

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Centers

OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES &

PARENT HANDBOOK

FGCDC - Administrator List

#1 - 3331 Idalia Avenue, El Paso, Texas 79930

Director #1 - (915) 207-0189 - Aide Martinez (Ms. Aide)

Main Line - (915) 219-8607

#2 - 4910 Dyer Street, El Paso, Texas 79930

Program Director #2 - (915) 355-7716 - Itzel Bussell (Ms. Itzel)

Administrative Director #2 - (915) 353-0102 - Valentina Aguilar (Ms. Valentina)

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Centers believe that early childhood programs should be filled with fun, warmth, security, education, exploration, and discovery. Thank you for choosing us as your partner in educating our children!

Mission Statement

At FG CDC, we believe every child is unique, valuable, and full of potential. Inspired by the work of Jean Piaget, we understand that children learn best through hands-on experiences, exploration, and active engagement with the world around them.

We believe children are like flowers; when given the right support, attention, and care, they grow and thrive in their own time. Our program is designed to support each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development while respecting their individual pace of learning.

We provide a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment where children feel encouraged to explore, create, and build confidence. We are committed to building strong relationships with families through open communication and meaningful involvement.

Our goal is to care for every child with the same love, patience, and dedication that we would give our own.

Philosophy

We believe children are naturally curious and ready to learn from birth. Guided by the principles of Jean Piaget, we recognize that children learn best by doing, through play, exploration, and hands-on experiences.

Just like flowers, each child grows at their own pace. With the right environment, guidance, and encouragement, every child can develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed.

We strive to create a learning environment that is:

- Safe, nurturing, and welcoming
- Engaging and hands-on
- Supportive of each child's individual development
- Respectful of all cultures, families, and backgrounds

We believe:

- Children learn through relationships with caregivers, peers, and their environment
- Development happens at different rates for every child
- Learning is connected across all areas of growth
- Family involvement is essential to a child's success

Our role is to guide, support, and encourage children as they explore their world and build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Enrollment Requirements

Before your child can be officially enrolled in our Flowers in The Garden Child Development Centers you must complete our Enrollment Forms and provide documents. **(Please see pg. 10 and 11 - Enrollment Forms and Policy Change Notification 746.501 a(13))**

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats



*Spaces will not be held by verbal contract, registration through email as well as fee and 1st week deposit must be paid in order for a spot to be held for you and your child. We do require that the parent/guardian and their child(ren) visit our center prior to enrollment. This process allows your child(ren) to become more familiar with our center and staff. This only applies to private pay parents.

Pre-Enrollment Screening Policy

At FG CDC, we want to make sure our center is the right fit for every child. To do this, we have a pre-enrollment screening process. This helps us understand each child's needs and ensures we can provide the best care and support.

Before a child is enrolled, we will:

- Meet with parents to talk about the child's development, medical needs, behavior, and any special accommodations.
- Observe the child in the classroom, if needed, to see how they interact and adjust.
- Review the child's health records, including immunization records and any medical conditions.
- Go over our policies and expectations with parents to make sure we all understand how our program works.
- Parents/guardians must disclose any **court orders, custody arrangements, protective orders, CPS safety plans, or other legal documents** that affect the child's care, custody, or release.

If we find that our program may not be the best fit for a child, we will do our best to provide recommendations for other options. Our goal is to make sure every child is in a place where they can thrive and receive high-quality care.

Reference Check Policy

FG CDC may check references before enrolling a child to make sure our program is a good match for the family. This helps us create a positive and supportive environment for all children, parents, and staff.

As part of this process, we may:

- Contact previous childcare providers to ask about attendance, behavior, and family involvement.
- Speak with other references who can share insights about the family's childcare experience.

If the reference check raises concerns that could affect our center's environment, **FG CDC reserves the right to deny enrollment, suspend services, or terminate care when the center determines enrollment or continued care is not appropriate or feasible, subject to applicable federal and state law and child-care licensing requirements.**

Dress Code, Clothing, & Personal Belongings

Children should come dressed in comfortable, season-appropriate clothing that can get dirty, since some activities we do daily are messy. Your child will have the opportunity to experience a variety of activities. Children will be using art materials, enjoying outside play, and self-feeding at times. ***Please do not bring your child/children wearing clothing or shoes that should not get dirty.***

Two (2) spare changes of clothes are required for all children in case of soiling of clothes. Children under the age of 3, and those who are potty-training are required to have at least ten (10) changes of clothing (including socks). **Please mark all personal items for easy identification**, such as coats, sweaters, gloves, blankets, etc. We want to keep your children happy and comfortable.

A separate set of indoor shoes is always required at the center for each child. Feet are required to always remain covered when indoors. These "indoor shoes" can be simply a pair of crocs from the dollar store, or even a separate set of sneakers if you wish. Indoor shoes also protect your child's feet in the event of a fire drill in the winter months/rainy days. ***No open-toed shoes!***

Please ensure that you have proper outerwear provided for your child so that they are comfortable (sweater or light jacket when it is chilly) and don't miss out on outdoor play. All children will go outside for outdoor play, weather permitting. If a child does not have proper outdoor apparel, they will have to remain indoors with another teacher/classroom. Look up Road to Success Association, they have clothes. ***(Please see Pg. 13 - Outdoor Time & Playground Safety Policy for more information on Outdoor Play)***

Children are not allowed to bring personal belongings such as toys from home. The Center is not and will not be responsible for any items brought from home, including jewelry. ****We will not replace lost articles****

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

We also ask for you to understand that sometimes we can lose items such as bottles, bottle caps and any other personal items because we are very busy during the day, however we try our very best not to lose any items. The teachers can have, depending on the age, anywhere from 4-10 kids at a time and it can be a bit difficult to keep everything in place, we just ask that you be graceful with us when it comes to clothing and personal items, if you have items that you do not want to lose, please **DO NOT SEND them**. We are not responsible for any items lost.

We will notify parents when their child is running low on supplies. If a parent fails to supply these items, the center will charge \$1.00 for each diaper, \$0.50 per wipe and formula will be provided if the child is enrolled in the food program.

Our center does not wash bottles or cups.

Photograph Policy

Pictures taken in the center will be for the enjoyment of the program participants, and for program promotion as needed. We will use the photos for their ProCare account, we will post pictures on Facebook as well as our ProCare account. Families are encouraged to bring family pictures so that the children can see them throughout the day and make the children feel comfortable.

Liability Insurance

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center #1

3331 Idalia Ave., El Paso, Texas 79930

We **DO** carry liability insurance and the information regarding our policy is posted on our Family Wall.

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center #2

4910 Dyer Street, El Paso, Texas 79930

We **DO** carry liability insurance and the information regarding our policy is posted on our Family Wall.

Hours of Care 746.501 a(1)

Flowers In The Garden Child Development Center #1

3331 Idalia Avenue - hours are as listed below:

Hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Monday – Sunday (Saturdays and Sundays are only as requested and if space is available) January - December

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center #2

4910 Dyer Street - hours are as listed below:

Hours of Operation are 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Monday-Friday

January-December

Both Centers will be closed on the following days. All tuition for the week must be paid in full.

