

# PARENT HANDBOOK

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## WELCOME

Dear The Footprint Foundation Families,

We want to thank you for choosing The Footprint Foundation for your childcare needs. Our desire is to offer a safe, clean, loving, and educational environment for your child to grow, learn, and play.

The Footprint Foundation understands how difficult it can be for working parents to balance all of their commitments and responsibilities in their lives. For this reason, we strive to offer a program that will enrich your child's development while putting your mind at ease.

We will do our best to assist your child in developing important values such as: good manners, caring, sharing, patience, responsibility, as well as communication and teamwork. We believe that children develop best through educational play, and we will implement these important values throughout our day. We also offer Montessori activities such as learning the alphabet, shapes, colors, numbers by focusing on each child's learning abilities.

It is our goal to offer your family the quality childcare experience you deserve. Please feel free to openly discuss with us any problems or concerns you may have at anytime. An open and honest relationship is the key to a happy childcare experience for everyone involved.

Please help us operate our childcare business in a professional manner by carefully reading the parent handbook and filling out all the necessary forms. It is very important that you are aware of and understand all our policies.

Thank you for choosing The Footprint Foundation as your childcare team. We look forward to providing your child with the best possible care.

Warm Regards,

**ADRIAN & MICHELLE FERNANDEZ**

*Owners*

**JOHN J. ALEMAN**

*Center Director*

## **ABOUT US**

### **OWNERS**

Having been married for 10 years, Adrian and Michelle welcomed their son Abraham to the family. Adrian an Executive in the Healthcare Finance industry and Michelle a physician, struggled in finding childcare that fit their desires for Abraham. Michelle having grown up in childcare preferred a facility that incorporated a Montessori curriculum and life skills, while Adrian sought a facility that promoted education yet wanted Abraham to be in a comforting environment. It is with great pleasure that they were able to establish The Footprint Foundation to start Abraham's educational, fun, active and creative learning environment.

### **DIRECTOR**

Mr. John J. Aleman, a passionate community outreach advocate started his career in child development over 15 years ago. It has always been his goal to facilitate a childcare program in which he could utilize his experience and expand his outreach. In efforts to do so, he has established a program that incorporates martial arts, fitness, agriculture, music, positive guidance, and structure. John a Houston native, is one of seven children, he believes that family is important and hopes to be an extension of your family within The Footprint Foundation.

### **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

**MRS. ALBA SANCHEZ**

### **TEACHERS**

**MS. NEIDA CARILLO**

**MS. MARIA GARCIA**

**MRS. CHELSEA SILVA**



## **POLICIES**

### **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Communication is the key to our success at The Footprint Foundation. We encourage staff, guests, parents, volunteers, or anyone at our center to share concerns, suggestions, questions or ideas. Communication with you is crucial to enable us to help develop your child. The Footprint Foundation welcomes changes and suggestions on how to make your time here more enjoyable.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Footprint Foundation will be open Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from January through December. The Footprint Foundation is licensed by the State of Texas, Department of Family Protective Services, and is owned and operated by Adrian & Michelle Fernandez as AMF Legacy a Limited Liability Corporation.

John J. Aleman, as Director, will manage the day-to-day operations. Adrian Fernandez, as center Administrator, will be handling the business operations. The Footprint Foundation is licensed to care for no more than 28 children at any one time and will serve children ages 6 weeks to 13 years of age. We will never refuse to enroll a child on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, political persuasion, national origin, handicap/disability, ancestry or sexual orientation. We are inspected regularly to insure that we meet the State of Texas licensing standards.

**The following are holidays to be paid for that the center will be closed:**

**NEW YEARS DAY**

**MEMORIAL DAY**

**FOURTH OF JULY**

**LABOR DAY**

**THANKSGIVING**

**FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

If the holiday falls on a Saturday the center will be closed the Friday before the holiday and if the holiday falls on a Sunday the center will be closed the Monday after the holiday.

### **CONCEAL AND CARRY POLICY**

For the protection of our staff, children and parents, we will not allow any weapons on the premises unless it is legally part of your uniform.

### **PARENT INFORMATION AREA**

The Footprint Foundation will post the following items for parents' review at the front entrance on the parent information board: license certificate, a complete copy of the parent handbook, results of our most recent licensing monitoring visit, and a copy of the licensing regulations.

### **OUR ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IS AS FOLLOWS**

Administrator // Director // Assistant Director // Teachers // Assistant Teachers // Cook



**SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED ANYWHERE ON THE PREMISES  
OF THE CENTER, INDOORS OR OUTDOORS!**

**CHANGE TO THE PARENT HANDBOOK/POLICIES**

The Center, at its discretion, may change any policy contained in the Parent Handbook. Parents will be notified two weeks in advance of any changes by email or written notice distributed to children's cubbies or mailbox.

**ARRIVAL**

Parents or authorized adults are required to bring children into the building and escort the child to their assigned classroom. Once in the room, please have your child wash their hands and then fill out the daily report if applicable and assist with removing outer clothing and placing items in the child's cubby. Staff will take daily attendance several times throughout the day to know the names and number of children. We ask that if you have more than one child in the center that you drop off the youngest last. This is a concern in the infant room due to the 'No Shoes' rule. Once your child is ready to start the day, please bring your child to the teacher and share any questions, concerns, or special instructions for the day before saying goodbye. If a child falls asleep in a swing or car seat, the child must be removed from the swing or car seat and placed to sleep on his or her back in a crib<sup>1</sup>.

*<sup>1</sup>State of Texas Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers with Commentary*

**DEPARTURE**

When you arrive to pick up your child, please check the child's mailbox to see if there is any correspondence to be taken home. Please take a moment to talk with your child's teacher about the day's events and let the teacher know you are leaving. We ask that if you have more than one child in the center that you pick up the youngest first. Before you leave the building, please remember to sign your child(ren) out by the front door.

