



## Parent Handbook

11512 Olson Drive

Austin, Texas 78750

512-258-0101

[hopechildrenscenter.com](http://hopechildrenscenter.com)



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## About us

### History

Hope Children's Center was established in 1978 by Hope Presbyterian Church as a community outreach ministry. Today, Hope Children's Center continues to nurture and educate children in a loving Christian atmosphere.

### Mission

Every child is a blessing from God and a valued member of the global community. At Hope Children's Center, we celebrate cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity and create an environment in which every child knows they are loved, accepted, and respected.

In tandem with International Baccalaureate schools, we strive to develop students, that are inquisitive, knowledgeable, effective communicators, principled, openminded, caring, balanced, and reflective.

We foster learning experiences through a holistic approach with a firm foundation in child-directed learning.

Holistic learning enhances socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive development by providing a vibrant and dynamic classroom setting that embraces play, discovery, and exploration.

Child-directed learning is a crucial component for success in early childhood education, allowing children to be age-appropriate while challenging their ability to comprehend complex thought.

We foster an environment in which children learn how to get along with others and share their emotions. The art of sharing and caring is modeled by classroom teachers and other staff members. We teach conflict resolution skills at all ages.

Hope Children's Center accepts all. We do not discriminate based on gender, race, religion, national, or ethnic origin in admittance.

### Mission in Action

Hope Children's Center's day-to-day operations are administered by a Director with the help of the Assistant Director, and with the oversight of the HCC Commission of Hope Presbyterian Church. HCC staff consists of nurturing teaches who meet or exceed the minimum standards as mandated by the state of Texas.

### **Our teachers work diligently to fulfill our mission by providing an environment which:**

- Values each child as a blessing
- Encourages children to promote positive self-image
- Guides children to celebrate individual differences and look for commonalities
- Reinforces social skills and empathy
- Develops independence
- Encourages exploration and fosters curiosity

- Teaches academics readiness
- Inspires lifelong learning

### **Children blossom in a developmentally-appropriate, active learning environment**

- **Our teachers offer engaging and developmentally-appropriate curriculum choices.** The curriculum is designed to nurture a child's curiosity and sense of wonder, while strengthening social, emotional, physical, and intellectual skills. Teachers are available to guide each child's experience.
- **Intentional activities are experienced through:**
  - o Open-ended activities
  - o Dramatic play
  - o Art expression
  - o Literature
  - o Exploration and experimentation
  - o Outdoor activities
  - o Pro-social skills
  - o Problem solving with peers
  - o Fine and gross motor skills
  - o Music
  - o Nature activities
  - o Cultural experiences

### **In alignment with International Baccalaureate principle, we explore:**

- Who we are
- Where we are in time and place
- How we express ourselves
- How we organize ourselves
- How we share the planet
- How we relate to the world
- How the world relates to us
- How we communicate

## Hours of Operation & School Calendar

### Hours of Operation

Hope Children's Center is open from 9am-6pm, except on student holidays observed by Round Rock Independent School District.

Hope Children's Center operates for ages 18 months-Kindergarten: 9:00 am-1:00 pm

The Bridge Program is from 1:00 pm-2:15 pm

The Club (After-School Program) is from 2:40 pm- 6:00 pm

### School Calendar

Hope Children's Center observes all the school holidays and closings of Round Rock ISD.

Round Rock ISD Academic Calendars can be found here, and then click on the academic year:

<https://roundrockisd.org/about-rrisd/calendars/>

## School Closings

HCC will close if Round Rock ISD closes or delays the start of the school day due to weather conditions. They will post these closing on their district website: <https://roundrockisd.org/>

More information about how RRISD decides on weather closures can be found at:

<https://roundrockisd.org/inclement-weather-protocols/>

HCC will follow the recommendations of the State of Texas, City of Austin, and/or Travis County authorities and the Hope Presbyterian Church Session in decisions to close school for health or community safety reasons.

## Registration

Registration begins in January for the following school year. Current enrollees, siblings not yet enrolled, and members of Hope Presbyterian Church may register prior to the general public.