- All Government holidays.
- Once a year we will close for Staff Development Day (Parents will be notified 4 weeks in advance)
- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day → Labor Day
- Good Friday → Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)
- Memorial Day → Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after
- 4th of July

Holidays that land on Saturday or Sunday will be observed on an alternative day or days during the week before or after the holiday. Anytime the center is closed a notice will be posted as a reminder. *Please note that we follow the EPISD Weather Alerts for any closures that may be necessary. (See Emergency Preparedness on Pg. 14 for more details.)*

Attendance Policy

Unfortunately, there are **no refunds or discounts** for days that your child does not attend the center. There are still costs associated with each childcare spot each day that unfortunately cannot be avoided if your child is not in attendance. If your child will not be attending the center due to illness or any other reason, please let someone at the center know as soon as possible, as well as the reason they will not be attending. This will prevent activities from being delayed. If a child receiving CCS assistance has five consecutive absences, FGCD will report the absences to CCS as required. Continued enrollment and eligibility will be handled in accordance with CCS requirements and FGCD attendance policies. If you pay privately and your child has five consecutive absences, your family will lose their spot at our center.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

No refunds on registration fees or tuition. Please notify us by 9:30 am if your child will not be attending. Please remember this policy is to protect the health and safety of our children and staff.

Arrival Sign-In & Departure Sign-Out and Procedure for the release of children 746.501 a(2)

Parents are required to sign in and out using ProCare upon arrival and departure. Every child must be signed in and out. As a result, no child will be released from the playground area without consent. Our responsibility begins when you place your child in the care of a staff member and ends when you take him/her from the care of a staff member.

Please do not allow your child to wander off unattended or leave the building ahead of you. The parking lot has many cars and children cannot be seen when vehicles are backing up. For safety purposes, only those listed on the enrollment forms as designated persons for pick up will be permitted to leave with your child/children.

If circumstances should arise for someone other than those on your list to pick up your child/children, you will need to email or text us. This is an absolute last option (*we prefer you update your authorized pick-up list!*):

FGCDC 1

3331 Idalia - Director - Ms. Aide - (915) 207-0189 - aide@flowerzinthegarden.com
Or Flowers #1 Main Line - (915) 219-8607

FGCDC 2

4910 Dyer Street - Program Director - Ms. Itzel - (915) 355-7716 - itzel@flowerzinthegarden.com
Or Administrative Director - Ms. Valentina - (915) 353-0102 - fgcdcadmin@flowerzinthegarden.com

In order to make that change please include the person's first and last name with a phone number. We will require a Valid ID for the identification of an individual we do not recognize. Please inform those you have designated to pick up your child of our pick-up policy. If they do not have a VALID ID, the child will not be released. **WE SOMETIMES SWITCH SUPERVISORS - ALWAYS HAVE YOUR ID WITH YOU AND ASK EMERGENCY CONTACTS TO HAVE THEIR IDs!**

*When dropping off your child, a quick drop-off will make their transition to our care more comfortable. Children tend to cry if the parent stays for too long. Parents can fill out an **AUTHORIZED PICK-UP CHANGE FORM** if they wish to change who can pick up their children. Children will not be allowed to leave unless we have it in writing. The administrator will verify the person's ID to release your child into their custody.

Child Custody

Without a court document or CPS letter, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. **We will not accept the responsibility of deciding** which parent/guardian has legal custody if there is no court documentation or CPS letter. We ask that families provide us with a copy of court documents/CPS letter stating the custody statements on who can pick up and who cannot etc. Once this has been turned in the changes cannot be undone until a new court document or CPS letter is turned in. **Existing court orders, protective orders, custody agreements, or CPS documentation affecting release of the child must be provided at enrollment. Any new or amended legal documents must be provided to FG CDC promptly after issuance.**

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center (FGCDC) understands that emergencies and unexpected delays may occasionally happen. However, all families are expected to pick up their child by their scheduled and agreed-upon pick-up time.

Children who remain at the center after their designated pick-up time require staff members to stay beyond scheduled work hours. Staff depend on families arriving on time so they may leave as scheduled and attend to their own personal and family responsibilities. Repeated late pick-ups place an unfair burden on staff and disrupt center operations.

A late pick-up fee of **\$1.00 per minute**, or portion thereof, will be charged **beginning immediately after the child's scheduled pick-up time**. Late fees must be paid promptly and may be added to the family's account balance.

Families are expected to consistently follow all pick-up times and center expectations. Ongoing or repeated late pick-ups will be considered a failure to follow center policies and procedures and may result in disciplinary action under the center's **Three Strike Policy**.

Under the Three Strike Policy:

- A strike may be issued for repeated late pick-ups or failure to comply with center policies.
- Strikes remain active for a period of six (6) months from the date issued.
- Upon receiving a third strike, the child will be disenrolled from the center.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

FGCDC will make reasonable efforts to communicate concerns with families before further action is taken. Parents are strongly encouraged to maintain open communication with the center regarding emergencies or unavoidable delays. Families are also encouraged to download and actively use the ProCare app, as much of the center's communication, notices, reminders, and documentation are shared through the app.

ILLNESS, EXCLUSION & RETURN-TO-CARE POLICY 746.501 a(3)

Flowers in the Garden (FGCDC) is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff. Children must be well enough to comfortably participate in the center's normal daily activities, including indoor and outdoor play.

FGCDC staff will observe children for signs and symptoms of illness throughout the day. If a child becomes ill while in care or meets the exclusion criteria below, the parent/guardian will be contacted and be required to arrange pick-up within one (1) hour of notification.

A Child Will Be Excluded from Care When:

- **Fever**
 - The child has a temperature of 100.4 °F or higher.
 - A child with a fever must remain out of care until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, unless otherwise directed in writing by a healthcare professional.
- **Diarrhea**
 - The child has two or more episodes of diarrhea, defined as: stools that are significantly more watery, loose, or more frequent than what is normal for that child.
 - The child may return when the diarrhea has been resolved and the child is able to participate normally in care.
 - A doctor's note may be required when diarrhea is accompanied by additional symptoms or when FG CDC determines medical clearance is necessary for safe return.
- **Vomiting**
 - The child has two or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-infectious condition.
 - The child may return when vomiting has resolved, the child can retain food and fluids, and the child is otherwise able to participate normally in care. FG CDC may require medical clearance when appropriate.
- **Other Symptoms or Conditions**
 - A child may also be excluded when experiencing:
 - Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, or untreated wheezing
 - A persistent or severe cough that interferes with normal activity
 - Unexplained rash, blisters, or open/oozing skin lesions
 - Red eyes accompanied by unusual or excessive discharge
 - Symptoms of a contagious or infectious illness
 - Head lice requiring treatment
 - Persistent or severe abdominal pain
 - Convulsions or seizure activity requiring medical attention
 - Any other symptoms that prevent the child from comfortably participating in normal activities or require a level of care and supervision that prevent staff from safely caring for the other children in the classroom.
- **Medication Used to Mask Symptoms**
 - Parents/guardians must not administer fever-reducing or other medication solely for the purpose of masking symptoms so that the child may attend care.
 - If FG CDC determines that a child's symptoms meet the exclusion criteria after arrival, the child will be excluded regardless of medication administered before arrival.
- **Parent/Guardian Pick-Up (For Exclusion Reasons)**
 - When a child must be excluded after being admitted for the day, FG CDC will contact the parent/guardian. The child must be picked up within one hour.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

- If the parent/guardian cannot be reached or cannot pick up the child, FGDCD will contact the authorized emergency contacts listed in the child's enrollment record.

Medications 746.501 a(4)

FGCDC does not routinely administer medication. Medication will only be administered when permitted under center policy and applicable licensing requirements. **Exception:** If a child has a recurring medical condition, such as asthma, allergic reactions, ADHD medication, rash/skin medicine, the child's parent or health care provider may sign a medication authorization form allowing Flowers in the Garden to administer the medication when symptoms occur for up to a 6-month period (updated form must be turned in every 6 months). The authorization must include information on symptoms to watch for.