**SPECIAL NOTES**

Children will only be released to previously authorized persons as designated on your enrollment paperwork. If anyone other than the child's parent or someone listed on the enrollment form is to pick up a child, please notify the Director, Assistant Director, or Administrator in advance by writing, email, or by phone. The person picking up the child will need to show a driver's license or other picture ID.

If parents wish to allow a school-age child to leave for school or arrive from school at the center by bus or other prearranged transportation, they must provide written authorization for this activity. School-age children who leave the center by bus or other prearranged transportation must be traveling to school or another activity where adult supervision is present.

Child safety is essential at The Footprint Foundation. If a parent or other authorized person arrives to pick up a child and that person appears to be intoxicated or under the influence, all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent the person from leaving with the child, including offering to call a cab or another person. While we cannot legally withhold a child from the legal guardian, The Footprint Foundation will not hesitate to call the local authorities if we feel a child is in danger.

**PARENT VISITS**

Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time during the hours of operation unless parental access is prohibited or restricted by a court order. If so, a copy of the order will need to be on file with the Director. Please understand that we can not legally limit access to a parent if there is not a copy of a court order on file at the center.

**COMMUNICATION**

It is important that we communicate daily concerning the needs and interests of each child. If there are issues or concerns that need to be addressed, parents can discuss these with their child's teacher at drop off/pick up or arrange a convenient time to talk with the Director or Assistant Director either by phone or in person. To foster communication on a regular basis, The Footprint Foundation provides a written newsletter and parent



bulletin boards outside each classroom and by the office. Each child will also have a cubby if so please check those daily for newsletters and other communications from the teachers or from the administration.

The Footprint Foundation will hold Parent Advisory Board meetings which you are encouraged to attend where you can voice your opinion or offer suggestions. In addition, voluntary parent/teacher conferences will be offered bi- annually in spring and fall. You may at any time request a parent/teacher conference by coordinating with either of the Directors or Administrator.

If a child will not attend on a regularly scheduled day, parents should make the Director or Assistant Director aware at least 1 hour prior to the child's regular scheduled arrival time.

### **CELL PHONE USE**

If you need to use the phone, please do so outside the center before coming into or after leaving The Footprint Foundation. We ask that your time inside the center be spent talking with the teachers to communicate about your child's day.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

In the event a problem exists; the Center wants it corrected as quickly as possible. This can only be achieved if it is identified immediately. Parents with concerns should first discuss them with the classroom teacher if the concern is not related to a teacher or staff member. If the classroom teacher is unable to resolve the concern independently and to the satisfaction of the parent, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the Administrator, Director, or Assistant Director.

### **PETS**

There will not be pets on the premises. If pets will be added in the future, a notice will be posted to inform parents in advance, and whether or not children will have access to the pet(s). Allergies children may have will be taken into consideration.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

To protect each family's confidentiality, The Footprint Foundation will not share information about a child or a child's family with anyone who is not authorized to receive this information. While at The Footprint Foundation, you may come into contact with information of a confidential nature. This information could include personal or medical information regarding another child or parent, facility information that is not disclosed to the public or information about an employee. Information that is over heard or discussed at the center should be considered confidential and not shared with anyone.

### **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

Employees will be familiarized with the child abuse and neglect laws. Employees will know how to identify children who are abused or neglected. Childcare providers are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect and are required by law to report the abuse or neglect to child protective services or the local authorities.

### **BABYSITTING**

The Footprint Foundation discourages and does not support staff providing babysitting services to families on their own time. We ask that parents do not ask staff members to babysit. The Footprint Foundation believes this may cross an ethical line.

### **ENROLLMENT AND DISCHARGE OF ENROLLED CHILDREN**

It is mandatory that all parents and children meet with the Director or Assistant Director to tour the center, discuss all child specific needs, and go over center policies before enrolling. The Footprint Foundation will make accommodations for a child with disabilities as specified under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Parents/legal guardians may request access to their child's file at any time by contacting the Director or Assistant Director. The Director or Assistant Director will inform parents when updates are needed, giving 30



days' advance notice to submit updated forms. All of the following items must be completed and returned to the center to be kept on file by the first day of attendance:

- Child Care Enrollment
- Health History and Emergency Care Plan
- Child Care Center Transportation Permission (if applicable)
- Child Care Intake for Child Under 2 Years (if applicable)
- First week's tuition and registration fee of \$100 per child or \$505 per family which is non-refundable. Due within 30 days after child starts attending
- Day Care Immunization Record
- Child Health Report or record signed by a doctor

Children enrolled 3 or more days a week or at least 27 hours per week will be considered full time. Part time basis will be 2 or less days per week and fewer than 27 hours per week. Parents electing part time care will be advised that in the event a full time client wishes to enroll, the part time client will be given the option of the full time position, if declined; the center may offer a two-week notice to terminate care. The Footprint Foundation will accept children for drop-in care if prior enrollment arrangements have been made, enrollment forms are on file, and space is available. Children will be enrolled for a trial period of 2 weeks. During the trial period, either the center or parent may terminate childcare without advance notice. Items provided by parents (age specific and labeled with Child's Name):

- Infant Formula
- Pack of Disposable diapers
- Baby wipes
- Blanket sleepers (one for summer and one for winter)
- Lotions (i.e. sunscreen, insect repellent, diaper rash cream, etc signed authorization is required)
- A standard zipping sleeping bag at least 2 inches thick and a minimum size of 24 inches by 36 inches  
Bottle for water and enough formula/milk bottles to get through the day
- (2) Full changes of clothing including underwear, shoes, socks, pants, and shirts (based on seasons)  
Clothing suitable for outdoor play for each season (including hat/mittens/boots)

The Footprint Foundation will provide a crib with a tight fitting sheet for each child less than one year of age. Sheets will be washed by staff after every 5 uses or sooner if needed. Sleeping bags/blankets will be sent home on Friday or the child's last day of attendance each week for parents to wash and return on Monday.