The following are needed to secure enrollment at HCC:

- Registration fee\*
- Supply fee\*
- Enrollment forms – must be complete according to state regulations, please keep these updated

**\*Registration and supply fees are NON-REFUNDABLE**

Once enrollment capacity is reached, waiting lists are formed and used to fill vacancies.

## Tuition Payments

HCC monthly tuition is due by the first of the month. Payments may be made electronically by card or check.

- Refunds are not issued for absences, bad weather days, holidays, or any day the school is closed due to unforeseen circumstances. This includes closures based upon the state of Texas, City of Austin, and/or Travis County authorities for health or community safety reasons.
- In the event of an extended school closure, online curriculum will be offered and tuition will be collected
- Absences may not be made up.
- There is a \$35 returned check fee.
- Use your bank's bill pay system to send a check to Hope Children's Center, 11512 Olson Drive, Austin, TX 78750, 512-258-0101. Please make sure your child's name is on the check that comes directly from your bank's bill pay system.
- **A \$25 late fee is assessed on accounts 15 days past due.** If an unpaid balance remains on your account and no payment arrangements have been made, your child will be unable to return to school until a payment plan is established.

According to the Internal Revenue Service, a childcare expense for working parents may be tax deductible. A statement will be made available upon request.

## Child Care Subsidy Funding

You may qualify for tuition assistance. Please contact Texas Workforce Solutions if you feel you may need assistance : <https://texaschildcaresolutions.org/financial-assistance-for-child-care/>

## Withdrawal

Withdrawals before the end of the school year require **30-day written notice** submitted to the HCC office to be released from further monthly tuition obligations. You are financially responsible, whether your child attends or not, for 30 days from the date of notice.

If you remove your child from the school and then return, you must pay an enrollment fee of \$100. Your child will only be admitted if space is available.

## School Visitation

HCC has an open-door policy during operating hours. Visitors must check in at the HCC office. All visitors on campus must be escorted by a staff member.

## Clothing & What to Bring

### Clothing

Dress your child in clothing that is:

- Easy for your child to manage
- Comfortable
- Appropriate for weather conditions (label all jackets/coats)
- Okay to get dirty, covered in paint, shaving cream, etc.

Please no onesies or overalls. For safety reasons, we recommend children wear closed-toed shoes.

### What to Bring

Each day in your backpack (large enough to hold art projects), please bring these items

**LABELED with your child's name** each day:

- If appropriate, **2 diapers (or 2 pull-ups** with “easy open sides” or Velcro, if toilet training)
- A spill-proof **sippy cup** filled with water **or water bottle**
- A healthy, low-sugar **snack** in a small Ziplock bag or another disposable container
- A complete **change of clothes** appropriate for the season, including socks, in a labeled Ziplock bag to keep in the backpack. Please label each article of clothing as well.
- A healthy **lunch in a lunchbox** or container with a lid

Please do not bring binkies, blankies, or toys from home. They may create conflict with the children or may get lost.

## Food Guidelines

All food, including snack, lunch, birthday and special/party days, will be provided for each child by their parents.

Food will not be provided by HCC staff.

Please send a water bottle for your child each day, labeled with your child's first and last name.

### Snack

Parents provide snack and are responsible for the nutritional value and daily food needs of their child.

- We recommend a child-sized healthy, low sugar snack that your child can feed themselves
- Refrigeration is not provided
- Label your child's snack with their first and last name



## Lunch

Parents provide lunch and are responsible for the nutritional value and daily food needs of their child.

Tips for a successful lunch and school:

- Pack a nutritious lunch in a child-friendly container (Nutritious can be defined as 1 protein, 1 fruit or vegetable, 1 carbohydrate/cereal, and 1 dairy)
- Pack foods familiar to your child
- Send child-sized portions
- Include plastic utensils and straws
- Label all containers, **ice packs**, water bottles, etc. with your child's first and last name
- Lunches and drinks must not require heating or refrigeration
- Yogurts in tubes are discouraged
- Gum, lollipops, and hard candy are not permitted
- Glass containers are not permitted

## Breast Feeding

HCC provides a comfortable place for mothers to breastfeed. Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk while their child is in care.