Location of First Aid Kits

The first aid kit is located in the office - 3331 Idalia Avenue

The first aid kit is located in the office - 4910 Dyer Street

EpiPen Policy

If a child has been prescribed an EpiPen, the parent/guardian will provide an individual care plan for the child and a clearly labeled box containing two (2) EpiPens and any other prescribed medication to be kept in the office. The medication must be prescribed for the child by a doctor and be clearly labeled. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the EpiPens are within their expiration date. The care plan provided by the parent/guardian will provide a thorough guide to the use of an EpiPen for that individual child and should be followed accordingly. Staff will be required to attend yearly EpiPen training as long as there is a child or an adult at the center who has been prescribed an EpiPen.

In the event of a child showing signs of an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis, the child's INDIVIDUAL CARE PLAN should be followed. If an EpiPen is administered, all necessary paperwork must be completed, and signatures obtained as soon as possible. Whenever an EpiPen has been administered, *emergency services will be called*. An Incident Form will be completed, and the EpiPen box must be stapled to the Incident Form. Once an EpiPen has been administered, the time of administration and the type of EpiPen should be clearly written so as to be visible to all emergency personnel. If an EpiPen has been used, a child MUST NOT return to school until the EpiPen medication has been replaced and there are two (2) unexpired EpiPens for the child on site. We are unable to accept children who have been prescribed an EpiPen onto the premises without their medication. Children who have an expired EpiPen will also be unable to attend until we have been provided with two (2) unexpired EpiPens. Although we will try to remind parents when their child's EpiPen expires, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make sure that their child's EpiPen is not expired. The center will follow all applicable Texas Minimum Standards and medication administration requirements regarding emergency medications, documentation, storage, and staff training.

Allergies

If your child has any allergies, please indicate them on the application form and please bring a doctor's note so that we can place it in the child's file.

- If child is allergic or sensitive to a particular food, a physician's note is required, which must state which food(s) are to be avoided. In those cases, the identified foods will not be served.
- If we need to replace food such as milk, please have the doctor indicate which milk or replacement they can have.
 - Milk is a requirement of our Food Program. We need to know what substitute your child can have.
- A picture labeled with your child's name will be placed in the kitchen and classroom to help us avoid the allergen.

Injuries and Parent Notification 746.501 a(5 & 6)

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

The teacher will immediately advise the administrative staff. The administrative staff will determine the severity of the injury (i.e., scrapes, bumps, bruises, etc.) We will administer first aid and forward an accident report home with the person that picks up your child at the end of the day, the form must be signed and dated, however, we will also communicate through our ProCare app immediately after we have attended the situation to notify you. Please ensure that you have provided an email address with us, so we can send you a ProCare app link. The app is to keep constant communication with you, it's very important you download the app and log in constantly, we will also post lesson plans for you to view and pictures of your child's day.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

In case of a serious accident or injury, EMS (911) will be contacted first. Within the limits of their ability, the staff will administer first aid. We will make every attempt to contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the person you have indicated on the forms to make medical decisions for your child. If we cannot reach you, we will release your child into the custody of the emergency paramedics to transport your child for immediate medical care. An administrator or the Director will accompany the child until the parents/guardians have arrived. FG CDC will notify Child Care Regulation of serious injuries, illnesses, incidents, or other occurrences when notification is required by Texas Minimum Standards. Medical bills that may arise from an accident are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Discipline/Guidance/Quality Care Policy 746.501 a(7)

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR POLICY AND PROCEDURES

At Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center (FGCDC), all discipline and guidance practices are implemented in accordance with **Texas Minimum Standards** and are designed to promote each child's self-esteem, self-control, self-direction, and ability to manage conflicts constructively. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment that supports positive behavior and a lifelong love of learning. Children are guided to understand that their actions have logical and developmentally appropriate consequences and to develop self-discipline and constructive ways to manage conflicts.

When a child exhibits challenging behavior, **families will be informed of the incident**, and a behavioral report will be completed and shared through ProCare. Families will receive a copy of the Discipline and Guidance Policy for their records, with one copy provided to the family and one copy signed and returned to FG CDC when required. After review by both the family and teacher, appropriate interventions will be implemented. These may include additional classroom support, individualized strategies, and referrals to outside services, when appropriate. (**See Pg. 16 for information on the Referral Process**)

The Director and/or teachers **will maintain ongoing communication** with parents/guardians to express concerns, collaborate on strategies, and provide updates on the child's progress. FG CDC values a collaborative partnership with families to ensure consistency between the home and center environments. If challenging behaviors persist, the center may take additional steps as outlined in the **Escalation Procedures** below, including developing an individualized action plan, scheduling a parent/guardian conference, and, when necessary, suspending or terminating services in accordance with center policies.

All behavior guidance practices at FG CDC are:

- Individualized and consistent for each child
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding
- Directed toward teaching acceptable behavior and self-control
- Based on positive reinforcement and clear communication of expectations

Behavior Guidance Strategies

FG CDC utilizes the following developmentally appropriate and positive methods of discipline and guidance:

1. **Positive Reinforcement and Encouragement** - Staff use praise and encouragement to reinforce appropriate behaviors and build self-esteem, while minimizing focus on negative behaviors.
2. **Clear Expectations and Redirection** - Children are reminded daily of behavior expectations using clear, positive statements. When necessary, staff redirect children to appropriate alternative behaviors or activities.
3. **Problem-Solving and Emotional Support** - Teachers guide children in expressing their feelings, resolving conflicts, and developing appropriate social skills through modeling and discussion.
4. **Safe Spaces for Self-Regulation** - Designated areas are available in the classroom to allow children to calm themselves using developmentally appropriate tools and strategies.
5. **Limited, Supervised Separation** - When necessary, a brief, supervised separation from the group may be used.

This separation is:

- Appropriate to the child's age and development
 - Limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age
 - Used only for helping the child regain self-control
 - Always supervised by a caregiver
6. **Individualized Support Plans** - If challenging behaviors persist, an individualized plan will be developed in collaboration with teachers, parents/guardians, and specialists as needed.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

7. **Outside Resources and Referrals** - FG CDC may recommend or coordinate referrals to qualified professionals or support services when appropriate. (See Pg. 16 for information on the Referral Process)

Escalation Procedures

If challenging behaviors continue despite the implementation of the above strategies:

- The teacher will consult with the Director to develop an additional action plan.
- A conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, teacher, and Director to collaboratively address the behavior and determine next steps.
- Ongoing communication will continue to monitor progress and adjust interventions as needed.

If **all reasonable efforts have been exhausted** and the child continues to exhibit behaviors that pose a risk to themselves, other children, or staff, **and/or if parents/guardians are unwilling to participate** in the intervention process, FG CDC reserves the right to suspend or terminate services in accordance with center policies. Parents/guardians may also terminate services at any time by providing written notice.

Prohibited Practices

In accordance with Texas Minimum Standards, the following forms of discipline are strictly prohibited at FG CDC:

- Corporal punishment or physical discipline
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Denial of basic needs, including food, shelter, or rest
- Locked time-out rooms or unsupervised separation
- Discipline that is not related to the behavior or is excessive in duration
- Harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment
- Humiliation or shaming
- Use of mechanical restraints

All discipline must be constructive, appropriate to the child's age and development, and intended to teach and guide rather than punish.