## **NURSING MOTHERS**

The Footprint Foundation will provide a rocking chair, nursing cover and designated area for breastfeeding mothers.





## **VACATION FOR FULL TIME ENROLLMENT**

Each year round full time child will receive 10 vacation days to be used within the calendar year after 90 days of continuous care. When enrolling for the first time, vacation will be pro-rated for the balance of the calendar year as follows: Enrolling in January & February = 10 days; March & April = 9 days; May & June = 8 days; July & August = 7 days and September = 6 days. Vacation days can not be carried over from year to year. Vacation days can be used if your child is sick, on vacation or just not in attendance that day. Vacation may not be used for holidays if your child attends care for any part of the day. Only children who attend full time year round will receive 10 days of vacation. If choosing to reduce hours in the summer to less than full time, your child will not be eligible for vacation days or the multi child discount. The Footprint Foundation reserves the right to charge accounts for days credited which was more than the allotted vacation due to summer enrollment. i.e. If you use 5 days of vacation in January, then reduce to the minimum two days a week in the summer months, you are only eligible to receive 2 days of vacation and will be charged back the three days credited in January.

Children enrolled part time will also receive vacation days as outlined under Part Time Enrollment below. If at any time during the calendar year you use before and after school rates, you will not be eligible for vacation days.

## **VACATION FOR PART TIME ENROLLMENT**

Children enrolled part time full days (min. of 5 hrs.) with a set schedule will receive the number of vacation days that the child is scheduled per week to be used in the calendar year after 90 days of continuous care. For example, if your child is scheduled to attend Tuesdays and Thursdays, you will receive 2 days of vacation to be used each year. Vacation may not be carried over from year to year. If a holiday falls on your child's regular scheduled day or the center is closed in observance of a holiday, The Footprint Foundation will expect payment for that holiday. If your child has a fluctuating schedule, you will not be eligible for vacation days and you will be charged for all holidays regardless of attendance. If at any time during the calendar year you use before and after school rates, you will not be eligible for vacation days or the multi child discount. Prorated vacation will be determined by the Director at enrollment.

## **STAFF ORIENTATION**

Before any staff members, volunteers, or substitutes will be left to care for your children they will have an orientation to the center. The state orientation form will be used to document that this has occurred and all the areas on the form will be initialed by the worker.

## **CHILDREN'S ATTENDANCE SCHEDULES**

Parents must meet with the Director or Assistant Director and keep a current schedule for their child(ren) on file. Staff will be determined based on the schedules of the children so please keep your schedule up to date. If you need to make changes to your schedule please contact the Director or Assistant Director. If you want to drop off or pick up your child(ren) outside of your scheduled time, arrangements must be made in advance with the Director/ Assistant Director and is subject to availability. If there is a time when you are running late, please call the center. Also, please remember that all children must be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. or late fees will be incurred. The Footprint Foundation reserves the right to contact Social Services or the Police Dept if children are not picked up by 6:30 p.m.

## **CHILD(REN) ABSENCE**

If your child(ren) will not be attending due to illness or any other reason, please notify the center at least one hour prior to your normal scheduled arrival. The Footprint Foundation's policy will be, if a child has not arrived within 30 minutes of normal arrival time, the parent listed on the enrollment paperwork will be contacted. If the parent cannot be reached after 30 minutes then the emergency contact person will be called. The Footprint Foundation is extremely serious about keeping all children safe. If your child normally arrives after school but will not be using Cypress Bus or authorized transportation you must advise the bus lines not to expect your child for that day. It is not The Footprint Foundations responsibility to notify schools or transportation arrangements for absences.



## **TERMINATION**

A child may be discharged from the center for reasons such as, but not limited to:

- Failure to pay fees on time (grounds for immediate termination, without advance notice)
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Inability of child care program to meet the needs of the child. Staff will consult with the parent concerning how any problems might be solved before ending the care arrangement. The parent will be referred to other community resources
- Repeated failure to pick up the child at the scheduled time or after the second pick-up of later than 6 p.m.
- Failure to complete and return required forms (grounds for immediate termination, without advance notice)

The Footprint Foundation will give a two week written notice of intent to discharge a child and try to inform parents of local resources, except when the discharge requires an immediate termination. Should the parent remove the child during the notice period initiated by the center, fees will not be charged for the remaining unused days. Parents must give a two week written notice (verbal will not be accepted) of their intent to withdraw the child(ren), and required to pay for those two weeks regardless of attendance. All outstanding fees must be paid. Any accumulated vacation will not be honored during the two week notice.

## **FEE PAYMENTS AND REFUND**

Fees are to be paid in advance by cash, check, money order, or automatic ACH withdrawals on Monday for the week of childcare, or the first day of attendance. A payment box is located outside the Administrator/Director's office near the front door for your convenience.

- If there will be a third party payment, as from an employer or the county, a special payment schedule will be arranged with the Administrator and a rate contract must be signed and an authorization must be in place before care can start. Authorizations must stay current to attend The Footprint Foundation.
- Parents are responsible for any unpaid amounts and any unpaid co-payments involving county subsidy.
- No refunds will be given for days when children do not attend for illness or other reasons.
- Rates are higher for children under 2 years of age than for older children.
- There will be a 10% reduction for two or more full time children in attendance, only if children are full time year round and will apply to the oldest child's rate or oldest two if there are three or more children enrolled.
- Discounts do not apply to part-time, before or after school rates, or summer only enrollment.
- The full time rate is offered for children who are scheduled to be in care for 3 days or more per week, with additional \$25 per hour for weekly hours exceeding 50.
- A part time rate will be charged for children who are scheduled fewer than 2 days per week. Exceeding 3 days per week will increase rates to full time.
- There will be an extra fee assessed for late pick up of a child without notification to the Director/Assistant Director of \$25.00 for every 1/2 hour + \$25 for children picked up after 6pm.



