one of the most important aspects of a good relationship. Trinity CDC has created several avenues to facilitate effective two-way communication. Families are encouraged to send messages through Brightwheel, email

their child's teacher or the Director, speak in person, or call the Center during our hours of operation. Additionally, we are committed to providing information through each family's home language, and we will work with you for needed translations, both verbal and written. We will share information about how Trinity CDC is supporting children's physical activity and gross motor skill development, cognitive skills, language development whenever the opportunity arises.

Trinity Triumph Newsletter

The Trinity CDC Newsletter is sent out once a month from the Director via Brightwheel. This newsletter provides parents and guardians information about what will be happening during that month, as well as birthdays and upcoming events.

Parent's Knowledge of their Children

Parents are a child's first teacher, and their knowledge and expertise is invaluable. Each child's home culture varies, and it is extremely important that families share information about their family's values and culture as they see fit. At registration time, families are asked to fill out developmental histories of their children and will be asked to update this information yearly. We also ask that you share information about important events and changes in your child's life, as this is critical to our understanding.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences may be scheduled by parents or teachers to discuss the progress of each child. Twice a year, in the fall and spring, we have a sign-up procedure to ensure that every family has a chance to speak with the teacher in a non-hurried atmosphere.

The Fall conference will focus more on the parent telling the teacher about their child. The spring conference will focus more on the teacher telling the parent how the child is doing at school. At each of the conference meetings throughout the year, the teachers assess the children to determine areas that a child may need support. Parents have an opportunity to share their own observations through informal surveys, the parent portion of developmental screeners, and anecdotally through regular communication with their child's teacher.

Brightwheel

Trinity CDC utilizes Brightwheel, an all-in-one childcare management software that saves time and simplifies operations for early education providers. From billing and parent communication to curriculum and admissions, it combines everything that is needed in one easy-to-use platform. Trusted by millions of educators and families and backed by a dedicated support team, Brightwheel strengthens family connections and

ensures seamless operations with reliable performance and robust security.

Informal Conversations

We welcome your questions and input at any time. We only ask you not disrupt class time to talk. Drop off time is an important time to spend a couple of minutes orienting a teacher to the child's moods and needs. Please don't be offended if the teacher can't spend more than five minutes talking with you when you bring your child or pick him/her up. Our primary concern is to supervise the children in our care. If you want or need more time to talk, please ask for a conference time or give the Director a message. Important information that you have to share should be written.

Observations and Visits

You are welcome to come observe, eat lunch, read a book, etc, Trinity CDC has an open-door policy. We encourage you to share your talents with our class - stop by to sing, read a book, show us about your work, or just play and talk with your child's friends. Please check with your teacher for your particular child's needs and a good time to visit. Background check required if parents/guardians are planning to schedule more than one time visit.

Parent Group Meetings

These are scheduled several times a year for the exchange of information and ideas. They often happen at arrival time, lunch time, or at the end of the work day.

Telephone Calls

Many times we are with the children and cannot answer the phone. Please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible. If you really need to talk to a person and yet get our voice mail, you may hang up and try again. We do try and listen for persistent ringing and will attempt to return those calls sooner rather than later.

Email

All classrooms are provided with a classroom email where parents can communicate with teachers for sending photos or documentation as needed. The fastest way to get a response from your child's teacher, or the Director, is to send a message on Brightwheel.

Information can also be seen on our website www.trinitycdc.org

- Pink Room: pinkroom@trinitycdc.org
- Purple Room: purpleroom@trinitycdc.org
- Orange Room: orangeroom@trinitycdc.org
- Blue Room: blueroom@trinitycdc.org
- All Staff: teachers@trinitycdc.org

School Schedule and Calendar

The Center operates year-round and is open from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. We close for Holidays, which are paid breaks for the teachers, as well as four annual Professional Development Days for Teachers. The 2026-2027 Calendar is posted to Brightwheel, and copies are available in the office.

Inclement Weather

Trinity CDC will close for inclement weather If Austin ISD announces so before 7 a.m. When listening to the news media, if AISD announces closure or late start for the day, Trinity CDC will also be closed or have a late start. Trinity CDC will also partake in early release if school releases early. Parents will also be notified via Brightwheel Alerts and/or email as soon as any closures are announced. In case of closure announced once the school day has started, parents will be called and arrangements made for safe, prompt pick up. Tuition will not be refunded for inclement weather.

Transportation

Transportation is not provided by the center. You may park in the circular drive but we ask that you pull up in front of the church door and do not block the entrance of the drive. We want staff and other parents to be able to enter the circular drive at all times. Please follow the path from the circular drive to TCDC's entrance. Parking in the shopping area is fine as long as you do not park in front of the businesses. You may also park in the street as long as you do not do so in front of a no-parking sign. We realize that our parking situation is not the best, so please be considerate.

Do not leave purses or other belongings in unlocked cars, even if you run in for only a moment. To promote a healthier, more sustainable environment and ensure the safety and well-being of our community, idling of vehicles during drop-off and pick-up times is strongly discouraged. Please help by watching out for other children who may also be coming and going from our center, as well as the library and activities across the street. Children will not be allowed to cross the street alone, nor will they be allowed to enter cars that are double parked.

If the TCDC door is ever locked, please come around to the playground and use the inner courtyard door. Please, always keep the chain on both gates. Children can run toward the street faster than we can!

Arrival, Attendance, and Absence Policy

Parents shall bring children into the classroom each morning, sign in on Brightwheel and leave the child in the presence of a staff member. Upon arrival, each child will be asked to wash their hands and be given a daily health check by the teacher in charge. (See Health

section) We know parents are often in a hurry in the mornings, but we encourage all family members bringing children to take a few minutes and let the teachers know important information about their children. Please do not use cell phones when picking up and dropping off, this allows teachers to communicate with you about your child and the day. It is helpful for us to know what kind of a night they had, their general mood in the morning, and if there are any special circumstances that might help us understand their feelings (e.g. fell asleep much later than usual; death in family, moving, scared of thunderstorm, etc.)

Children may come anytime after 7:00 a.m. and before 9:30. We are unable to care for your children before 7:00 a.m. Children benefit most from our program if they arrive before 9:30 as late arrivals miss out on an important socialization time. In order to bring your child between 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., you must first check with the Director by phone or in person.