EXPULSION POLICY 746.501 a(8)

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We will provide you with a challenging behavior form to inform you about the incident. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center:

IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.
- Parents threaten physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
- Parents exhibit verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse to staff. NO abuse is tolerated towards any staff or family members including physical as well.
- Failure to communicate in an appropriate manner.
- Failure to follow our policies and procedures.

CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Persistent behavior that creates a serious safety risk despite reasonable interventions.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

Prior to expulsion, a parent will be called, and correspondence will be sent home indicating what the problem is, and every effort will be made by both the center and the parent to correct the problem. If after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. Immediate suspension/termination may occur when continued care presents an immediate health or safety risk or when serious threatening or abusive conduct occurs. In other circumstances, FG CDC will make reasonable efforts to address the concern and provide notice when appropriate. We also have therapy service providers attend our program to give children their therapy services and we want to make sure you and your family can benefit from their amazing work. When FG CDC identifies persistent developmental, behavioral, safety, or functional concerns, the family may be required to participate in a conference and

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

cooperate with reasonable recommendations for evaluation, screening, referral, or development of an appropriate support plan. Failure to participate in the intervention process may result in suspension or termination of care when FGDCD determines it can no longer safely or appropriately meet the child's needs. You will be given two-weeks' notice. (See Pg. 16 for information on the Referral Process)

Disenrolling Children Procedure for Families

A two-week notice must be given and you are responsible to pay the two weeks whether the child attends or not, if you have a CCS contract, you must notify your caseworker of changes. The changes can be completed online on the CCS website or KinderConnect App and your monthly co-payment or balance must be at 0.00. Please send a message through ProCare with the following information:

Child's Name: The Date of withdrawal: Reason Before Switching: (if you're comfortable doing so)
Name: Date:

Safe Sleep and SIDS 746.501 a(9)

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

At our child care center, we follow safe sleep practices for infants in accordance with Texas regulations. Infants are always placed on their backs to sleep unless we have a completed Form 3019, *Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation*, signed by the child's healthcare provider [Section 746.2427]. Infants must sleep in cribs that meet federal safety standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). These cribs must include a firm mattress with a tight-fitting sheet [Section 746.2409].

For infants younger than 12 months old, the crib or play yard should be bare, except for the fitted sheet and a mattress cover or protector. We do not place any soft or loose bedding in the crib, such as blankets, quilts, comforters, pillows, bumper pads, liners, sleep positioning devices, stuffed animals, or any other soft objects [Section 746.2415(b)]. Additionally, we ensure that an infant's head, face, and crib remain uncovered at all times. This includes keeping items like blankets, linens, and clothing out of the crib [Section 746.2429].

Sleep positioning devices such as wedges or infant positioners are not allowed, as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has found no evidence supporting their safety, and they may actually increase the risk of suffocation [Section 746.2415(b)]. To keep infants comfortable, we ensure that sleep areas are well-ventilated and kept at a temperature that would feel comfortable to a lightly clothed adult [Section 746.3407(10)]. If extra warmth is needed, we use safe sleep clothing like sleepers or footed pajamas instead of blankets [Section 746.2415(b)].

Each infant is placed to sleep alone in their own crib [Section 746.2405]. While pacifiers are allowed, they must not be attached to the infant's clothing or to stuffed animals, and cannot be secured with cords or strings due to the risk of strangulation [Sections 746.2415(b) and 746.2401(6)].

If a child arrives asleep in a car seat or falls asleep in a device like a swing or bouncy chair, we will move the infant to a crib right away unless we have Form 3019 on file signed by the child's healthcare provider [Section 746.2426].

Our facility is smoke-free at all times, which means that smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes or vaporizers, is not allowed anywhere on the premises [Section 746.3703(d)].

We actively supervise all sleeping infants by both sight and sound [Section 746.2403]. Once an infant can roll both ways, we will continue to place them on their back to sleep, but we will allow them to move into their preferred sleep position afterward [Section 746.2427]. Throughout the day, awake infants will be given supervised "tummy time" multiple times to help develop their muscles and support healthy growth [Section 746.2427]. Lastly, swaddling is not allowed during sleep or rest unless we have a signed Form 3019 from the child's healthcare provider [Section 746.2428].

Meals 746.501 a(10)

The Center serves a morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack and dinner to all children who are present at the time of service. Meals are served at no extra charge. ***NO OUTSIDE FOOD IS ALLOWED** at time of drop off, such as/not limited to cookies, donuts, candy etc. ***apart from meals due to a food allergy or a pre-established parent preference on meals** (please see below at the top of Pg. 10)

All three meals strive to meet the **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)** guidelines for nutritious, appropriate foods for young children. Our menus, kitchen facilities, and cooking procedures also follow their guidelines. Our kitchen is inspected regularly by the local Health Department.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

We welcome menu suggestions. However, we are NOT able to prepare separate meals for children based on their preferences. All children will be served the same meal, apart from food allergies (**See Pg. 6 for allergies policy**)

If your child will not be eating the Center's food, families must provide acceptable substitutions if desired. Please notify the Director/ Other Administrator upon enrollment if this applies to your child. These are to be served during the regular meal times at the center. Please ensure that the meal is nutritious. You may ask us for guidance. Do not include foods that will cause problems in the classroom, such as chips, candy, gum, sweets, or soda.

Infants are served whenever they are hungry or according to feeding instructions. All other children eat their meals together with their classmates. We will not "hold" meals for your child. If your child is not at the Center when a meal is served, he/she will not receive that meal. Please plan for your child to be fed prior to arrival if it is after meal service.

Parents of infants must send 5-7 clean bottles DAILY. Please make sure to ALWAYS clean bottles.

Breakfast: 6-8am AM Snack: 9-10am Lunch: 11am-1pm PM Snack: 2-3pm Supper: 4-5:30pm
At-Risk Supper: 3:30pm-5:30pm At-Risk Snack: 5:30-6:30pm

All menu changes will be posted on the "Parents Need to Know" board and ProCare.

Nutrition Education and Procedures:

- Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach
- Education on food allergies and precautions
- Outside food is commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen inspected by local health officials.
- We provide healthy options and follow CACFP guidelines
- Please check out our menu on ProCare

Immunizations 746.501 a(11)

Immunizations are required of all children attending a childcare center in the state of Texas. We understand that there may sometimes be a medical reason not to give an immunization at the scheduled time. However, unless we have a written note signed by your child's physician, we are not allowed to make any exceptions. If we do not comply with this requirement, we could lose our state license. We are required to obtain a copy of the child's immunization record by the date of admission as specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Provided immunization records must include the following:

- Child's name/birth date • Number of doses/vaccine type
- Month, Day, and Year the child received vaccination.
- The signature or stamp of the physician or other health care professional who administered the vaccine unless it is generated from an electronic health record system.
- TB testing is not required by the county for children to attend the Center.

746.501 a(11)

IMPORTANT: You must show proof of the appropriate immunizations BEFORE your child can attend our Center. Your physician must sign an Immunization Form, or the exemption form must be turned in notarized.

Exception: Exceptions for immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services rules in 25 TAC§ 97.62 (relating to Exclusions from Compliance).

You must contact the local health department to find out what you must provide to us in lieu of the immunization record.