- There will be an extra fee of \$25 per day assessed for late payment.
- There will be a \$35 NSF fee for insufficient funds checks. If at any time a second NSF occurs from the same family, The Footprint Foundation will only accept cash, cashiers check or money order and may terminate care immediately if so chooses. The Footprint Foundation will charge for any attorney fees or collection fees involved in the collection of a delinquent payment.
- The Footprint Foundation reserves the right to review rates at any point and will provide at least a two-week advance notice of rate increases in writing. There will also be an annual review of rates and a consideration of a rate increase.
- The Footprint Foundation charges a non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 per child or \$125 per family annually. Summer only attendance will have a \$50 registration fee per child for either part-time or full-time. The registration fee must be paid prior to enrollment.
- When a child's rate drops into a new rate category due to a birthday, the rate will be adjusted the week following the birthday.
- No refunds will be issued including parental error with scheduling or disenrollment of a child by either party.

## **DAILY ACTIVITIES**

Staff will have information about Developmentally Appropriate Practices and we will review this information at least annually. The Footprint Foundation's staff will plan activities and provide children with a variety of experiences including but not limited to; for Language Development: books for reading, writing materials, music, games, finger plays, poems and flannel board stories. Large muscle skills: balls, basketball hoops, bubbles, running, jumping, dancing and outdoor play. Small muscle skills: puzzles, art and craft activities, manipulative toys and blocks. Creative expression: dramatic play props, musical instruments and movement activities. Self-help skills: cleaning up after ourselves, helping with mealtime preparation, and dressing ourselves.

## **CURRICULUM PLANNING TIME**

Teachers are expected to plan activities for their children based on the themes that have been selected for the week. To assist and encourage that planning, The Footprint Foundation will allow staff one hour or more each week out of the classroom to gather materials, do research, or change classroom arrangements.

Learning through educational play is a major component of our program. Enough time, materials and space will be provided for children to actively explore the world around them. Children will have an opportunity to use a variety of art materials, manipulative tools, math, science, and housekeeping equipment. Our curriculum will provide exposure to a variety of cultures through music, stories, games and art, and we will celebrate how we are all the same and how we are all different from one another.

## **REST OR NAPTIME**

The State of Texas Licensing requires a rest period for all children younger than five years of age who are in care for more than four consecutive hours. Children who do not sleep may get up after 30 minutes, and children who awaken early will be allowed to get up and do quiet activities. Cribs or playpens are provided for each child less than one year of age. Children over the age of one year will sleep on a sleeping cot. Sleeping bags/blankets will be sent home after every five uses or sooner if necessary.

## **CHILDREN'S CLOTHING**

Children's clothing should be comfortable, allowing complete freedom of movement, be washable, and



suitable for daily indoor and outdoor activities. Since children spend time outdoors daily, parents should consider weather conditions when planning daily dress. Help us encourage development of independent bathroom skills by having children's clothing easy for them to manipulate with a minimum of assistance. Children must wear shoes which are practical as well as comfortable. Flip-flops and shoes without straps are prohibited. Girls should wear shorts under dresses and skirts. Two complete changes of clothing should be kept at the center. The Footprint Foundation will make reasonable efforts to safeguard children's personal belongings and clothing, but will not be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Children, including infants and toddlers, will go outdoors daily when weather permits. The Footprint Foundation has a large outdoor play area that is fenced in for safety with balls, ride on toys, swings, and slides with climbers. Children 2 and older will be kept indoors if the temperature is below zero degrees including the wind chill. Children younger than 2 years will be kept indoors if the temperature, including wind chill, is below 20 degrees. Children will also stay indoors when it is raining or when the temperature is above 98 degrees. If the inside temperature rises above 80 degrees we will provide fans or air-conditioning.

### **CHILDREN UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE**

There shall be no specifically scheduled nap time for all infants as a group. As children begin to mature, a child's schedule will be changed to slowly eliminate the a.m. nap and slowly integrate the child into the center schedule. Priority shall be given to the individual eating and sleep needs of the child. They will be given individual attention including lots of time for talking. Body position of non-mobile infants and their location in the room will be changed frequently. We will provide safe, open spaces for children whom are creeping and crawling. Infants and toddlers will be encouraged to play with a wide variety of safe toys and objects.

Written reports will be maintained documenting what each child ate, when they slept, and when they wet or soiled a diaper/potty training attempts. Parents will use this report to share information with us about the child's night and morning activities and disposition.

SIDS is the leading cause of death among infants aged one month to one year. Being a SIDS conscious facility, no blankets, toys, bumper padding or other objects will be allowed in a crib. Swaddling will be prohibited unless by doctors' orders with a note on file. Blanket sleepers are the only approved sleeping attire for children sleeping in cribs. Parents must supply one winter and one summer blanket sleeper. Over the age of one, nukes and blankets are allowed at nap time only. If a child is having a difficult drop off, we will permit the child a short time to adjust before having to put away the nuk or blanket.

### **PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN**

Preschool children will have opportunities to play and explore their surroundings. They will be given many learning experiences in a variety of developmental areas that are age appropriate. Weekly activities will include math, science, large and small muscle movement, art and literacy.

We occasionally take walks around the center. Emergency information for each child will be taken whenever the children leave the premises as well as a walkie talkie. You will be notified in advance of any field trip requiring transportation.

A schedule of daily activities is posted on a bulletin board outside each classroom. Groups of children may be combined at the beginning and at the end of the day. Activities at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day will be designed for a wide age range of children working and playing together. Activities are planned a week in advance and prepared by teachers that work directly with the children and are based on the themes chosen as well as children's interests. Lesson plans are available for parents to review. Curriculum will celebrate cultural diversity as well as individualism in all children.

Children may engage in water play and will be closely supervised to ensure safety. The Footprint Foundation may offer wading pools in the summer and parents will be notified in advance. Children will be transitioned from activity to activity in small groups or as they complete their activity to prevent long waiting times and each classroom will offer activities for children to engage in if a waiting period would occur.