## Diaper Changing/Toilet Training

Children's clothing should be easy for teachers to change and for the child to manage independently. Elastic waists are encouraged. No onesies or overalls. Bring disposable diapers/pullups from home. Label each one with your child's name.

Children **must** be toilet-trained if enrolled in the 3-year-old class and older. Children who are 3 years old and not toilet-trained may need to be placed in a 2-year-old class so that we can accommodate their needs.

Teach your child how to:

- Wipe themselves
- Flush the toilet
- Manage their clothing (pull up and down)
- Wash their hands
- Tell an adult when they need to use the bathroom
- Boys—use a urinal

## Outside and Gym Play

Outdoor and gym play offer a variety of activities, challenges, and complexity that are not attainable in a small indoor space. In these settings, children engage in loud, active games using gross motor skills. A child's social and emotional development is involved in active play as children create games with movement, strategies, and rules.

- HCC has two playgrounds and a gymnasium. The children play outside daily if weather permits. In the case of inclement weather, children play in the gym.

### Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

- Please apply sunscreen and insect repellent prior to arrival at school. Teachers are not allowed to do this. Do not place these items in your child's backpack, as they are unsafe in reach of children.

### Water Play

- Children may engage in supervised water activities, which can include: water table play, sprinkler play, or small pool games. None of the water activities will include swimming.

### Outdoor Play & Weather Guidelines

The children at HCC may play outside if the windchill is above 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Check the weather daily and dress your child accordingly
- Dress your child in layers for ease of removal

Temperature considerations and proper clothing are as follows:

- Below 60 degrees: jacket or long sleeves recommended.
- Below 50 degrees: coat and long pants recommended
- Below 40 degrees: gloves/mittens, hats, long pants, and coat are necessary

## Understand the Weather



### Wind-Chill

- 30° is **chilly** and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is **cold**
- 0° to 15° is **very cold**
- -20° to 0° is **bitter cold** with significant risk of **frostbite**
- -20° to -60° is **extreme cold** and **frostbite** is likely
- -60° is **frigid** and exposed **skin will freeze** in 1 minute



### Heat Index

- 80° or below is considered **comfortable**
- 90° beginning to feel **uncomfortable**
- 100° **uncomfortable** and may be **hazardous**
- 110° considered **dangerous**

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

# Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)										
Air Temperature	Wind Speed in mph									
	Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	
40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27	
30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13	
20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1	
10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15	
0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	
-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	



Comfortable for outdoor play



Caution



Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)												
Air Temperature (F)	Relative Humidity (Percent)											
	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95
80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	87
84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100
90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127
94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135		
100	109	114	118	124	129	130						
104	119	124	131	137								

## Safety

Safety is a top priority at HCC

### Exterior doors:

- All exterior doors on campus are locked during the school day except for arrival and dismissal times. Once doors are locked, all visitors on campus must be escorted.
- If you arrive at HCC during the school day, ring the doorbell at the entrance near the HCC office or on the North building entrance, and someone will assist you. Please be patient while you wait; we may be coming from another building to answer the door.

## Emergency Preparedness

HCC conducts, fire, tornado, and lockdown drills on a routine basis. An emergency preparedness plan is available in the office for you to look at in the office. The plan cannot leave the premises. In the event of emergency campus evacuation, students, and staff will relocate to Spicewood Elementary School at 11601 Olson Drive, Austin, TX, 78750 or to an alternate location as directed by emergency personnel. If needed, children will be transported to an evacuation location site by personal vehicles. After children are transported safely, HCC staff will notify parents of the evacuation location by text, email, or Tadpoles.

## Parking

HCC has two parking lots, one located on Olson Drive and the other on Spicewood Parkway. The parking lots are shared with Spicewood Elementary. The circular drive on Olson Drive is for **emergency parking and church business only**.