Vision and hearing screening 746.501 a(12)

Every child is required to have a vision and hearing screening yearly from 4 years old onward. This can be done by your child's physician. We must have a current record of this screening for your child to be in care. As well as a signed statement that the child's screening records are current and on file. (**This doesn't apply to school age students enrolled in a school district.**)

Enrollment Forms and Policy Change Notification 746.501 a(13)

These policies are reviewed at least annually and revised as needed to remain consistent with applicable Texas Child Care Regulation requirements. If policies or procedures change, we will provide timely written notice to parents. An additional copy will be posted on the "Parents Need to Know" board.

Parents are responsible for completing enrollment forms prior to care:

- Childcare contract and application (**Administrative Packet**) (all information required according to regulation 746.605)

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

- Immunization records/affidavit must be turned in before admission into the program.
- Health statement or doctor recommendations (will be kept for three months after a healthcare professional has indicated specialized medical attention) and must be turned in before admission into the program.
- Medication administration records (if applicable) (will be kept for three months after administering medication and will require update often, please bring doctor's note as well)
- Signed consent forms (All that are applicable)
- Registration Fee (see below) and the first week of care must also be paid in advance

The Registration Form contains all the general information needed to enroll your child at the center. Some of the information is required by the **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Child Care Regulation (CCR)**, which licenses our facility. All the information is essential to the well-being and safety of your child. You must completely fill in all areas of the form on both pages, sign, and return it to the Center at the time of enrollment. We will be sending you the application through email. Please make sure you give us a current email address and phone numbers so that we can send you your own personal link for ProCare. Remember it must be one code per person, this is to ensure we know exactly who checked your child in or out.

The Goal-Setting Information Form asks several detailed questions about your child's background and interests. It is used by the teachers to get to know their children and understand their needs as well as for children entering an infant or toddler classroom. This form will also include an area for you to place goals for your child this year or if you would like information on activities to do at home with your child, inform us and we would be more than happy to help!

The Health Form includes questions about your child's immunizations, disease history, and medical needs. If you have any additional medical concerns, please talk to your child's teacher or one of the Center staff. This form must be signed by your child's physician. We must have this form signed and on file prior to your child's enrollment in the Center. With this form, we also need a copy of your child's immunization records.

Tuition

Tuition is based on the facilities and staffing that we must have available in order to care properly for your child. Therefore, if your child does not attend for any reason, tuition is NOT reduced. No reduction is given for unexpected closings, holidays, severe weather closings, absences, absences due to illness, vacations, or domestic problems. Tuition is payable in advance. Parents may pay for the entire month, or they may pay ½ of the month's tuition on the 1st and pay the other ½ by the 15th. If you choose to pay weekly, payments are due every Friday. Payments are considered late on the 1st working day after the due date.

Hours and Fees

We make every effort to keep tuition and fees affordable. However, when our costs rise, we are sometimes forced to pass along the increase to our families. When tuition increases, we will provide timely notice to parents. Please see contract in enrollment packet.

Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center 1 and 2 Tuition Rates

Please see the contract located in the enrollment form for the full-time/part-time rates for each location.

Full-time tuition: up to 50 hours a week

Part-time tuition: under 25 hours a week

**Hours over 50 a week will be charged at \$10.75 an hour.

**Hours over 25 a week will be charged at a full-time rate.

In addition to tuition, the Center has the following required fees:

- At the time of enrollment, the **yearly non-refundable registration fee of \$150.00** is required. Also, the Center has the following fees which are incurred in certain situations:
- A returned check fee of \$25.00 is assessed for every check or electronic withdrawal returned by your bank. In addition, if the return causes your payment to be late, you are also assessed the appropriate late payment fee.
- Paying late will result in a weekly charge of \$15.00 per week until the balance is paid in full.
- If payments exceed \$500.00, you are subject to withdrawal from services, a two-week notice will be given.

Tax Statement

A statement will be provided before January 31st of each year for those who plan to expense childcare when filing taxes with the IRS. Please make arrangements to pick up these forms; they will not be mailed.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

Transportation Policy 746.501 a(14)

All children will be placed in appropriate car seats according to their age and weight. We will also have a transportation policy to follow. The number of children transported will never exceed the vehicle's designated seating capacity, and each child will use the appropriate seat belt or child passenger safety restraint as required. Face-to-name roll call will be taken at the time of pick-up and drop-off, as well as arrival to the center to ensure that all children have been accounted for before leaving the vehicle unattended, a checklist checked by two different people will also be completed so that they check both in and under each seat to check for children that may be sleeping or hiding. Unloading and loading will be done in a safe location such as a parking lot or curbside of the vehicle. No children will ever cross a street alone. If an emergency arises, caregivers will follow our transportation policy.

Please remember that our pick-up times are subject to change, however we will keep you or the school notified if possible. Please talk with your child about never leaving the designated pick-up area. For school-age transportation, FG CDC's responsibility begins when the child is released by the school into FG CDC staff's care. If a **child is not present** at the designated pick-up time, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately through our ProCare app. FG CDC is not required to return to the school after the vehicle has departed. Any return pick-up will be at the driver's discretion based on the transportation route, schedule, and the safe transportation of all children. If the school releases a child independently before the child is transferred to FG CDC staff, FG CDC has not assumed care or supervision of the child. Please notify us if your child will not need to be picked up. Seat belts and proper car seating will be used, please remember if your child is not sitting down or is not keeping their seatbelt fastened, we will notify you and during the second time it occurs, we will disenroll from our transportation list, and the only care we will provide is at the location, therefore you must seek other transportation from the school to our Center.

Water Activities 746.501 a(15)

During the warmer months, Flowers in the Garden may offer optional water days in which children play in the wading pool outside on the playground. Parents who wish for their children to participate will need to sign a permission form that includes their sunscreen preference. However, if the weather permits and is warm enough, the wading pool will be on-site and will be filled with an age-appropriate amount of water. For infants and toddlers, the water level will not exceed 1 inch of water depth. Teachers will always supervise children and never leave children unattended when children are in the wading pool. The pool will be drained, sanitized, and stored away when not in use. Per Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), if your child has any physical, health, behavioral or other condition that would put them at risk while swimming, then they **MUST** wear a life jacket at the swimming pool.

Field Trip Policy 746.501 a(16)

The center will take the children off-premises for walks or field trips. Parents will be notified ahead of time and a consent form will be given to be signed and dated and placed in the child's file. Staff ratios will be maintained on all walks or field trips. Staff members and children will wear matching shirts when going out (**\$25.00 per T-shirt**). First aid kits and emergency cards will be brought on every field trip. At least one staff member present with children must hold a current valid CPR first aid certificate. Access to a working telephone must be available within a 5-minute walking distance. An emergency contact binder will be taken on every trip. Every staff member will be expected to know the binder and its content. An emergency plan will include all emergency numbers and what actions must be taken in case of an emergency.

No-Pet Policy 746.501 a(17)

We do not have any pets in our Center, and we ask that no outside pets be brought onto or near the premises during hours of operation.

Curriculum 746.501 a(18) (A-F)

Play in a child's life is particularly important. It teaches children many skills and experiences to grow as a whole. Play gives children open opportunities to explore the world by meeting their intellectual, emotional, social, language, and physical needs. Our program incorporates a balance of structured, adult-directed activities and provides choices for children to learn according to their abilities. Our curriculum Frog Street is based on a children's interests, and throughout the day, the children's cognitive, motor, social, and emotional development needs are met through interactions, hands-on activities, and a sense of freedom of choice. Children will be given many opportunities to play outdoors and enjoy activities that promote gross motor skills. Children will dance and express themselves through music. We will have music time inside and outside! Children will paint, draw, and read books outdoors and indoors with teachers. Lesson planning will be done every week to ensure teachers have a plan to follow and to promote the child's development! STEM toys will be available for children to learn and build concepts. The curriculum includes dramatic play, creative art activities, music, science activities, block play, work at home activities, sensory experiences, the

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

celebration of birthdays, and holidays. Children will be exposed to shapes, colors, numbers, and letters through developmentally appropriate activities taught using small group instruction. For after-school children, we will be using a curriculum and other resources where teachers will do STEM activities and so much more!