Please notify us if your child will be absent. Calls may be made to our answering machine any time night or day. Via Brightwheel or email is also an easy way to communicate. We must keep accurate records for other agencies regarding illnesses and other absences, so please always let us know if your child is ill.

If your child is to be dropped off by a school bus after his/her time at another school, but does not arrive within a fifteen minute normal time-frame, we will call the school first, then the parent to verify if the child went to school. If no one answers at these numbers, we will call the emergency contacts on the child's admission form. It is the parent's responsibility to notify TCDC when the child is absent from the other program or is not riding the bus for any reason. If we cannot locate the child or any of the contacts, we will call 911.

Release of Children Policy

Children shall be picked up in the classroom or from the playground by a parent, guardian, or designated adult and signed out via Brightwheel. If the designated person does not have access to Brightwheel, teachers can sign the child out. The child will be released only to persons properly designated on the Application Information form. If someone other than the designated person(s) is to pick-up a child, please notify the teacher and/or Director, preferably in writing. Photo IDs will be checked and copies may be made if we do not know the person.

Under the laws of Texas, both parents have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. An enrolling parent who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list must file an official court document (for example, current restraining order, sole custody decree, etc.) with the center. Absent that document, the center may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.

If you are unavoidably detained, please send a message on Brightwheel and let us know when we may expect you. If a child has not been picked up by 6:00pm and the Director has not received confirmation that someone is coming to pick them up, law enforcement will be contacted to ensure the child's safety and the Director or designated person in charge will stay with the child until someone designated by

Tuition

Tuition is based on full-time enrollment at Trinity CDC. A 10% discount is given for each additional child from the same family.

Trinity Tuition & Fees September 2025-2026

<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>
Pink Room 12-24 Months	\$1,400.00
Purple Room 18 month to 2 years	\$1,275.00
Orange Room 2-3 years	\$1,250.00
Blue Room 3-5 years	\$1,250.00

Supply Fee: \$150 Billed annually on September 1st.

Late Tuition Fee

Tuition is due in advance at the first of each month. There is a five day grace period. On the 6th day of the month, there will be a \$10.00 late fee plus \$5.00 per working day until the amount is paid in full. We prefer that parents pay tuition by check or money order, although cash will be accepted as long as the right change is given.

Exceptions

Special payment arrangements may be made with the Director in writing by the 1st of the month. A late fee will not be charged if payment is made according to the agreement. The Center will not carry any account for more than one month.

Checks

All checks may be made payable to Trinity Child Development Center. They may be given to the Director or left in the gray box on the wall in the Director's office. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for returned checks due to insufficient funds. If more than two prior checks have been returned for insufficient funds, then only a money order or cash will be accepted.

Refunds and Cancellation

Neither credit nor refund can be granted for a child's absence from school. Absences

from school, vacations, or holidays observed shall cause no exception in the amount of tuition due. When withdrawing, parents must give a two weeks' notice or the full month's tuition will be due whether or not the child is in attendance.

Late Pick-up Fee

Our hours of operation are 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM. We do give a 5 minute grace period to allow for unforeseen circumstances that will occur from time to time. We need for all children and parents to leave the building by 5:30 PM, so that the staff may close the CDC. Parents in the Center past 5:30 p.m. will be charged a late fee of \$15.00 plus \$1.00 for each minute the child stays past 5:30 p.m. This charge will be invoiced via Brightwheel the following day, and is in accord with policies enforced at other facilities throughout the city. Parents are asked to send a message via Brightwheel to let the school know they will be late so that we may help to comfort your child in case he/she is worried.

Workforce Child Care Services

If you receive tuition subsidies, you are required to report changes of your status (change of address, employment, household information, etc.) to Workforce within 10 days. We are required to report 5 consecutive absences. Payment of parent fees is due on the 1st day of each month, or each Monday if the parent share of cost is charged weekly. The Workforce telephone number is (512) 597-7191. Parents are responsible for signing their child in and out via Brightwheel to meet Texas Workforce Commission's requirements.

Admission Requirements/Health Practices

Upon enrollment, all students must have the following health information on site:

1. A wellness statement signed by your child's physician (must be updated annually)
2. An official record of current immunizations required by the Texas Department of Health. Currently, TB tests are not required in Travis County.
3. Four year olds are required to have a vision and hearing screening.
4. The Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for children of certain ages and grades. Refer to 25 TAC Chapter 37, Subchapter C, (relating to Vision and Hearing Screening), for specifics on vision and hearing screening. This information may be accessed on the Internet at: www.dshs.state.tx.us/vhs/.
5. Emergency contact information for each child (must be kept up to date throughout the year). At the beginning of each new school year, parents will

be asked to fill out new enrollment information for their children. Parents can update all Admission Information such as phone numbers and addresses when such information changes.

6. Current information about any health insurance coverage required by treatment in an emergency (insurance company, subscriber's name & policy number)
7. Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to the child's health information.
8. Written instructions from a physician for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies, asthma, or other chronic illness. Medical plans must be updated annually or earlier if medical information changes.
9. Parents Rights a parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:
 - a. enter and examine the child care facility during the facility's hours of operation without advanced notice;
 - b. review the child care facility's publicly accessible records;
 - c. receive inspection reports for the child care facility and information about how to access the facility's online compliance history;
 - d. obtain a copy of the child care facility's policies and procedures;
 - e. review, at the request of the parent or guardian, the facility's:
 - i. staff training records; and
 - ii. any in-house staff training curriculum used by the facility;
 - f. review the child care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;
 - g. inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's or guardian's child, provided that:
 - i. video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
 - ii. the parent or guardian of the child does not retain any part of the video recording depicting a child that is not their own; and
 - iii. the parent or guardian of any other child captured in the video recording receives written notice from the facility before allowing a parent to inspect a recording;
 - h. have the child care facility comply with a court order preventing another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the parent's or guardian's child;
 - i. be provided the contact information for the child care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;
 - j. file a complaint against the child care facility by contacting the local

- Child Care Regulation office; and
- k. be free from any retaliatory action by the child care facility for exercising any of the parent's or guardian's rights.