## **SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN**

Children will have a quiet place to study or relax, access to appropriate materials and activities, and will have ample time for large muscle activities.

## **SPECIAL CLASSES/PHOTOGRAPHY**

The Footprint Foundation may offer special classes such as computer, Spanish, tutoring for school age children, and photographs of your children. Parents will be notified in advance if there will be additional fees associated with these services. Most special services will have additional fees and those charges will be explained when the classes/ photography are offered. Participation is completely voluntary.

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY**

Children's behavior will be guided by setting clear limits or rules for children. Staff will talk with children about expected behaviors and model those behaviors consistently for them. Staff will state positively what children can do, using specific terms (e.g., "you need to walk" rather than "don't run"). Undesirable behavior will be redirected to another activity. Children will be given a wide variety of age-appropriate activities to choose from and will be given the attention they need before they demand it. Behavior management will be for the purpose of helping children develop self-control, self-esteem and respect for the rights of others.

When a child is crying, fussy or distraught, staff will work to calm and comfort the child in ways that are appropriate for the child's age and personal disposition. This may include stroking, cuddling, rocking; offering a drink, acknowledging the child's fear, separation sadness, or conflict. Distracting or redirecting to another activity or talking calmly with the child about how s/he is feeling about what has happened may ease the situation. If the unhappiness persists, we may contact a parent to share what is occurring, and inquire if this might indicate onset of an illness.

The Footprint Foundation recognizes that no single technique will work with every child every time. If a child exhibits unacceptable behavior, the staff will request a conference with parents to consider how to deal with the behavior. If the behavior continues, the next steps may include referrals to appropriate community resources, and the third disciplinary conference will result in discharge of the child from care.

In accordance with "Texas Department of Family & Protective Services," actions that are aversive, cruel, humiliating, and actions that may be psychologically, emotionally or physically painful, discomforting, dangerous or potentially injurious are prohibited. Prohibited actions include spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, twisting, or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment on the child; verbal abuse threats or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family; physical restraint, binding or tying the child to restrict the child's movement or enclosing the child in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle; withholding or forcing meals, snacks or naps; punishing a child for lapses in toilet training. These forms of punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

We reserve the right to refuse or discontinue service if a child exhibits a pattern of defiance towards authority, uses excessive harsh language, bites, or poses a threat against self, staff or the children in care.



# RATES

## Preschool Rates:

Ages 12months-4 years	
Full-time(>3 days/wk)	\$150.00
Half-time(<2 days/wk)	\$ 110.00

## Afterschool Only:

Ages 4yrs-12yrs	
Full-time(>3days/wk)	\$ 80.00
Half-time(<2days/wk)	\$ 50.00

## Drop In Monthly Membership:

15 days month	\$425.00
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## Registration:

Summer:	\$100.00
School year:	\$100.00 FT/PT
	\$100.00 Afterschool Program

**Transportation:** \$10.00 week

**Supply Fee:** \$30.00

**Martial Arts:** \$45.00 month

## Pick-up after 6pm:

<b>6-6:30pm</b>	\$ 25.00**
<b>after 6:30pm</b>	\$ 1.00 per minute**

*\*\*Must be paid immediately.*

Part-time and school clients will be required to pay for the number of days scheduled per week regardless of attendance. This includes being closed for holidays. Part-time clients opting for one day a week will be considered "Drop-In" and pay the drop-in rate.

There will be a 10% reduction for two or more full time children in attendance, only if children are full time year round and it will apply to the oldest child's rate or oldest two if there are three or more children enrolled.



Fee for late payment: Fees are to be paid in advance on Monday for the week's services. If a payment is not received by Friday, \$25 per day will be charged for each day payment is not made. If a portion of the fee will be paid by a third party, such as an employer or the county, that payment will be accepted on a pre-arranged schedule coordinated with the Administrator.

Fee for non-sufficient funds (NSF) or overdrafts: There will be a \$35 NSF fee for insufficient funds or overdrafts. If at any time a second NSF occurs from the same family, The Footprint Foundation will only accept cash, cashiers check or money order and may terminate care immediately if so chooses. The Footprint Foundation will charge for any attorney fees or collection fees involved in the collection of a delinquent payment.

## **CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR FIRE/TORNADO & OTHER EMERGENCIES**

Attendance will be kept in each classroom daily and arrival/departure times recorded. During early AM arrival and late PM pick-up, teachers will be kept aware of children they are responsible for, as rooms are condensed and staff leaves the center for the day. Teachers will know the names of each child and their whereabouts at all times.

Fire evacuation plans will be practiced monthly. Tornado evacuation plans will be practiced monthly from April through October. The Director or Assistant Director will document dates of fire and tornado drills and check the smoke detectors monthly on a form provided by the state.

### **IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY THAT WOULD REQUIRE AN EVACUATION**

Children will be evacuated by all available staff through the nearest exit. Attendance forms and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts will be taken out by the staff member designated to be "in charge" to assure that all children are accounted for and all families can be notified. Children will be assembled at the rear of the building in the fenced in play area. The Director will call the fire department and parents will be notified. If we are unable to return to the building following an evacuation, the children will be taken to an adjacent facility, until parents or other authorized adults can be reached and come for them.

For any child/staff with special needs or that would need assistance during an evacuation, a staff member and a back up staff member will be assigned to assist in the safe evacuation.

### **IN THE EVENT OF A TORNADO WARNING/SEVERE WEATHER**

Children will be taken to an interior bathroom for safety. Blankets, a portable radio and flashlight with extra batteries, are kept in an accessible central location at all times. Attendance forms and emergency contact information will be brought by the staff member designated to be "in charge". Staff will engage the children in activities until we are assured by the authorities that the danger has passed.

In the event of a lost child, staff will instantly check all areas of the center. If the child cannot be found, the child's parents and/or emergency contact and the police will be immediately notified.