OUTDOOR TIME & PLAYGROUND SAFETY POLICY

Children will be provided regular opportunities for outdoor play each day, weather permitting, consistent with their age, developmental needs, length of time in care, and applicable Minimum Standards. We will offer children a variety of activities to play outside similar to how they play inside. Outside time is a time of exploration! Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily program for **all age groups**, weather permitting, with duration and activities adjusted according to each child's age, developmental needs, health, and length of time in care. The activities that are done indoors connect to our outdoor activity time.

Children will be taken outside with assistance from teachers. Staff members will take a bag containing wipes, hand sanitizer, emergency contact binder, gloves, and a small amount of first aid kit items. Teachers will carry a backpack full of first aid supplies and other emergency information that may be needed. **Fresh water will be taken out every time children go outside.**

If a child needs to use the restroom, gets hurt, or becomes ill, teachers will be able to communicate with us by using a walkie-talkie or cell phone in case of an emergency.

Please see our Dress Code on Pg. 2-3 for a guide on what the children should wear for outdoor time.

*The playgrounds at both Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center locations are connected directly to the building.

Benefits of Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

Flowers in the Garden recognizes that regular physical activity and outdoor play are important to children's healthy growth and development. Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to strengthen gross-motor skills, coordination, balance, endurance, and overall physical fitness. It also supports children's social-emotional development by encouraging cooperation, confidence, independence, problem-solving, and positive peer interactions. Outdoor experiences provide opportunities for exploration, creativity, sensory learning, and connection with the natural environment and support children's cognitive development, curiosity, and overall well-being.

Indoor Physical Activity During Extreme Weather - 746.501(a)(18)(F)

When extreme weather conditions, including excessive heat, cold, high winds, poor air quality, precipitation, or other conditions that may pose a significant health or safety risk prevent or limit outdoor play, children will be provided **developmentally appropriate indoor physical activities**. These may include music and movement, dancing, stretching, obstacle courses, gross-motor games, and other structured and unstructured activities that allow children to remain physically active.

Screen Time

Our normal daily routine does include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and tablet use but only from time to time. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child with a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a free choice, included in our lesson plan for the day, and limited to no more than 30 minutes per week.

Authorization of Application of Personal Care Products 746.501 a(19)

We will not apply insect repellent at our Center, please make accommodations to spray your child before dropping off. Sunscreen must be provided by you, and we will place it in the child's cubby, labeled. We ask that you send a cream version of sunscreen since it will be easier to apply.

The parents must provide diaper ointment, sunscreen, Vaseline, and other items the child may need. Items must be *labeled with the child's name* as well as a *parent's signature on the container* for the Center to administer the product. We will also have you sign an authorization form. **One per child: they may not share even if they are siblings.** Please remember we do not share items and we do not provide items.

Chain of Concern 746.501 a(20)

When you have a concern, question, or comment, you should consider your child's teachers as your first resource. They are usually able to answer questions, not only about classroom procedures, but also general questions about child

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

development. However, if it is a concern, please contact the Director at the time of pick-up or use the administrator group chat through ProCare. We ask that you stay professional and keep a professional vocabulary, especially in front of children, and address concerns appropriately. Our center does not tolerate misconduct from either teachers or parents, care may be terminated immediately if behavior is threatening, abusive, harassing, disruptive, or repeated policy-violating conduct. If you have a question or concern which your child's teachers cannot address, or if you feel more comfortable talking to someone else, please feel free to consult the Director. Please allow 24 business hours for serious concerns.

Non-discrimination Policy

The Center is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352), The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-135), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112). This is an equal opportunity program. No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, political beliefs, or religion, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination.

Parent/Child Interaction 746.501 a(21 and 22)

Parents are welcome to visit our Center at any time during the Center's hours of operation to observe their child, the Center's operations, and program activities without having to secure prior approval. Parents may also participate in the Center's activities, curriculum planning, and family events. If you are interested in participating in person or through Zoom, please notify the Director. We would love to hear your thoughts and include you in our programming and activities.

Please remember to check in with the front office personnel when entering the Center. Health checks will be conducted if you decide to come into the Center. If your child has a hard time during departure, please keep visits brief to avoid upsetting your child. We understand that these transitions can sometimes be difficult and will keep you updated throughout the day.

We are committed to supporting parents through open communication and encouraging parental involvement in our programming and care activities. Our objective is to care for your child the same way you would.

VERY IMPORTANT: The **Texas Minimum Standards** may be accessed online or at our Center. Please ask any staff member for the Minimum Standards binder. The most current inspections from Licensing will be posted on our family board at the entrance. Flowers in the Garden Child Development Center is licensed by the **State of Texas as a Child Day Care Center**. *Minimum Standards are available on the web at <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf> or your local Licensing Office.

Important Parent Information 746.501 a(23)

You may contact the local Licensing office at 915-834-5730, Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org to report: Abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities Violations of minimum standards in a childcare operation. 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (See Pg. 15-16 - Keeping Children Safe - for in-depth examples of abuse and neglect)

Emergency Preparedness 746.501 a(24)

*Please review our Emergency Preparedness Plan attached at the end of the Handbook

Evacuation routes and relocation plans are posted in every room. Evacuation Plans:

- All employees are responsible for moving children to the designated safe area.
- Emergency evacuation & relocation diagrams are in areas specified by Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC), Child Protective Services (CPS).
- In some circumstances, parents will be called upon to pick up their children.
- Upon departure and arrival, the director or administrator will have a name-to-face list, or ProCare list, of all the children that must be accounted for. Together, the director or administrator and the caregivers will verify that all the children are present.
- The director is responsible for calling the local authorities needed such as: Fire department, ambulance, local police or sheriff, poison control, and Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC), Child Care Regulation (CCR).
- The director or administrator is responsible for securing children's emergency numbers, emergency medical authorizations, and attendance sheets during an emergency.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

Firearms and Other Weapons

Child-Care Centers allow Peace officers as listed in §2.12 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and security officers commissioned by the Texas Private Security Board who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty, to have firearms and ammunition on the premises of the child-care center. For all other persons, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of the child-care center.

Emergency Drills

Emergency fire drills are held monthly, and other emergency drills are held every three months to ensure children are accustomed to emergency evacuation and relocation procedures.

Weather and Cleaning Closures

We will notify through ProCare of closures due to inclement weather. We will be following EPISD regarding inclement weather closures. If your children are at the center and the weather begins to become unsafe please monitor ProCare or EPISD Weather Alerts. We will also notify for cleaning closures if several kids contract viruses that are contagious or easy to spread. We will notify you immediately through ProCare if you need to come and pick up your child.

Breastfeeding Mommas 746.501 a(25)

Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their children while in care. A rocking chair is available in infant rooms for comfortable seating. If you would like something private, please notify us and we will make arrangements. We also have several resources to share with you about breastfeeding and how important breastfeeding is. We also provide information on how to apply for WIC services and what locations you can visit to get more information. We also use bottle warmers to warm up breastmilk for the infants at our center.