Procedures for Parents to Review Minimum Standards Child Care Regulation Reports

At any time, parents may ask to review the Minimum Standard Rules for Child Care Centers which are kept in the office. All of our Licensing Inspection Reports are posted on the Hall Bulletin Board for your viewing.

If you believe that the State's Minimum Standards are not being met, you may call the Child Care Licensing Office: 512-834-3195. (<http://www.txchildcaresearch.org>). A licensing representative will investigate your complaint. Parents are also required by law to report any suspected neglect or abuse of a child by calling 1-800-252-5400.

HHSC website: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/>

Instruction for parents to access Minimum standards, Abuse and Neglect & HHSC website
Minimum Standards online:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/child-care-regulation/minimum-standards>

Abuse and Neglect

The law requires any person who believes that a child is being abused or neglected to report the circumstances to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Abuse Hotline. A person making the report is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Any person suspecting abuse and not reporting it can be held liable for a Class B misdemeanor. Time frames for investigating reports are based on severity of allegations. Reporting suspected child abuse makes it possible for the family to get help.

Reports are confidential, and not subject to public release under the Open Records Act. The law provides for immunity from civil or criminal liability for innocent persons who report even unfounded suspicions, as long as reports are made in good faith. The reporter's identity is kept confidential.

Liability and Accident Insurance

TCDC maintain liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$1 million for each occurrence of negligence or injury to a child while the child is on our premises or in our care.

Daily Health Check

Every day when your child comes to school, teachers are to do a health check of him/her. This consists of checking for signs of illness, injury, or evidence of possible

abuse or neglect. You can help by telling us important things about your child's well-being. (For instance, if your child coughed and was awake most of the night, let us know. If she fell down and cut her eye, tell us.) Daily health checks are a sign of quality care and are for the protection of all the children.

“Nuisance” Diseases

Head lice and body lice are considered “nuisance” diseases, as they do not cause major health complications. According to the CDC, head-to-head contact during play is the primary transmission route among young children. The sustained, repeated contact that is normal in childcare accelerates how fast lice spread through a group once a single case is present.

In the event that head lice and/or nits are found in your child's hair, the parents will be notified immediately to pick up their child. The rest of the children who have had contact will also be checked, as well as the teachers, and measures will be taken to reduce transmission in the classroom (cleaning carpets and soft items, sending home nap items, etc.). It is the policy of Trinity Child Development Center that children with active lice are excluded from care until they have been treated. Nits may be present after treatment, but this does not prevent a child from attending as long as they have been treated and no longer have active lice.

Families are expected to:

1. Check your child's hair thoroughly using a fine-toothed lice comb in good lighting.
2. If live lice or nits within a quarter inch of the scalp are found, begin lice treatment that night.
3. Check all household members — siblings and parents — and treat any who are also infested.
4. Wash the child's bedding, pillowcases, car seat cover, and any soft toys that were in close head contact, in hot water (at least 130°F / 54°C) and dry on high heat.
5. Notify the daycare that your child had lice and that treatment has begun.
6. Complete a second treatment 7–9 days after the first, per product instructions.

Immunization Requirements

Trinity's number one concern is the health and safety of all of our children and employees, and volunteers. We strongly encourage that every child and adult in the program receive all recommended and required immunizations set forth by the Texas Department of State Health Services. There may be instances in which a child/adult is not fully vaccinated, such as someone with an allergy to a vaccine ingredient or an auto-immune disorder, or a child who has just entered foster care and is on a catch-up vaccine schedule .

If a child/adult is under-immunized, Trinity must have a signed and notarized affidavit or an official letter from a healthcare professional who is treating the child. In the event that a person at TCDC contracts a vaccine-preventable illness, the Health Department will be notified and they may require children who are not fully immunized to be excluded from care for a period of time (typically up to 30 days). Refunds/credits will not be given for exclusion from care.

Illness and Exclusion Criteria

Trinity CDC must follow the communicable disease exclusions required for schools as defined by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) in 25 TAC §97.7 (relating to Diseases Requiring Exclusion from Schools). You can access this information from DSHS or Licensing staff.

If the child becomes ill while at school, they will be cared for by a familiar caregiver, isolated so as not to expose new individuals, and a parent or guardian will be called to pick-up the child as quickly as possible. If a critical illness requires the immediate attention of a physician, we will contact EMS and the Director will notify the parents immediately.

We will send Brightwheel messages notifying parents about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child has been exposed, the signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at school and that families should implement at home.

Children with contagious or infectious diseases will be re-admitted after they have been examined by a medical professional and have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medications. Parents are asked to report any communicable diseases to us for the safety of the other children. We ask that anytime parents take their children to their physicians, they bring us a note from the doctor that states when the child may return to school.

Incident, Injury, and Illness Reports

Incident reports are sent out via Brightwheel as an “incident” for minor incidents or injuries, such as minor cuts, scratches, and bites from other children requiring first-aid treatment by employees. Illnesses that are minor, such as vomiting, fever, rashes that require exclusion from care will be sent out on Brightwheel as an alert, which will send a text message to all family members who are listed as “parent” in Brightwheel.

The teachers will fill out the Licensing Incident/Illness Report Form 7239 that is signed by the Director or the designated person in charge, and signed by a family member at pickup for more serious incidents or injuries, such as:

- An injury to a child in care that required medical treatment by a health-care professional or hospitalization
- An illness that required the hospitalization of a child in care
- A child in care had an emergency anaphylaxis reaction that required administration of an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector
- An incident of a child in care or employee contracting a communicable disease deemed notifiable by the Texas Department of State Health Services, as specified in 25 TAC Chapter 97, Subchapter A (relating to Control of Communicable Diseases)
- Any other non-routine situation that placed, or may have placed, a child at risk for injury or harm, such as forgetting a child in a center vehicle or not preventing a child from wandering away from the child-care center unsupervised

Policy on handling and notifying parents about medical emergencies

In case of an accidental injury that may require medical attention, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If we can't reach anyone, we will call the name listed as your emergency contact. If we still cannot reach anyone, we will call the child's physician. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school informed of current telephone numbers and emergency numbers.

In case of a critical illness or injury requiring immediate attention of a physician, we will call EMS, then give the child first aid or CPR if needed, contact the physician and then the parents while ensuring supervision of the other children.