Parking lot safety tips:

- Watch for small children
- Stay alert and turn off your phone
- Drive slowly and follow direction signs
- Observe parking designations- curbs, reserved, and handicapped spaces
- Take valuables with you
- Supervise your children in and around the parking lot. **Hold your child's hand at ALL times.**

### **DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN YOUR VEHICLE**

HCC staff is **REQUIRED** by Texas State Law and Child Care Licensing to report to the police or the Department of Texas Health and Human Services within 48 hours if a child is left unattended in a vehicle.

## Arrival

Please make note of program times. Arriving on time establishes a positive school routine and ensures children can participate in all school activities. It is also disruptive to class activities when teachers must stop to admit late arrivals. Please be on time.

School doors unlock five minutes prior and 15 minutes after program start times. If you arrive at HCC during the school day, ring the doorbell at the entrance near the HCC office or the North building and someone will assist you.

**Once doors are locked, all visitors on campus will be escorted.**

When separating from your child at school, short and sweet goodbyes work best. It is our experience once a child is engaged in activities, they settle down and have fun. If a child has difficulty adjusting, we will contact you. It may be beneficial to shorten a child's day to ease the transition.

## Dismissal

Please make note of program times. Picking children up on time establishes a positive school routine and reduces fear and anxiety.

School doors are unlocked 15 minutes prior to 5 minutes after program dismissal times. If you arrive at HCC during the school day, ring the doorbell at the entrance near the HCC office or the North building, and someone will assist you.

**Once the doors are locked, all visitors on campus must be escorted.**

If you will not be on time, call the HCC office or notify us via Tadpoles. Beginning the second week of school, parents arriving more than ten (10) minutes late will be assessed **a late fee of \$10 and an additional \$1 per minute.**

Children will only be dismissed to authorized adults. You may add or delete someone at any time in the office.

If you need to leave a car safety seat at school, bring it to the HCC office.

HCC encourages parents to engage in conversation with their children about the day and adventures at school during arrival and dismissal times. Please leave your cell phone in your car.

## After Dismissal

Please supervise children at all times while on Hope Presbyterian Church property.

After HCC dismissal, you are welcome to gather and visit in the courtyard. The large trees provide shade and the lawn provides lots of room for children to play. Please supervise your children at all times.

Respect all Hope Presbyterian Church property, especially the Memorial Garden.

### Hope Memorial Garden

Hope Presbyterian Church has a dedicated memorial garden at the south end of the sanctuary, between the intersection of Olson Drive and Spicewood Parkway. In September 2002, this space was dedicated as a garden for the interment of the cremains of members of Hope. The Hope Memorial Garden dignifies the memory of those interred there and provides a serene place for remembrance, comfort, reflection, and connection for their families. You are welcome to walk through the garden with your children and use it as a quiet space for conversation or reflection. Hope respectfully asks you not to use this space as a play area.

## Medical

### Information and Procedures

- As required by the Texas Department of State Health Services and Child Care Licensing, the following must be on file in the HCC office **PRIOR to the first day your child attends school:**
  - o Current and complete health admission requirements forms
  - o Current record of immunizations or vaccine exemption affidavit
  - o Plan of action for medical conditions and/or allergies
  - o Medications required in plan of action
- Submit in writing to the HCC office changes in your child's medical information

### Emergencies

In the event of critical illness or injury HCC staff will:

- Contact emergency medical services
- Administer first-aid treatment or CPR if needed
- Contact the child's parents or emergency contact
- Contact the physician identified in the child's record if needed
- Ensure supervision of other children

### Allergies

An EMERGENCY PLAN OF ACTION must be completed by your child's doctor and medications required in the plan of action must be provided to HCC office BEFORE the first day of school. This is a requirement set by Childcare Licensing.

### Medication

- A Medication Authorization form is required before medication (prescription and over-the-counter), including diaper ointment, can be administered. Medication Authorization forms are available in the HCC office.
- Medication (Prescription and over-the-counter) must be in its original container with instructions and brought to the HCC office, not kept in backpacks or classrooms. The Medication Authorization form will be kept with the child's medication in the HCC office.