If the center should lose the use of heat, water or electricity before the center opens; parents will be notified by 6:00 a.m. and will be asked to not bring their child that day. If the center should lose the use of heat, water or electricity while children are in attendance, the Director or Assistant Director will call the parents of all children and ask them to pick them up within one hour.

The Footprint Foundation will close due to inclement weather.

In the event that the center receives a threat to the building or its occupants (e.g., bomb threat, bodily injury threat, etc.), law enforcement and the parents will be immediately contacted to advise them of the threat. Depending on the nature of the threat, evacuation and/or closure may be required.



There will always be at least two staff members on site for safety precaution and in case of an emergency. At least one of those staff members will be trained on Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS), Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and CPR . Emergency numbers such as police, fire department, poison control, etc will be posted by each telephone.

### **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

There are three fire extinguishers located in three areas of the building: front entry, rear exit leading into the playground area, and one in the kitchen. All fire extinguishers will be professionally inspected annually.

### **CLEANLINESS PROCEDURE FOR STAFF/CHILDREN**

Cleanliness and sanitation are of primary importance for The Footprint Foundation! Staff and children are required to wash their hands upon arrival and after taking a break or anytime you re-enter any classroom or kitchen area, after using the restroom, diapering, or any other time their hands become soiled. Staff working with children shall wash their hands with soap and warm running water before handling food, and after assisting with toileting and after wiping bodily secretions from a child with a disposable tissue.

Children's hands shall be washed with soap and warm running water before and after meals and snacks and after toileting or diapering. Children's hands and face shall be washed after meals. Washing in a common bucket or pan is allowed after certain activities such as finger painting, if this preliminary washing is to eliminate excess paint and is followed up by individual hand washing under running water with soap. Infants hands may be washed with a fabric, cloth, or paper wipe containing soap and water. Children age one and over must use soap and running water to wash.

### **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**

The Footprint Foundation staff adopt universal precautions when exposed to blood and blood-containing body fluids and injury discharges of children. Persons shall wash their hands immediately with soap and warm running water if exposed. Single use disposable gloves will be worn if there is contact with blood-containing body fluids or tissue discharges. Hands shall be washed with soap and water after removal of gloves. Gloves will be discarded in plastic bags. For spills of vomit, urine, feces, blood or other body fluids, the center staff shall clean and disinfect the floors, walls, bathrooms, tabletops, toys, kitchen countertops and diaper changing tables.

### **TOY SANITATION**

Toys that have been in a child's mouth will be picked up as soon as the child lets go of it and placed into a basket to be washed, sanitized, and air-dried. Toys requiring laundering, such as stuffed dolls or animals, will be laundered weekly or sooner if needed. Shelves and other toys will be sanitized daily and left to air dry.

**\*\*\*Parents are required to wash their child's hands upon entering the child's classroom\*\*\***

### **DIAPERING**

Before changing a diaper, the staff will wash his/her hands. Latex free gloves may be worn by staff during diaper changes and discarded after the diaper has been removed. Following the diaper change, the soiled diaper will be disposed of in a plastic-lined, diaper pail. Wet or soiled clothing will be put into a plastic bag and tied. Hands of both the child and the staff member will be washed. Changing pads will be cleaned and disinfected after each child.

## **HEALTHCARE POLICY**

We regret any inconvenience caused by the strict adherence to these guidelines. Our concern for all the children dictates a very aggressive approach when dealing with health matters. Because of conflicting medical opinions about the advisability of re-admitting children receiving treatment who still appear ill, The Footprint Foundation will be vigilant on safety when making such decisions and ask for your tolerance and understanding.





## **SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

When a child is known to have any special health care needs, that information will be shared with those staff who are assigned to care for that child, but will otherwise be treated with confidentiality. Such special needs, including dietary requirements, will be posted on the inside of the staff cupboard door, where medication and medical log book are stored. When specialized equipment is needed, such as nebulizer or epi-pen, the child's parent or a medical professional will train staff in correct procedures. Proper hand washing procedures will be followed to prevent the spread of disease. Hand washing procedures will be posted at all of the sinks.

## **DAILY HEALTH CHECK**

Every effort is made by Center staff to prevent the spread of disease. Even with precautions, children entering care are likely to experience an increase in mild illnesses. The frequency and severity of these will vary from child to child. However, an average child under the age of five has six to twelve mild illnesses per year.

If your child exhibits a change in mood or behavior after arriving at the center, a health check may be conducted to determine if your child is ill. The health check may include a visual or physical assessment of the child and/or the use of a thermometer to reveal the child's temperature.

When a child is ill, they need a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care. We are not licensed to provide get-well care, therefore, ill children must be excluded from our care.

## **CHILD ILLNESS**

Children who are ill are not to be brought to the center. Examples of children who are ill:

- Fever (oral of 101o F or higher)
- Vomiting more than once in the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea more than once in the past 24 hours
- Contagious disease such as but not limited to
  - Chicken pox (until 6 days after onset of rash or sores have dried)
  - Pertussis/whooping cough (until on antibiotics 5 days)
  - Mumps
  - Hepatitis A
  - Measles
  - Head Lice (until 1st treatment is initiated)
  - Scabies (until after all treatment is completed)
  - Strep throat (until 24 hours of treatment and fever is gone)
  - Pink eye (until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated)
  - Colds with severe runny noses



- An unidentified rash
- Has a constant, thick, colored nasal discharge

Children may return to the center when they are symptom free and off medication for at least 24 hours. If on a prescribed medication, they must be on it for at least 24 hours or have medical approval to return to childcare and are able to participate in the daily activities. We will follow procedures on personal cleanliness and communicable diseases stated in licensing rules and the guidelines for exclusion of children from childcare as adapted from the Division of Public Health.

Parents will be informed whenever their children has been exposed to a communicable disease. Certain diseases must also be reported to the public health department and to our licensing specialist.