Parents must be notified about the following emergency or medical situations :

- If there is an allegation that the child has been abused, neglected, or exploited, as defined in Texas Family Code §261.001, while in care, parents are notified immediately.
- After we ensure the safety of the child, TCDC must notify the parent of the child immediately after the child:
 - Is injured and the injury requires medical treatment by a health-care professional or hospitalization
 - This notification does not apply to an injury for which a health-care professional only evaluates a child as a precaution. However, if TCDC later learns the injury is more serious than initially diagnosed and requires medical treatment, the operation must report the incident to CCR upon learning of the change in the child's status.
 - Shows signs or symptoms of an illness that requires hospitalization

- Has had an emergency anaphylaxis reaction that required administration of an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector
- Has been involved in any non-routine situation that placed, or may have placed, the child at risk for injury or harm. For example, a caregiver forgetting the child in classroom or failing to prevent the child from wandering away from the child-care center unsupervised
- Has been involved in any situation that renders the child-care center unsafe, such as a fire, flood, or damage to the child-care center as a result of severe weather.
- TCDC must provide written notice to the parent of each child in a group within 48 hours when there is an outbreak of lice or other infestation in the group, but TCDC will attempt to notify families immediately. We will send an individual note to each parent via Brightwheel.
- TCDC must provide written notice to the parent of each child attending the child-care center within 48 hours of becoming aware that a child in your care or an employee has contracted a communicable disease deemed notifiable by the Texas Department of State Health Services, as specified in 25 TAC Chapter 97, Subchapter A (relating to Control of Communicable Diseases).
 - We will notify by sending a Brightwheel message that gives the type of illness, signs and symptoms, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures.

Procedures for Dispensing Medicine

We prefer that families give medicine at home whenever possible, but we understand that children may need multiple doses per day. When a child needs to be given medication at school, please remember that medicine can be administered only if:

- A licensed health provider who has prescribed or recommended the medication has written instructions for administering the medication
- It is brought in the original container
- It is clearly labeled with the child's first and last name and dosage
- The medicine is placed in the Director's office or refrigerator. (Do not leave any medication in diaper bags.)
- The parent or guardian signs a medication authorization for each medication

If there is a long-term medication to be given (for recurring or periodic problems like asthma or allergic reactions), a long term medication form must be filled out every six months. This authorization form must include information on symptoms to watch for and a plan from the doctor.

All medicine must be disposed of or returned to the parent when the medication is

out-of-date, no longer required for the child, or when the child withdraws.

Prevention of Illness

Two of the best methods for preventing illness are hand washing and covering sneezes and coughs. Parents can help us by encouraging the same methods at home. Staff and children are required to wash their hands many times a day. Please follow our example and have your child wash hands with soap for as long as it takes to sing the “Alphabet Song.” We teach children to cough or sneeze into the crook of their elbow, thereby avoiding the spread of those germs by using their hands and then immediately touching objects or people.

Teacher Health Requirements Our teachers and other staff members are immunized as required by the Travis County Health Department. At this time, no immunizations are required.

Child Nutrition and Food Practices

Through our snack service and nutrition standards at Trinity CDC, we aim to provide balanced and nutritious foods and beverages that support the healthy growth and development of every child. By encouraging healthy food choices and promoting safe eating habits, we work together with families to foster lifelong wellness practices.

Nutrition Objectives

The food we offer young children sets a pattern for and affects so many things: brain development, diabetes, obesity, stress, etc.

- Parents pack lunch each day that includes something from at least three of the five food groups (grain, protein, dairy, fruit, vegetable)
- Parents and Trinity CDC staff do not provide fried foods, high fat meats, or vegetables cooked in fat
- Sweets and salty snacks are not served, except a limited portion for special occasions such as birthdays and holiday celebrations
- Only healthy beverages, like milk (or dairy milk alternatives), 100% juice, and water are provided
- Breastfeeding is encouraged and supported, for both parents and employees
- Families and teachers work together so that we can help children develop healthy, life-long habits