**Notify your child's teacher or HCC office in writing of any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) administered to your child prior to arrival at school.**

### Illness

Children who have a fever (100 degrees or higher), vomiting, diarrhea, or a persistent cough may not attend or return to school until they are completely symptom-free, without fever-reducing medications, for 24 hours.

Children displaying any of the above symptoms are removed from the classroom. Parents are contacted and required to promptly pick up their child.

Email the HCC office when your child will be absent due to illness or mark the child absent in Tadpoles, our childcare app. We must be notified of any child having a communicable disease as outlined by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Parents of classmates are notified in writing if a contagious disease exists.

**Texas Health Services: Department of State Health Service  
Diseases Requiring Exclusion from Schools (Rule §97.7)**

Here is a hyperlink to the webpage above:

[Texas Administrative Code RULE §97.7, Diseases Requiring Exclusion From Schools](#)

You can view and order a chart with this information at:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/idps-home/school-communicable-disease-chart>

HCC staff members are required to follow the same illness guidelines as the children.

**Injury**

The staff makes every effort to ensure the safety of your child while they are in our care. Unfortunately, minor accidents may occur. We will notify you immediately in the event of a more serious injury or accident. An Incident Form will need to be signed upon arrival. You may request a copy of the form.

**Hearing and Vision Screening**

As required by the Texas Health and Safety Code, four and five-year-old children enrolled in a licensed childcare center are required to have visions and hearing screenings.

Please have your child's physician conduct these screenings and provide results to HCC. Screening results are kept in the HCC office for each child.

**Children's Immunization Policy**

All students must submit a clinic copy of current vaccinations, or a notarized state exemption form upon enrollment. School-age students may substitute with the name of the school attended where current records are on file.

**Employee Immunization Policy**

Hope Children's Center has implemented the following immunization policy for all its employees to be in compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Minimum Standard Rule §746.3611, which requires a policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases. While the safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employees.

Vaccines we currently recommend our employees receive:

- Influenza (annually)
- Pertussis (Tdap)
- COVID-19

If the employee is not exempt from having these immunizations, HCC recommends that employees consider these immunizations.

The employee will indicate on a form if there are any exemptions that would prevent them from receiving an immunization for a vaccine-preventable disease.

A copy of this policy, signed by the employee, will be kept in the employee file.

A staff member who has a fever (100.2 degrees or higher), a possible contagious disease, vomiting, diarrhea, or a persistent cough may not be able to return to school until they are symptom-free for 24 hours. HCC will encourage the use of protective medical equipment to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible disease. The protective medical equipment will include gloves, hand washing, and if applicable, a face mask. The use of protective medical equipment will be based upon the level of risk the employee's routine and direct exposure to children. Employees should not be in direct contact when they are ill or exhibiting signs of illness. Hope Children's Center will monitor information provided to the public through the CDC and/or other sources to determine the level of risk the employee presents.

There will be no discrimination or retaliatory action against any employee who does/does not receive immunizations for vaccine-preventable illnesses. The use of protective medical equipment is not considered retaliatory when used by employees of HCC.

All employees will be required to sign this policy and the signed policy will be retained on file. The information related to whether or not an employee chooses to have immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases will be kept confidential. Failure to sign this policy will result in the employee not being able to work directly with children.

## Communications

HCC staff encourages open and honest communication with parents. Feel free to discuss questions or concerns about policy and procedures with the Director.

Inform the Director or your child's teacher of changes in family life that may affect your child (i.e. travelling parents, illness in family, death, divorce, employment status, new child at home, etc.)

Keep your child's information up to date (i.e. phone numbers, address, emergency contact, etc.) with the HCC office.

Teachers are available for in-person and phone conferences by appointment. Please refrain from discussing your child or other children with teachers during arrival and dismissal. It is a hectic time and we want to ensure that there is ample time to address your concern.



Parents will be notified in writing of changes in school policy.