If a child should become ill or seriously injured while at the center, parents will be contacted immediately. Sick children will be isolated within sight and hearing and made as comfortable as possible. Ill children should be picked up as soon as possible. If the child is not picked up within one hour, the emergency contact person on the child's enrollment form will be called.

Superficial injuries will be washed with soap and water and covered with a bandage or treated with ice. Parents will be told about the minor injury when they pick their child up. We will practice universal precautions when handling all blood injuries and bodily fluid. Staff will use disposable gloves when treating blood injuries. Surfaces touched by blood will be washed and disinfected, and all materials used to treat the injury will be wrapped in an airtight plastic bag and disposed of immediately.

If there is a need for emergency medical treatment, 911 will be called for staff or child. If it is a life-threatening situation with no time to consult the child's/staff members parent or emergency contact, the child/staff member will be taken to Methodist Willowbrook which is the closest hospital to The Footprint Foundation location. Should an ambulance be needed, parents/staff member will be responsible for any costs. Parents/staff emergency contact will be contacted as soon as possible after contacting 911. Staff will have training in infant and child CPR. First aid supplies will be stored in the office area. Death of a child or any incident or accident that occurs while the child is in the care of the center resulting in an injury that requires professional medical treatment must be reported within 48 hours to licensing. If medical treatment is sought after the child has left the center, you must inform the Director, Assistant Director, or Administrator immediately.

When children are off-site for walks or field trips, staff will take along emergency contact information, attendance sheets and a first aid kit in case an injury occurs to children or staff. Injuries will be recorded in the medical log book upon return to the center.

## **MEDICATIONS**

The Footprint Foundation will store medications in a locked cabinet in the classroom unless the medication requires refrigeration then it will be stored in a container labeled with the child's name in the staff office. Medications will be administered under the following conditions:

- Prescriptive and non-prescriptive medication will only be given to children if parents have completed the authorization form provided
- All medicine must be in its original container, bearing the label with child's name, dosage and administration directions and proper dosing dispensing tool
- The Footprint Foundation will not exceed the age-related dosage on the label of any medication without a written doctor's authorization



- Medication will only be administered at the specified time on the authorization sheet. If a dose is missed, the parent will be notified at pick up and it will be the parent's discretion on how to handle the missed dose

The Footprint Foundation will not permit "As Needed" medications. Any over the counter medication must have the appropriate form filled out with specific instructions on dosage amounts and dosing times. Never can dosing exceed the labels recommended days administered unless a note is on file from the child's physician. The Footprint Foundation will maintain a medical log where we will document the administration of medication and accidents or injuries that happen when children are in our care. Observations of injuries to a child's body received outside of care or any marked changes in behavior or appearance will be noted.

### **NON-MEDICINAL PRODUCTS**

Sun screen, insect repellent, lip balm, diaper creams and other non-medicinal products will only be used on a child when signed authorization is on file, and the specific products are supplied by the parent and labeled with the child's name.

### **SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME (SBS)**

Staff, including substitutes and emergency back-up providers, must have attended an approved training in the identification, prevention, and grave effects of shaking babies, before being allowed to work with children.

### **BITING POLICY**

Children biting is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in group childcare. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers involved. No matter what the cause, biting in a group situation causes strong feelings in all involved. It does help, however, to be aware of the potential problem before it happens, and to form a plan of action if it does occur.

#### **When a child is bitten there are steps to follow for the biter and the victim:**

- The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "Stop, that is not okay"
- The caring attention is focused on the victim
- The biter is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that the child can understand. "I can see that you want that truck, but I can't let you hurt him to get it. We need to wait for our turn."
- Redirect the child to other play
- Staff will write an ouch report for parents to sign at pick up

#### **For the victim:**

- Separate the victim from the biter
- Comfort the child
- Administer first aid
- Staff will write an ouch report for parents to sign at pick up

### **The Footprint Foundation policy if biting becomes severe in nature:**

- Talk to the parents to determine any triggers that may be causing the behavior.
- Have staff working in the classroom document the behaviors including time of day, date, what the child was doing prior to the bite, and what the child was doing when the bite happened so that we can identify any possible triggers in the classroom.
- If after meeting with the parents and documentation does not eliminate these behaviors, outside sources may be consulted for observation and evaluation. (Birth to 3 for children under age 3 and the appropriate school district for children age 4+)
- If the outside agency does not determine that services are warranted, The Footprint Foundation will then meet with the parents to outline that from this point forward a “three strikes and you are out” rule meaning that if we have three separate biting incidents occur the family will be dismissed from the center immediately following the third incident.

### **STAFF VACCINATION POLICY**

The Footprint Foundation does require staff to show proof of vaccination for vaccine preventable diseases (VPD). A list of VPD's can be found at the website [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines) Although not required, staff is encouraged to receive all VPD's prior to employment.

### **NUTRITION POLICY**

The Footprint Foundation follows USDA guidelines when planning our menus. If eligibility requirements are met, The Footprint Foundation will participate in the Child and Adult Food Program. Menus will be posted outside the kitchen as well as outside each classroom and meals will be based on a 5 week rotation. If a menu must be changed for any reason, the food substituted will be noted on the posted menu. Menus will be kept on file for three months. Meals and snacks are prepared at the center. Kitchen staff receives the appropriate training in food service procedures. The Footprint Foundation will provide breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack to all children in attendance at the times identified in the daily schedule. School-aged children will be offered an afternoon snack upon return from school. If your child has special dietary needs (medical condition or personal choice) or has food allergies, parents must notify the center in writing.

Children who attend during the early morning or late afternoon hours will be offered a snack to ensure that they never go without food for more than 3 hours. Children will eat family style and will be allowed to serve themselves. Each child will be asked to take a small amount of each item served and encouraged to try everything but the children will not be forced to eat items they do not like. Mealtimes will include meaningful conversation and will promote social interaction, encourage good table manners and develop sound nutritional habits. Teachers will eat with the children to model the behavior that is desired.