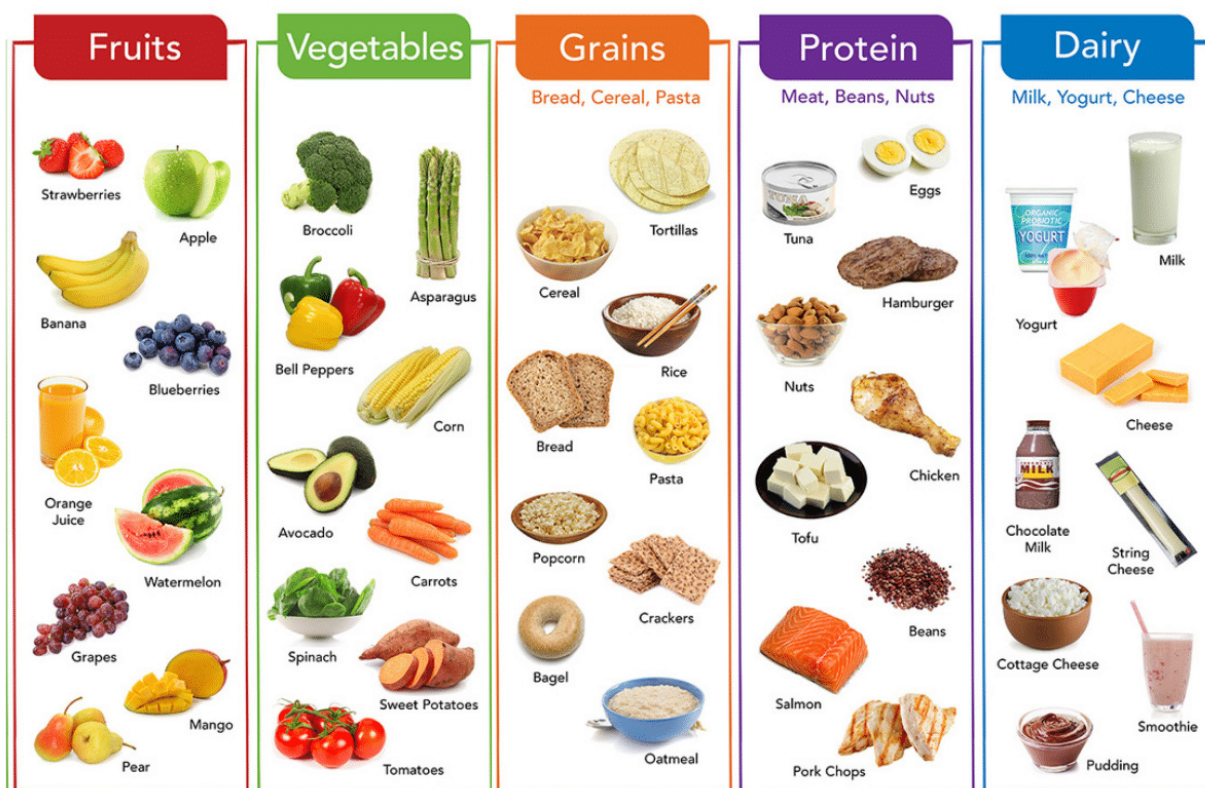
Morning and Afternoon Snacks

We proudly provide two nutritious snacks throughout the day to all enrolled children: morning snack is served between 9:00am - 9:30am and afternoon snack is served between 2:45 pm - 3:30 pm. Each snack will include two of the following: whole grain, protein/dairy, or fruit/vegetable. Water is available at all times, and will be placed on the table for every

meal and snack. Snack Menus are posted on the Parent Bulletin in the hallway, and shared via the Brightwheel app. Teachers never force children to eat any particular foods or to clean their plate.

Lunch

Lunch is provided by the child's family. Families provide the child's meal, with an understanding that Trinity CDC is not responsible for their nutritional value or for meeting the child's daily food needs. Because children learn best if their nutritional needs are being met, we ask parents to send a variety of foods from the five food groups, while avoiding food with empty calories, such as chips or cookies.



Food Storage and Temperature

Meals will not be refrigerated or heated. Please consider using blue ice or thermal jars when storing meals for your child. Meat, dairy, or egg products must be kept in a thermos or stored with blue ice to maintain freshness. We encourage children to be independent when it comes to opening and closing their lunch containers, please provide easy to open containers for children.

We encourage preparing homemade portions and encourage families to learn about child nutrition and read food packaging labels to make informed choices. We recommend avoiding “quick meals” like Lunchables and other prepackaged foods due to containing high

sodium and additives as well as being expensive. Families with a dietary preference (Ex: vegetarian/vegan) and/or religious restriction for certain foods (kosher, halal, etc.) should indicate dietary needs upon enrollment, and we will happily accommodate to the best of our abilities.

Safety & Choking Hazards

To ensure the safety of young children, we do not serve certain foods to children under 4 years old due to choking risks. If you are sending any of these foods, please cut them into pieces not larger than ½ inch based on your child's ability to chew and swallow safely.

- o Hot dogs
- o Whole grapes
- o Nuts
- o Popcorn
- o Cheese chunks
- o Raw peas
- o Hard pretzels
- o Spoonful of peanut butter
- o Whole pieces of meat
- o Whole carrots

Good and easy ideas for lunch include choosing something from any of the following columns. Remember: we ask family members to send something from each food group. Besides sending healthy food, we also want you to make preparing lunch as easy as possible

Water bottles

- o Children should have a clean, filled water bottle daily.
- o Water bottles should be labeled with the child's full name and kept accessible to them throughout the day.
- o Only water is permitted in the bottle, and it must have a spout or straw cover for safety.

Breastfeeding and Breastmilk

Trinity CDC is committed to encouraging breastfeeding and providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers and employees. Our breastfeeding policy is as follows:

- ★ Breastfeeding parents and employees will be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.
 - o Parents are provided a comfortable place with an adult sized seat within the classroom that enables a mother to breastfeed her child. Parents are welcome to breastfeed in the classroom, and the designated private space is the Church nursery for parents who desire privacy.
 - o Employees are given breaks to express breastmilk in privacy, and parents are welcome to use the nursery or room 12 to pump as needed.
 - o The kitchen sink is available for washing pump parts.
- ★ A refrigerator/freezer is available for storage of expressed breastmilk in a stored and

labeled container with the child's full name and the date that the milk was expressed to ensure that staff are able to offer the oldest milk first.

- ★ Parents are supported as their child enters our toddler program, and the teachers work with families to help their child transition from the breast to a bottle, sippy cup, or open cup.
- ★ Staff are trained in handling, storing, heating, and feeding breastmilk. We follow the breastmilk guidelines from the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (www.bfmed.org) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov).
- ★ Information on breastfeeding will be provided, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. There are also additional resources located in the office, such as brochures and books about breastfeeding.

Food Allergies and Special Diets

At Trinity CDC, we take allergies and special dietary needs seriously to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all children. All children with food allergies should have an Allergy Action plan signed by the physician and parent/guardian. This plan will provide detailed instruction about which food(s) the child is allergic to and a plan of what to do if an allergic reaction occurs. It is the parent's responsibility to address all food allergies upon enrollment or development of said allergy. Please update your child's information as needed.

Guidance and Discipline Policy

Guidance and discipline techniques are based on an understanding of individual needs and development while promoting self-discipline and acceptable behavior. Staff attempt to anticipate and eliminate potential problems as much as possible. Discipline shall be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control in a loving manner. Trinity uses Conscious Discipline®, a curriculum designed by Dr. Becky Bailey that aims to teach children self-regulation and self-control, as well as positive prosocial behavior. Resources will be provided throughout the school year so that families can reinforce concepts at home and encourage the generalization of skills, such as calming breathing techniques.

Staff use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self direction which include:

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on the unacceptable behavior.
2. Reminding children of behavior expectations by giving clear, positive directions and guidance on the child's level of understanding. (e.g. "Walking feet" or "Blocks are for building" or "It's time to put away the dishes.")
3. Redirecting behavior by using positive statements ("Blocks are for building - try throwing this ball.")