### HCC communicates with parents through the following:

- Emails from HCC
- Tadpoles app, which provides emails and text messages
- Teacher's class notes and whiteboards

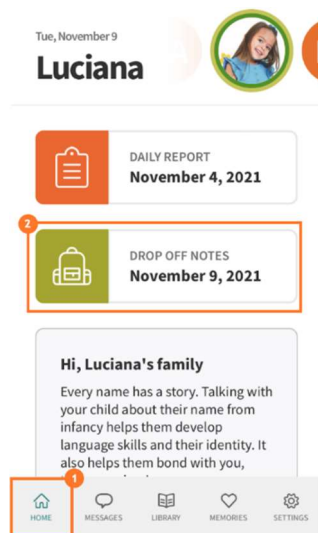
Periodically, parents receive emails from Hope Presbyterian Church inviting families to participate in activities and events.

### Absences

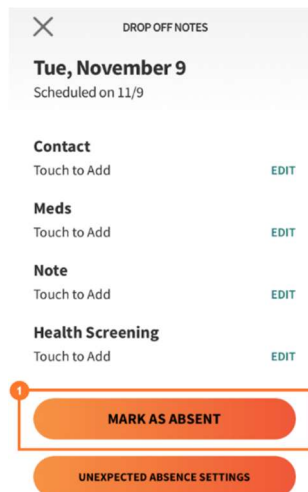
If your child will be absent, please send us a message or email by 8:15 am. This will allow for teachers to adjust for their day.

Family members can mark their child absent using the Tadpoles Parent mobile app. When family members mark a child absent using their family account, the absence is communicated to the child's school and teachers. Absences can be scheduled to occur on the same day or on a future date. To mark your child absent from the Tadpoles Parent mobile app:

First, from the Home screen (1), select Drop Off Notes (2)



Second, Select MARK AS ABSENT (1)



Third, on the Absences screen, select ADD A NEW ABSENCE (1)

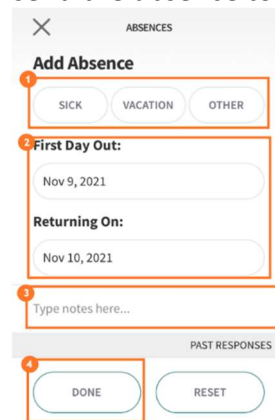


Then, select SICK, VACATION, or OTHER to designate the type of absence (1).

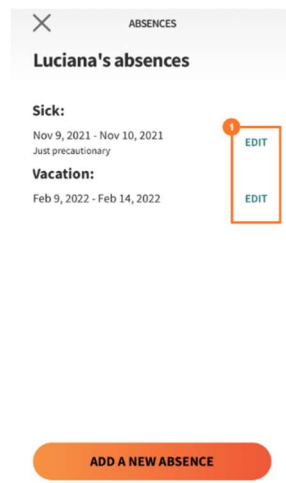
Select the First Day Out and Returning On dates (2).

You have the option to add a note (3).

Select Done (4) to save your changes and to send the absence to your child's school.



Last, you can then view and edit any absence from the Absences screen (1).



## Behavior, Discipline, and Guidance

HCC policy is to be loving, accepting, tolerant, and supportive of all children. We praise the fulfillment of expectations and set good examples for children.

Behavior and discipline procedures:

- Convey the expected behavior in positive terms
- Rephrase expected behavior
- Redirect child and offer explanation
- Separate from situation and discuss
- Ask for assistance if behavior persists
- Notify parents if warranted or if child needs to be dismissed

Injury due to behavior issue procedures:

- Give immediate attention to injured child
- Request assistance if needed
- Talk to involved children
- Notify parents if warranted
- Complete Illness/Incident Report

The Department of Health and Human Services, Childcare Licensing requires the following information be included in our discipline and guidance policies as stated in Rule §746.2805:

*“There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:*

- (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;*
- (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;*
- (3) Grabbing or pulling a child;*
- (4) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;*
- (5) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;*
- (6) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;*
- (7) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet;*
- (8) Placing a child in a restrictive device for time out;*
- (9) Withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out that is consistent with §746.2803(4)(D) of this subchapter (relating to What methods of discipline and guidance may a caregiver use?); and*
- (10) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.”*

And from Rule §746.2803:

*“Discipline must be:*

- (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;*
- (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding;*
- (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control; and*
- (4) A positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:*

- (A) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;*
- (B) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;*
- (C) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and*
- (D) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age."*

## Suspension and Exclusion Policy

HCC maintains the right to dismiss a child for the remainder of the school year if:

- Child is unable to adjust to a group situation
- Child or family member is disruptive or exhibits inappropriate behavior for the preschool environment
- Child displays special needs that HCC cannot meet

### **Suspension and Expulsion procedure:**

1. Teacher observation
2. Documentation of observed behavior or incident
3. Modification of environment or implementation of new strategy
4. If behavior continues, teacher/director engage in conversation with parents
5. Implement action items such as modifications or behavior plan from discussion with parents
6. Encourage parents to seek support services from specialists
7. Re-evaluate behavior
8. If behavior does not improve, notify parent in writing of suspension, terms of suspension, and terms for returning to care
9. Suspend or expel

Injuring another child out of aggression is grounds for immediate suspension. The terms of a child's suspension are determined by the Director.

## Childcare Licensing

HCC complies with the "Minimum Standards for Child Care" as outlines by the State of Texas, and is licensed to operate by the Department of Health and Human Services, Childcare Licensing. [https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child\\_Care/](https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child_Care/)

Local child-care licensing office is located at 14000 Summit, Austin, TX 78728, 512-834-3195.

More information on child care centers is found at

[https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child\\_Care/Search\\_Texas\\_Child\\_Care/default.asp](https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/default.asp)

Parents may ask the Director to see the following information:

- Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers
- Facility documentation of Liability insurance that complies with Human Resources Code, Section 42.0491
- Department of Health and Human Services, Childcare Licensing Inspection Report
- City of Austin Fire Marshal's Inspection Report
- Health Department's Sanitation Inspection Report

The strategy for coordination between HCC and appropriate community organizations will always be through and upon advisement of the Department of Health and Human Services, Childcare Licensing and our current Child Care Licensing Representative.

## Child Abuse Reporting

HCC staff is required to have annual training of one hour or more in prevention, recognition, and reporting child abuse and neglect. HCC staff is REQUIRED by Texas State Law and Child Care Licensing to report to the police or the Department of Health and Human Services, Childcare Licensing within 48 hours any instance when there is reason to suspect occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation.

Examples of abuse and neglect are:

- Leaving a child unattended in a vehicle
- Not securing a child in a car or booster seat
- Unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body or on multiple surface planes
- Child hygiene issues

If parents or others feel assistance or intervention is needed with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we highly encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit [getparentingtips.com](http://getparentingtips.com). The 24/7 Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline is 1-800-252-5400 for urgent situations that need to be investigated within 24 hours, for important but less urgent situations, go online at [txabusehotline.org](http://txabusehotline.org), and certainly for an emergency or life-threatening situation, please call 9-1-1.

To increase awareness, HCC posts the following publication for parents and staff:

# KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

## Report Abuse and Neglect

Texas law requires a person having reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person to immediately make a report to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or law enforcement.

Call **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.

## Protect Children

- Never shake a baby.
- Shaken baby syndrome is the result of violently shaking a young child. Injuries can include brain swelling and damage, subdural hemorrhaging, reduced cognitive function and death.

## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

SIDS is the unexplained death of a sleeping baby.

**Always place infants to sleep on their backs in a crib with a firm surface away from soft items like blankets, pillows or toys.**

## Keep Children Healthy

- Wash your hands and children's hands often.
- Immunize children.
- Keep ill children at home.
- Learn pediatric CPR and first aid.
- Make sure children drink plenty of water.
- Discuss special needs with caregivers.
- Learn more about childhood diabetes, which impairs a body's ability to regulate blood sugar levels, and other medical conditions, from your child's health-care provider.