Children will be praised for trying new things and they will be encouraged to clean up after themselves. Eating surfaces will be sanitized before meals and snacks and everyone will wash their hands before and after eating. Meals will not be withheld as a form of punishment.

Birthday and holiday store bought treats are allowed but please consider that we have some children with peanut allergies in our center. No made from scratch treats can be permitted. If bringing in treats, no religious, religiously suggestive, or items that may be religiously offensive will be permitted. Please try to provide nutritious choices low in fat and sugar and that do not contain nuts, peanuts, or nut by-products. Please make teachers aware when treats are to be brought in.

Children younger than 12 months must be served formula or breast milk, unless written direction is on file from the child's health care professional. Bottles, breast milk, and commercial baby food must be labeled with your child's name and served on the child's schedule. Babies will be held for bottle-feeding. Bottles will never be



propped up, and unused formula or breast milk will be disposed of immediately. All bottles will be rinsed and sent home for sanitation.

Food will be stored off of the floor and once opened, in airtight containers. Refrigerator (40 degrees or colder) and freezer temperatures (0 degrees or colder) will be properly maintained.

Dishes will be washed and sanitized in accordance with licensing regulations, in a commercial dishwasher and air dried in racks, baskets, or on drain boards. Equipment and utensils shall have smooth, hard surfaces, be easily cleanable, in good repair, durable, non-toxic and free of cracks, seams, chips and roughened areas, and shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Food preparation tables shall be durable, and surfaces shall be smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable. After cleaning, utensils shall be stored in a clean, dry place and protected from contamination. Kitchen utensils and food contact surfaces used for preparation, storage or serving of food shall be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Poisonous and toxic materials, including cleaning supplies, bleaches and insecticides, shall be labeled and stored in cabinets used for no other purpose and shall be inaccessible to children. Cleaning aids such as mops, brooms and buckets shall be clean and shall be stored outside of food preparation or food storage areas. Leftover prepared food which has not been served shall be dated, refrigerated promptly and used within 36 hours, or frozen immediately for later use. Staff will wash their hands with soap and warm running water before starting work, before and after handling food, and after using the toilet. Hands shall be dried with single use towels. No one with an open or infected wound or sore may work in the food preparation area unless the wound or sore is covered and, if it is on a hand, a nonporous glove is worn on that hand.

Snack and meal schedule: Breakfast 8:30; Lunch 11:30; Snack 2:30; 5:30 Additional snack - The Footprint Foundation acknowledges that you may not want your child to have a snack offered to them at 5:30 but the State of Texas Licensing mandates all children will be offered a food source.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Cypress Fairbanks ISD(#6263) bus lines provides transportation to/from Hancock Elementary School in the Cypress School District (parents must contact school district for fees and eligibility requirements). Please inform the Director or Assistant Director if you have arranged transportation with the school district. If your child(ren) does not arrive at the center at their regularly scheduled time, the Director or Assistant Director will phone the parents to inform them of the situation. If the parents are not able to be reached within 5 minutes, then the emergency back up person will be called. When a child is transported to his/her destination, an adult must wait until the child enters the building or is met by an authorized person.

When regularly scheduled transportation is provided, such as to and from school; the center must maintain a list of children to be transported, route and scheduled stops, name and place where child is to be dropped off.

## **SMOKING IS PROHIBITED IN THE VEHICLE.**

Should there be an accident, the Director, Assistant Director, or Administrator must verbally inform the licensing office within 24 hours, and provide a written report within 5 business days after the incident. The Footprint Foundation will not permit the use of staff vehicles to transport children at any time.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be taken throughout the year; however, the majority will most likely occur in the summer. Parents will be notified in advance and permission will be required for children to attend. Additional fees will apply and those also must be collected in advance. We encourage parents, grandparents, etc to attend as chaperones and the number needed and additional applicable fees will be requested on the information about the field trip.

With children safety a priority, The Footprint Foundation will require parent chaperones to verify that we have a manageable number of children to adults' ratio. If manageable numbers cannot be obtained, The Footprint



Foundation reserves the right to cancel any fieldtrip at their discretion. Staff will check the children onto the bus, we will take head counts to verify that all children are accounted for before and during the fieldtrip and also upon returning to The Footprint Foundation. When we arrive at our destination, children will be checked off the bus and then a head count will be made to verify that all children are accounted for. While on the fieldtrip, a head count will be taken once every 30 minutes to ensure all children are accounted for. To ensure that no child is left unattended, our staff will have all children exit the bus when it reaches its destination. A staff member will do a walk-through of the bus to verify that all children have exited the bus. The staff member will look on and under all the seats to verify no child is left on the bus.

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

**Texas Department of Family & Protective Services**

- Main office:** 512-834-3426
- Local office:** 713-940-5200
- Website:** <https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

**Texas Department of Family & Protective Services**

- Investigations:** 281-847-7000  
3 Northpoint Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77060

**KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE**

Reporting Abuse or Neglect: Texas Law requires caregivers to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Texas DPRS or law enforcement. Call 1-800-252-5400 to make confidential reports. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime. Employers are prohibited from retaliating against caregivers who make reports in good faith. These are also available on the web at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us) or <https://www.txabusehotline.org>

The Center’s Director or teacher will notify the Department of Protective Services, and/or the local law enforcement officials, when it appears that a child is being seriously neglected or abused.

The Texas Family Code (sections§34.07) States, Failure To Report: (A) A person commits an offense if the person has cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be further adversely affected by abuse or neglect and knowingly fails to report it, in accordance with Section §34.02 of the code, (B) An offense Under this Section is a “Class B” Misdemeanor.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ , parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_  
acknowledge receipt of the following forms.

- Enrollment Form
- Tuition Agreement
- Parent Handbook including Policies and Procedures
- Food Program Application
- Medication Authorization Form
- Discipline And Guidance Policy
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s) Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Director Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