4. Using brief, supervised separation from the activity or group. This allows for “cool-off” time. Older children decide as much as possible when they are ready to act appropriately. The time is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child’s age.
5. Challenging behavior will never be managed by taking away scheduled or promised physical activity time.
6. Teaching by example using fair and consistent rules. Discipline is relevant to the behavior involved.
7. Supervising, always aware of all activity, showing an attitude of understanding and firmness.
8. Helping children to understand why their behavior is unacceptable and letting them know what is acceptable in a given situation.
9. Helping to solve problems creatively when a conflict arises. Teachers help children verbalize the problem (e.g. “You both want that tricycle.”) Depending upon the child’s age, either the teachers suggest ideas or children will help to problem-solve (“I could get that other tricycle.”)
10. Using natural consequences whenever possible. (e.g. You threw the milk on the floor. Get a towel and wipe it up.”)
11. Communicating frequently with parents to discuss areas of concern, unusual behavior, common patterns, and strategies.

According to DFPS regulations, 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 an 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 with the door closed
9. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child’s age.

Although Trinity CDC does not expect to have consistent discipline problems, it is a possibility upon occasion. If difficult discipline problems arise, they will first be handled by the classroom teacher, then by the Director. If the staff determines that it would be beneficial to the child or the center, parents will be requested to make an appointment for a conference with the teacher (and perhaps the Director) to discuss the situation. The purpose of the conference is for TCDC staff and parents to share information,

observations and suggestions about the child's behavior and problem solving together.

Trinity CDC will make every effort to understand the cultural context of the family when making decisions regarding a child. However, there may be times when we feel it is in the best interest of the child to consult with experts regarding the child's behavior or social/emotional state. We have access to any community resources to help families and we reserve the right to require observation, evaluation, and/or therapy by a trained professional for the continued enrollment of a child in need.

Unusual behavior exhibited by a student may be related to events or experiences outside the center. Parents are encouraged to share their concerns with the center staff and to keep them informed about situations (family deaths, major changes to routines, etc.) that might affect the student's attitude or behavior temporarily, and which might require special consideration. If disruptive behavior continues after conferences and other attempts to resolve the problems are unsuccessful, the child may need to be removed from the classroom setting. A child may be dismissed from the center if his or her presence is determined to be detrimental to the child, to other children, or to the best interest of the center. If the center dismisses a child, the parents are no longer obligated to pay the tuition fees.

Parking

There usually is room for at least 3 vehicles directly in front of the center on the street, which are reserved for teachers. Families may park on the street along Westminster, or briefly at the Library next door. Please do not park beyond the sign that says "No Parking" because the City has been known to ticket people. You may briefly pull into the circular drive for drop off/pick-up but we ask that you pull up all the way on the righthand side so that you do not block it. We want people to be able to drive through between the 2 rows of parked cars. For the health and safety of the children, we ask that vehicles do not idle in parking areas, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat/cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.

Safety

Our premises are inspected annually by the Fire Marshall, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the City of Austin Health and Sanitation Department, and by representatives of Texas Workforce Child Care Services. Fire drills are held once a month, and severe weather (shelter in place) and lockdown drills are completed quarterly to help the children and staff practice emergency procedures.

If classes and administrative staff are all on the playground, you may find our front door locked. Please come through the second chain link gate to find your children in

the afternoon if that happens. All classrooms are locked from the exterior, so please ring the doorbell to gain access.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Our plan is designed to ensure the safety of children during a fire, weather, or other emergency requiring evacuation or relocation of the children. We practice fire drills monthly and have severe weather, lockdown and shelter in place drills once every month. When there are fire drills, we follow the evacuation and relocation diagram that is posted in every classroom.

We have shelter in place/severe weather and lockdown drills quarterly as required by Child Care Regulation. If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Director.

In case of a gas explosion or hazardous material spill, we will wait for emergency response teams to transport us. We would go to the Windsor Park Library next door, Hank's Restaurant, or to any other location designated by the City of Austin Office of Emergency Management. In all instances, as soon as possible, the administration will send a message via Brightwheel with a text alert to let them know where the children have been relocated. Please ensure that your contact information is up-to-date at all times in the Brightwheel app.

Enrollment Policies

Enrollment in our program is based on available space without regard to race, sex, creed, income level, or religion. We operate with a waiting list. After visiting the center and talking with the Director, when a family decides that they want to enroll their child in our center, a registration fee must be paid. When there is space available, the family will be notified and arrangements will be made regarding the first day of enrollment. Children and parents are encouraged to visit at least once, and as many times as desired to familiarize the child with the setting and the people.

On or before the first day of admission, parents must fill out and turn in all required paperwork including Admission Information, Enrollment Agreement, Emergency Authorization, Health Statement, Immunizations. Parents can update all Admission Information such as phone numbers and addresses when such information changes.

Families are provided with this Family Handbook, which includes all of Trinity CDC's operational policies and procedures. When a policy is changed by the Board of Directors, parents will be notified via Brightwheel with any updated policies. Parents must sign the updated policy acknowledgement and this form will be kept in the child's records.

Withdrawal, Suspension and Expulsion Policies

When families choose to withdraw their child from Trinity, they are expected to give two weeks' notice in writing (via Brightwheel, email, or a written note) before withdrawing their child. Failure to give notice will result in the family being responsible for two weeks of tuition.

In the rare event that a child/family member's behavior causes an unsafe situation for the TCDC community, the Director has the authority to suspend care for a period of time. Examples include, but are not limited to, excessive aggression, verbal abuse, or repeated violations of TCDC written policies outlined in the TCDC Family Handbook. However, a director may always retain the right to dis-enroll/expel a child when that is in the best interest of the child or other children at the center.

Steps that parents can take to prevent suspension or expulsion of their child:

1. Set your child up for success by ensuring that they have nutritious meals and plenty of sleep at night, as well as predictable routines.
2. Ensure that your child receives routine medical and dental care, as well as visits to address potential health issues that may contribute to disruptive behavior, such as mouth pain, ear infections, or developmental differences.
3. Communicate regularly with your child's teacher and/or the Director about any concerns or life events that may be impacting your child's behavior (Ex: parent moving out, a change in living arrangements, etc.).
4. Attend a parent teacher conference, either at the request of your child's teacher/Director or the family.
5. Follow up with recommendations, such as developmental screenings or referrals to providers with knowledge and expertise in the field of child development, such as Play Therapy, Speech Therapy, or a developmental assessment through Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) for children ages 0-3 or the local school district for children aged three and up.
6. Reinforce classroom learning at home, paying special attention to ensure that the child hears consistent language (Ex: "mouths are for eating, not biting.") across all settings. Early childhood is a critical time for a child's development, and it is essential that families and schools work together to teach safe, lifelong skills.