## Water Safety

- Always maintain active supervision and stay within reach of children in the water.
- Secure water areas with fences, alarms or other means to ensure children don't access the areas unsupervised.
- Have an emergency plan and ensure caregivers are trained in pediatric CPR.
- Don't assume children will use good judgment around the water and make safe choices.

## Transportation Safety

- Use car seats and booster seats according to Texas law. All children under 8-years-old who are 4'9" or shorter must be in an appropriate child safety seat system installed according to manufacturer's instructions.  
Before closing car doors, make sure that arms, fingers, legs and toes are all inside to avoid accidental injury.
- Children should not be left in a car unattended for any period. Have a system in place to ensure all children have safely exited the car.
- Keep car doors locked and the keys out of children's reach.
- Educate adults and children about car and transportation safety, especially about getting in and out of a vehicle, loading and unloading curbside.
- Maintain active supervision when children are around cars.
- More information can be found at:  
<https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/media-and-communications-office/child-passenger-safety-information>

## Unsafe Children's Products

Visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website at [cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov) to see recalls of unsafe children's products.

Sign up for email updates at [cpsc.gov/newsroom/subscribe](http://cpsc.gov/newsroom/subscribe).



TEXAS  
People and Progress

**Texas Health and Human Services Commission  
Child Care Regulation Department**

\* Texas Family Code, Title 5. The Parent-Child Relationship and the Suit Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship, Subtitle E. Protection of the Child, Chapter 261. Investigation of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect, Subchapter B. Report of Abuse or Neglect; Immunities

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## Gang-Free Zones

The State requires parents and guardians of children at licensed childcare centers to be informed about gang-free zones.

*What is a gang-free zone? A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.*

## Firearms and Weapons

Firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of HCC. This prohibition does not apply to personal vehicles.

Peace officers listed in 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 may have firearms on the premises.

## Animals at School

Pets are not allowed at HCC during the school day. If an animal will be in a classroom, parents will be notified in writing. Service animals are allowed on HCC campus with proper identification and documentation on file in the HCC office

## Special Events

Throughout the school year we have many school-wide special events. Parents will be informed ahead of time so that they may attend and join in the fun!

### Field Trips

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes may take walking field trips. Prior to a field trip, parents are required to sign a permission slip. Parent volunteers may be asked to accompany classes. No siblings are allowed on field trips.

### Birthdays

- Birthdays are celebrated in chapel. We invite parents to join chapel for birthday celebrations.
- Parents may provide stickers for classmates or donate a book to the HCC library in honor of their child's birthday



- Birthday invitations and “thank you” notes may be distributed at school if the entire class is included; birthday gifts need to be exchanged outside of school.

### Chapel

Children attend weekly chapel. Bible stories and character traits are presented through stories and skits, songs are sung, and birthdays are celebrated. Parents, family, and friends are always welcome!

## Character Building

Character-building is a fundamental component of a child’s education. Throughout the school year, we focus on a character trait each month. In chapel character building stories and songs reinforce the trait of the month. Follow-up discussions and activities continue in classrooms.

### **September- Love**

Love for self and love for others, empathy and inclusion

### **October- Joy**

Exuberance that leads to creativity and fun

### **November- Peace**

Reconciliation with self and others

### **December- Patience**

The art of creative waiting for what is next

### **January- Kindness**

Being clear is kind, honesty as the goal

### **February- Goodness**

When we do something good, we affect others—interconnectedness

### **March- Faithfulness**

Tenacity and persistence in all things

### **April- Gentleness**

Calm and gentle spirit, even when we have difficult feelings

### **May- Self-Control**

Respect for others and self, listening and maintaining calm even when we disagree



## Lost and Found

Lost articles are kept in the HCC office. Unclaimed clothing or items are donated to Hill Country Community Ministries in December and May. Label all items brought to school with your child's first and last name.

## Fundraisers

HCC may hold fundraising opportunities for our families to support the school. Thank you in advance for your support!