Keeping Children Safe 746.501 a(26)

Texas law requires any person who has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect to make a report as required by law. FGCD employees must make required reports directly to the appropriate authority and may not delegate their individual reporting responsibility or be required to obtain approval before making a report. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime. Employers are prohibited from retaliating against employees who make reports in good faith.

To Report Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect: Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

The Texas Abuse Hotline is available 24 hours a day for urgent situations that need to be investigated within 24 hours. Reports that are not urgent may be made online through the Texas Abuse Hotline website.

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

If there is an emergency or a situation that is life-threatening or requires immediate assistance, call **911** or the local law enforcement agency.

Child Care Regulation: The local Child Care Regulation office may be contacted regarding concerns related to child care regulations, licensing, or minimum standards. The current local office contact information is available through Texas Health and Human Services. <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/family-safety-resources/child-care/contact-child-care-regulation>

Teachers are required to take 24 hours of pre-service and 30 annual hours of training, teachers complete training in responding and preventing child abuse. Remember abuse can be stopped early, and it can happen anywhere. Watch your child for any changes in behavior, and talk with them every day, remind them you are there for them. If needed, please reach out to us and we can point you to a local agency that can help. Remember you are not alone!

Signs to watch:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior at home/school or school performance.
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention.
- Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes.
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen.
- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes.
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school.
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home.
- Shrinks at the approach of adults.
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression.
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example).

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

- Is delayed in physical or emotional development.
- Burns or bruises in unusual patterns that may indicate the use of an instrument or human bite; cigarette burns on any part of the body.
- Lack of reaction to pain.
- Aggressive, disruptive, and destructive behavior.
- Passive, withdrawn, and emotionless behavior.
- Unreasonable clothing that may hide injuries to arms or legs.

Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs necessary to sustain the life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services have been offered and refused.

Suspect Neglect When You See:

- Obvious malnourishment.
- Torn or dirty clothing.
- Child unattended for long periods of time.
- Wearing clothes not appropriate for the weather (missing a jacket when it's cold)
- Lack of personal cleanliness.
- Stealing or begging for food.
- Need for glasses, dental care, or other medical attention.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held two times a year. This meeting will take place between the child's teacher and parent/guardian to create a partnership between the teacher and parent/guardian to discuss the child's learning opportunities in our program. At this time, we will share information on the developmental screening or other assessments that we will conduct. This meeting is also a great opportunity to discuss the child's first few weeks in our program, and to clarify and reinforce any policies and/or procedures that may affect the family and/or child. IEPs and IFSPs are created by service providers working with children with special needs. You are encouraged to share copies of IEPs and IFSPs for your child. Information contained in IEPs, IFSPs, evaluations, and treatment records will be handled confidentially and shared only as authorized or permitted by applicable law; Releases of information are required to speak to members of a child's treatment team.

Therapy Assessments, Referrals, Developmental Screening, & Early Intervention Child Development Resources (P-FE-02)

At Flowers in the Garden, we monitor each child's development and progress through curriculum-based assessments, developmental observations, and formal developmental screenings. Our goal is to identify children who may benefit from additional support as early as possible and to work collaboratively with families to support each child's development, learning, behavior, and overall well-being.

FGCDC uses the **Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ)** as a developmental screening tool. The ASQ is a parent-completed developmental screening questionnaire that looks at a child's skills. The screening helps identify areas where a child may benefit from additional observation, support, or further evaluation. **All developmental screenings are completed with written parental/guardian consent, and screening results are shared with the family.** A developmental screening is **not a medical diagnosis or evaluation**. When concerns are identified, families may be encouraged to discuss the results with their child's pediatrician or another qualified professional.

The developmental screening and intervention process is collaborative and may involve parents/guardians, teachers, the child's primary care provider, and qualified health, education, behavioral, or early intervention professionals. FG CDC will maintain ongoing communication with families regarding their child's developmental progress and any areas of concern. **Parent/teacher conferences will be held at least twice each year** to discuss the child's development and to identify areas where additional support may be beneficial. Developmental and behavioral interventions as well as follow-ups will be documented thoroughly.

When developmental or behavioral concerns are identified, FG CDC may provide individualized classroom interventions and strategies to support the child. These may include developmental activities, classroom accommodations, behavior-support strategies, additional teacher support, or other appropriate interventions. When a child may benefit from services beyond what can be provided within the classroom, FG CDC may recommend a referral for further screening, evaluation, therapy, or early intervention. Families will be provided with information regarding appropriate community resources and specialists. Please refer to the **Intervention Specialists Document on the second-to-last page of this handbook** for current specialist and referral information.

For children from birth to 36 months who may need additional support with developmental milestones, **Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)** services may be available. ECI supports children with developmental needs. Services may be provided in natural environments, including the child's home or at the center, and may also provide parents and caregivers with strategies to support their child's development. When a referral or evaluation is recommended, FG CDC will document the communication with the family, resources provided, recommendations made, and follow-up efforts.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

Families are encouraged to follow through with recommended evaluations, pediatrician visits, therapy referrals, or other professional services. When appropriate, FG CDC may request documentation confirming that a recommended evaluation or appointment has occurred so that the Center can continue to support the child while in our care.

If a child is receiving services from an outside specialist, families are encouraged to share relevant recommendations, activities, or strategies with FG CDC so that teachers can provide consistent support in the classroom. Our goal is to **identify needs early, partner with families, provide appropriate developmental and behavioral support, and connect children with resources that can help them reach their full potential.**

Health Check 746.501 a(27)

The health and well-being of each child at FG CDC is of the utmost importance to us, therefore, we will conduct a daily health check before the parents/guardians leave. There will also be a questionnaire at time of check-in on the ProCare app. The results of the health check will be determined by the center's staff, not the parent, whether the child will remain at the center for that day. **(Please see our Exclusion Policy on Pg. 5 for reasons we will exclude your child from care.)**

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases for Caregivers 746.501 a(28)

Caregivers are encouraged but not required to obtain vaccinations for vaccine-preventable diseases. Employees are required to wear gloves while changing diapers or dealing with any bodily fluid and wash their hands to prevent the spread of diseases.

Parent Engagement 746.501 b(1) Family Events (P-FI-03)

We will conduct 3 events throughout the year, and we highly encourage our families to participate during these fun times! Our program coordinator Adda Torres will be coordinating various events throughout the year. Events and important info will be posted on ProCare. Follow us! Look us up as Flowers in The Garden Child Development Center, Flowers in the Garden #2, and we also partner with The Road to Success - Follow us all on Instagram and Facebook! **(Please see Pg. 14 - Parent/Child Interaction 746.501 a(21 and 22) for more information on the procedures the center follows for you to interact with your child at the center)**

Gang-Free Zone 746.501 b(2)

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.

Parents' Rights 746.521

At FG CDC, we respect and protect the rights of parents and guardians as provided by Texas law. A parent of a child in care has the right to enter and examine the Center during its hours of operation without advance notice, file a complaint against the Center, review the Center's publicly accessible records, review the Center's written records concerning their child, as allowed by applicable law and Center policy, and receive the Center's HHSC inspection reports and information regarding how to access the Center's compliance history online.

Parents may also have the Center comply with a valid court order signed by a judge that prevents another parent from visiting or removing their child from the Center, be provided with contact information for Child Care Regulation, including the department's name, address, and telephone number, and view any available video recording maintained by the Center of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child, subject to applicable privacy requirements. A parent may not retain any portion of a video that depicts another child, and the Center will provide written notice to the parent of any other child captured in the video before allowing the recording to be viewed.