Family Participation (Procedures for visiting, observing, and for participating)

During morning drop-off, families must bring their child to the inner gate inside the

playground area, where a staff member will be present to greet the child. Parents must sign their child in using the Brightwheel App at the time of arrival. If no staff member is present at the inner gate, parents are asked to walk their child to their classroom door and knock so the teacher can receive the child at the door.

During pick-up, parents and guardians should arrive at the inner gate inside the playground area or proceed to the designated classroom door if children are indoors. Children must be signed out through the Brightwheel App at the time of departure. Only individuals listed on the child's authorized pick-up list will be allowed to pick up the child, and staff may request to verify a photo ID. Parents must ensure that all gates and doors are securely closed behind them.

We believe that parents are indeed the child's first and most important teacher. We also recognize the fact that children do not come with instruction manuals. We do everything in our power to work with families in meeting each individual child's needs. We aim to strengthen the role of the family in whatever ways we can and welcome ideas from family members as to how we can best achieve teamwork, open communication, and ultimately success for the child.

Parents are encouraged to take a few minutes at the beginning of the day to give needed information to the teacher when they bring the children. Establishing a consistent pattern is helpful for the children. You may want to put their breakfast on the table and give them a big hug. You may choose to play on the floor for a few minutes or read a book. The most important thing is to reassure your child when you will be back and to tell him/her goodbye. This unhurried manner of leaving your children makes for a better day for everyone.

Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time. You do not have to secure prior approval. Because the youngest children can be very sensitive to changes in their routines, parents are encouraged to observe from a window or from a distance. Spending direct time with your child and their class often works best at the end of the day for these smaller children. Parents of the older children are encouraged to eat lunch with them or the library.

Other activities that families may participate in are:

- ★ Reading all communication from TCDC
- ★ Helping in the classroom by sharing a hobby or professional skill, etc.
- ★ Attending our semi-annual Family Picnics
- ★ Attending orientation and parent meetings
- ★ Helping at workdays to spruce up the playground or classrooms
- ★ Planning and participating in our yearly fundraisers (typically a yard sale in the

spring and Sharing with Santa in December)

- ★ Giving feedback to the teachers and Director, including filling out our regular surveys
- ★ Serving on the Board or its committees

TCDC encourages family involvement in all of its activities. That involvement makes our center a quality center that starts new parents on the road to effective parent participation for another 12 – 15 years and helps to build a real feeling of community for our most important resources – the children!

Family Engagement Opportunities:

- ★ Coffee with the Director: August, November, February, and May
- ★ Parent Work Day: July/August
- ★ Back-to-School Open House: September
- ★ Yard Sale: September/October
- ★ Fall Family Picnic: October
- ★ Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences: November
- ★ Holiday Celebration and Sharing with Santa: December
- ★ Parent Work Day: February, in conjunction with United Way's Day of Service
- ★ Spring Celebration and Egg Hunt: April
- ★ Spring Family Picnic: May
- ★ Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences: May
- ★ 4th of July Celebration: July

Birthdays and Holidays

The philosophy concerning holidays and birthday celebrations at TCDC is:

- to foster a sense of community, family, and togetherness
- to provide a stress free environment for children and adults
- to provide fun and help mark time for children
- To provide information about holidays & plan activities in a developmentally appropriate, secular manner that respects every family's culture
- To provide enrichment opportunities and joyful memories for children

If you would like to send lunch and/or a special treat for your child to celebrate their birthday or another special occasion, such as adoption day, please check with your child's teacher via Brightwheel messaging so that we can ensure that items sent are commercially prepared (only store bought items are allowed) and free of any allergens that may affect another child in the class.

Book Orders

Periodically we send a link via Brightwheel for order forms from book clubs. This is an

optional service and an inexpensive way for you to build your home library. We receive free books for our Center with each order.

Clothing

Clothing which is removable (sweaters, caps, etc.) should be labeled with a child's name. Comfortable play clothes are best for school. We try to use cover ups for our "messy" work, but sometimes accidents happen. Therefore, we ask that your child not wear something that would upset you if it got dirt or paint on it.

For safety purposes, flip flops may NOT be worn. Children should wear properly fitting, closed-toed shoes appropriate for indoor and outdoor play. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes with a back are best for climbing and running. Likewise, jewelry is often not appropriate for our child-oriented activities; it is best left at home. TCDC is not responsible for lost or stolen items from home.

Every child should have at least one seasonally appropriate change of clothing at school. Younger children who tend to have more bathroom accidents should have several changes of underwear and clothing. Bathroom accidents or spills can happen to anyone, and children handle it best when they have a change of their own clothing. All clothing should be labeled with the child's name to help avoid loss and confusion.

Confidentiality

We strive to ensure confidentiality for our children and families. Student information and results of screenings and assessments are confidential and shared only with parents and teachers who have direct contact with the child. Results may be shared with consultants when parents have given written permission.

We work with parents to help them see the need for staff to know of special circumstances in a child's life because these can affect our dealings and knowledge for working with the child. When information is shared, speculation is avoided; facts are stated. If in doubt about whether to share information or how to share information, please discuss this with the Director.

All parents give written permission at admission for health information (screenings, tests, diagnoses, and treatments and recommendations) to be shared with members of the teaching staff who are assigned responsibility for that child's care and education. This also includes TCDC's health consultant and other visiting regulatory agencies if necessary.

We strive to maintain confidentiality and the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share

confidential information with regulatory agencies and individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest.

Gang-Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

Items from Home

Because young children often find sharing of personal items difficult and because there is a potential for damage or loss, children are encouraged to leave treasured possessions and toys at home. "Security objects" such as stuffed animals or blankets are sometimes needed to facilitate the transition from home to school. In the event your child does bring an object from home, the toy or object will remain in his/her cubby or special place provided by the teacher. Parents should not allow items to come which are irreplaceable. There may be days when the teacher will ask for particular items (e.g. round items for circle week; Teddy Bears for the Teddy Bear picnic, etc.). Books are welcome almost any day, as long as their main theme is NOT violence. Please label all items so that they can be returned home safely.

Grievance Policy

Trinity aims to work side-by-side with parents and families to support early childhood development, and ensure that we are exceeding Minimum Standards. You may find yourself displeased with something that has happened at our center. Families are encouraged to ask questions or clarify at any time, and we will work together to negotiate difficulties. Families may raise issues by phone call, Brightwheel messaging (there's an "Admin only" feature for privacy), or face-to-face conversations. The Director's door is always open.

If your concerns have not been satisfactorily addressed, we ask that families follow a chain of command approach by first bringing up concerns with your child's teacher, then the Director, then the Governing Board of Directors or Parent Representative, then Child Care Regulation. Making a report to Child Care Regulation should be a last resort after attempting to resolve any concerns, however families may make a report at any time without any concern about retaliation.

Benefits of Outdoor Play & Physical Activity

We believe that physical activity and outdoor play is essential for children to explore, develop social skills, and strengthen their physical abilities. At Trinity CDC, we are dedicated to offering children ample opportunities for active play, both indoors and outdoors, to support their physical growth, motor skills, and overall well-being. At Trinity CDC, we see the outdoors as an extension of the classroom, where children can continue to learn, discover,

and grow in a natural setting. Children of all ages spend a minimum of two hours engaged in outdoor play and physical development each day. Outdoor play and physical activity support:

- Gross motor skill development
- Fine motor skill development
- Social-emotional growth through cooperative play
- Cognitive growth through exploration, observation, and problem-solving
- Stress reduction and overall physical wellness

Outdoor and Indoor Equipment

A variety of play equipment (balls, jump ropes, tricycles, etc.) is provided, in good condition, both indoors and outdoors. Other things include steppers, books, blocks, musical instruments and dress up clothing.

Duration of Physical Activity

Our staff aims to give enrolled children daily opportunities to engage in age-appropriate physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. We believe that outdoor play is important, even in cold weather. Please dress your child accordingly. Layers that can be removed or added as necessary are very helpful in autumn and spring. All items such as jackets, gloves, and hats should be labeled. In the hot Texas summertime, all children have the opportunity to play in the shade but when children do play in the sun, they should wear sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher.

Children will have at least 90+ minutes daily, weather permitting. Children are allowed to play outdoors 3 or more times a day. Additional structured and unstructured active movement opportunities are incorporated indoors for a minimum of 30 minutes on a daily basis. Throughout the day, we look for opportunities to keep children moving and limit the amount of time they remain seated.

Extreme Weather and Air Quality

The following criteria will be used to determine when extreme weather conditions pose a significant health risk that prohibits or limits outdoor play:

- The teachers/Director will receive alerts from the local weather regarding extreme conditions, and will ensure that children stay indoors if necessary, or restrict the amount of time spent outdoors.
- The CDC, in conjunction with NOAA and the EPA, has a helpful tool to determine if it is too hot/cold and air quality safety for the children to play outdoors:
 - <https://ephrtracking.cdc.gov/Applications/HeatRisk/>.
 - TCDC will keep children indoors if the weather and/or air quality is considered “Major” or “Extreme.”

Air Quality: TCDC staff will attempt to protect children and adults from exposure to high levels of air pollution from smog or heavy traffic by limiting outdoor and physical activity as a precaution during ozone or other air pollution alerts. Between June and October, we will check the local news and weather app daily. If there is an Ozone Action Day Alert, we will restrict the amount of time children are outside to no more than 30 minutes at a time.

Plan for Physical Activity in Extreme Weather

During heavy rain, icy conditions, poor air quality, or dangerous temperatures, children will stay indoors but will still receive the same total amount of physical activity time. TCDC teachers create “bad weather” plans to ensure physical activity occurs on days when extreme weather conditions prohibit or limit outdoor play, with indoor activities that include gross motor activities. Activities for these situations can include:

- Dance and movement parties
- Indoor games
- Yoga, stretching, and mindfulness activities
- Active storytelling

Sunscreen and Insect Protection

Parents are asked to put sunscreen on their children in the morning, and the teachers will reapply it to all children whose parents provide sunscreen. Insect repellent may also be brought and applied by teachers as needed when going outside, with a family permission note. If you opt out of applying sunscreen and/or bug spray, you do not have to turn in the permission form. Sunscreen and bug spray must be labelled with your child’s first name and last initial.

Water Play

We have sensory tables and water tables year round and sprinkler activities in the summertime. All teachers receive annual training on Water Safety through the American Red Cross. In the enrollment agreement, you can give permission for participation in these activities. Teachers like to provide water play for children. Most of the time this is planned for the sensory tables, either in the classrooms or outside. In some instances during summertime messy days, we may use a sprinkler or put water in sand. All precautions will be taken to ensure children’s health and well-being. Parents must give permission for children to participate in any water activity by signing the Water Activities Permission box on the Application Information Form.

Screen Time and Technology Use Policy

In alignment with NAEYC guidelines and Texas Minimum Standards, our center follows developmentally appropriate practices regarding the use of screen time and technology in the classroom. Screen media (including TVs, tablets, computers, and

smart boards) is not permitted for children under 2 years of age. For children ages 2 to 5, screen time is limited to no more than 20 minutes per day and must be used intentionally to support educational goals. All technology use should be purposeful, age-appropriate, and integrated into the curriculum in a way that enhances not replaces hands-on learning and play.

Required annual training for employees and volunteers

Each staff member will receive a minimum of thirty (30) hours of annual training not including First Aid and CPR during each year of employment. The Director will receive at least 36 annual training hours including a minimum of six (6) hours in program administration, management, and supervision. Trinity CDC is closed for a total of four days for designated Professional Development days, including attending at least one annual conference for early childhood educators.

The Board of Directors

The Center is operated under the auspices of the Trinity Child Development Center Board. The Board is composed of five to ten members from the community and parent representatives. The Director is an ex-officio member.

The Board sets the school calendar, tuition rates, oversees financial matters, establishes policies, and hires and evaluates the Director. Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate in the work of the TCDC Board of Directors by serving on the Board, and/or one of the committees. You can email the Board at board@trinitycdc.org

Contact Us

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