Parent's Rights also state that they shall obtain a copy of the Center's policies and procedures, review, upon request, staff training records and any in-house training curriculum, and be free from retaliation by the Center for exercising any of the parent's rights.

FG CDC will respect the rights of all legal parents and guardians unless a court order, protective order, CPS instruction, or other legal document limits those rights. Parent rights do not allow a parent to ignore health and safety rules, licensing requirements, privacy laws, or reasonable center policies that protect children, families, and staff. FG CDC will work with families to address concerns and will follow the center's established process for handling complaints or disagreements.

Accommodation for Families

Accommodation for families helps us support children and families who may need additional accommodations, including those related to home language, differing abilities, developmental needs, IEPs/IFSPs, and cultural backgrounds. We are committed to providing reasonable, individualized supports that allow each child to participate

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

fully in our program. Parents have the right to be informed of procedural safeguards and applicable rights in a language easily understood by the general public and, when possible, in the parent's primary language. Please notify the Director in writing if you or your child require accommodations so we can work together to determine appropriate supports:

1. **Therapy Services** - If specific therapies are needed during the day while the child is in our care, we will provide space to accommodate sessions when possible. Please add scheduled sessions to your ProCare calendar.
2. **Collaboration** - We will participate in comprehensive care meetings, IEP/IFSP meetings, and collaborate with families and outside providers when authorized by the parent/guardian.
3. **Individualized Supports** - We will consider reasonable accommodations and supports for a child's physical, developmental, behavioral, or learning needs. Supporting documentation from authorized medical, developmental, or educational professionals may be requested when appropriate.
4. **Language Access** - We will make reasonable efforts to provide important materials and resources in the parent's or child's primary language.
5. **Cultural Inclusion** - We value each family's cultural background and will provide opportunities for cultural inclusion through classroom activities, family events, books, and cultural experiences throughout the year.

Resources

Our center will offer a variety of resources such as prenatal care resources, information about nutrition, importance of vision and dental health, building connections at an early age, choosing the right child care program, parenting classes and so much more! **(For intervention resources, please see the Intervention Specialists Document on the second-to-last page of this handbook)**

Things to Bring for Your Child: Please send everything labeled.

PARENTS PLEASE BE ADVISED we are not responsible for any items misplaced or stolen, we are very busy throughout the day trying to ensure the health and safety of our children and so many other teaching moments happen throughout the day, if something goes missing, please send a message through ProCare to give us time to look for the items missing. We do apologize if we cannot find your items, however we are doing everything we can to ensure your child is having a fantastic day.

- Diapers and diaper ointment
- Wipes (In plastic container the first time (from Dollar Tree-small and colorful), refills thereafter)
- Monthly Materials List which is located in the contract (enrollment packet)
- Pacifier
- Formula
- Bottles (please provide 5-7 bottles or as many as child may need according to their schedule and age, teacher will send back home daily so you can clean and sanitize to send back the next day)
- Small Blanket for Nap Time for children 12 months and older only, as permitted by classroom sleep requirements. No loose blankets are permitted in an infant's crib.
 - Crib sized sheet for Sleeping mat for Preschool and Toddlers.
 - Nap Mat for Toddlers and Pre-school
 - Mini crib size sheet for Infants room
 - Infant sacks for Infant Room - no swaddles
- Water bottles
- Sunscreen
- **Change of clothes/shoes/socks is a must. When we send the clothes home, please replace them the following day**



\$19.99

Everything Kids Pink and Aqua Mermaid Toddler Nap Mat with ...

★★★★☆ 6

Add to cart



REVISED 9/3/2026

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

Flowers in the Garden CDC

INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS

The following organizations and providers are available as resources for families seeking developmental, behavioral, therapeutic, or early intervention support for their child. Families are encouraged to research available services and choose the provider or resource that best meets their child's individual needs. FG CDC staff can help families understand the referral process and provide information about available resources. Please note that families are responsible for contacting providers, scheduling appointments, completing required paperwork, and following through with recommended evaluations and services.

1. Road to Success Association

Road to Success Association is a local nonprofit organization that focuses on connecting childcare centers, families, and children with intervention specialists and other resources in our community. If you are unsure how to proceed with a developmental or behavioral concern or need help understanding your intervention options, Road to Success can provide information and help you better understand available resources so you can make an informed decision about the services that may best support your child.



2. Yagel Therapy Services

Yagel Therapy Services has partnered with Flowers in the Garden since its inception and provides therapeutic services to children and families. Their professionals work with children in a supportive, child-friendly environment and communicate with families regarding their child's progress and therapy needs. Families interested in therapy services can contact Yagel directly to learn about available services, eligibility, scheduling, and the referral process.



3. Paso Del Norte Children's Development Center

The Paso Del Norte Children's Development Center provides resources and support for children and families, including Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services for eligible children from birth to 36 months of age. ECI supports children who may need additional help with developmental skills such as communication, motor skills, learning, and social development. Parents can contact the Early Childhood Intervention Referral Line to discuss concerns, ask questions, and learn whether an evaluation may be appropriate for their child.



ECI Referral Line at 915-534-4ECI (4324)

4. Children's Disability Information Coalition (CDIC)

The Children's Disability Information Coalition (CDIC) provides information, resources, and support to families of children with disabilities or developmental concerns. Families can use CDIC as a resource when seeking information about evaluations, services, education, community resources, and support available to children with developmental needs. Parents who are unsure where to begin may contact CDIC to learn more about available resources and options for their child.



5. Autism Society of Texas - El Paso Office

The Autism Society of Texas provides information, education, resources, and support for individuals with autism and their families. Families may contact the organization for information about autism, available services, support resources, advocacy, and community programs. This resource may also be helpful for families who have concerns about possible autism and are seeking information about evaluation and next steps.



UPDATED: 8/20/2026 "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats

Flowers in the Garden Center #2

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN (4910 DYER ST)

If the facility is deemed unsafe, and evacuation is required, the children will be transported to the destinations designated in the Emergency Preparedness Plan below:



Off-Site Evacuation #1:

Hayes Fort Bliss Off-Post Housing Playground
BEHIND 2244 Glassburn Road



Off-Site Evacuation #2:

Jorge Almada Park
4500 Pollard Street
El Paso, TX 79930



On-Site Evacuation:

FG CDC #2 Parking Lot
4910 Dyer St, 79930



Transportation Arrangements:

(Children will be walked to the Hayes Fort Bliss Off-Post Housing Playground by FG CDC #2 Staff located behind 2244 Glassburn Rd, El Paso, TX 79906. The Playground is between French Road, Stockton St, and Glassburn Rd.

In case we are unable to walk to Hayes Fort Bliss Off-Post Housing Playground, we will relocate to Jorge Almada Park off Pollard St.)

If a medical examination or treatment is needed, children will be taken to the location below UNLESS emergency medical personnel designate another location:

University Medical Center

4815 Alameda Ave.
El Paso, TX 79905
915-544-1200

*If an emergency requires a larger area evacuation, we will take the children to a mass shelter designated by the emergency personnel and inform the parents of the location as soon as possible via phone or the ProCare App. If it is too far to walk, we will transport the children by FG CDC2 Van and/or Bus. For evacuation purposes, we require a signed authorization from parents to transport or walk to the alternative site. Authorization for emergency care for each child is needed as well.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." ~ William Butler Yeats