

**What a Fantastic  
Place to be!**

**2023-2024**

**Moody Early Childhood Center**



**The Family  
Handbook**

# Table of Contents

## Contents

### Contents

Program Philosophy.....	4
Mission Statement.....	4
Vision Statement.....	4
Motto.....	4
Handbook.....	4
Accreditations.....	4
Administration and staffing.....	4
Executive Director.....	4
Staff hiring.....	5
Teacher-student ratios.....	5
Curriculum.....	5
Infant.....	5
Toddler.....	6
Prekindergarten.....	6
Afterschool Program.....	6
Classroom Goals.....	6
Infant.....	6
Toddler.....	7
Pre-K.....	7
Observations and Assignments.....	7
Logistical information.....	8
Hours of operation.....	8
Tuition.....	8
Late payment fee.....	9
Scholarships.....	9
Childcare Subsidies.....	9
Why timely pick-up matters.....	9
Late pick up fees.....	9
Holding fee.....	10
Additional expenses.....	10
School closures.....	10

- Calendar ..... 10
- Withdrawal policy..... 10
- Enrollment and admission..... 11
  - Enrollment requirements..... 11
  - Forms ..... 11
  - Court Orders..... 11
- For enrolled families ..... 11
  - Communication..... 11
  - Why attendance matters..... 12
  - Attendance ..... 12
  - Dress Code ..... 13
  - Labeling ..... 13
  - Accidents..... 13
  - Breastfeeding ..... 13
  - Supplies..... 13
  - Inclement Weather/Outside Activities ..... 14
- Your child’s first day ..... 15
  - Adjustment to Moody Early Childhood Center ..... 15
  - Saying goodbye..... 16
- Parent participation ..... 16
  - Open door policy..... 16
  - How to get involved..... 16
- Communication..... 17
- Parent Code of Conduct ..... 17
  - Cell Phones ..... 17
  - Swearing/Cursing..... 17
  - Smoking ..... 18
  - Interactions..... 18
- Daily schedule..... 18
  - Arrival/Drop off procedure ..... 18
  - Pick-up/check-out procedure ..... 19
- Food ..... 19
  - Mealtime philosophy ..... 19
  - Allergies..... 20
- Potty Training ..... 20

Setting limits ..... 21  
    Behavior policy ..... 21  
    Discipline and Guidance ..... 21  
Celebrations ..... 22  
    Birthdays and holidays..... 22  
Staying healthy..... 22  
    Sick child policy ..... 22  
    Illness at school..... 23  
Medication policy ..... 23  
    Immunizations and hearing/vision screenings ..... 24  
    HIV/AIDS and blood-borne pathogens awareness ..... 24  
    Tuberculosis policy..... 24  
Additional policies ..... 25  
    Field trips, water activities, and transportation ..... 25  
    Video monitoring of school ..... 25  
    Child abuse reporting ..... 25  
    Anti-harassment ..... 25  
    Grievance and licensure check policy and procedure ..... 25  
    Gang-free zone..... 26  
    Emergency preparedness plan..... 26  
    Confidentiality ..... 26  
Video and Audio Monitoring Policy..... 27  
    Notice Informing Individuals About Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Requirements ..... 28

# Program Philosophy

## Mission Statement

**Moody Early Childhood Center** provides a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate program that fosters active learning, support for the whole child, and a child-friendly environment. MECC fosters innovation, embraces teamwork, strives for excellence, respects and supports families, commits to service at all levels, respects and appreciates diversity, actively listens and seeks to understand, communicates openly and productively, uses resources creatively and responsibly and abides by the NAEYC code of ethics.

At Moody Center, we will:

- Be a fun, safe, creative learning center for Galveston children from newborn through Prekindergarten 4.
- Prepare children academically, emotionally and socially for kindergarten.
- Have a highly qualified staff experienced in, and committed to, the very best early childhood education
- Welcome families and community partners into the life of the center.
- Give every child a strong foundation to do his or her best in school and in life.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** strives to be nationally recognized as an outstanding childcare center.

## Vision Statement

The vision of **Moody Early Childhood Center** is to ensure that Galveston children, regardless of their families' economic status, enter kindergarten prepared to succeed.

## Motto

*“Giving all Galveston children the opportunity to soar”*

## Handbook

Welcome to Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC). Thank you for selecting MECC as your child's Early Childhood Center. We are the first in-district charter school in the state of Texas serving infants 6 weeks old through Prekindergarten and have created this "Parent Handbook" to introduce you to the Philosophy and Culture of our school. Most of the answers to your questions can be found in the handbook. If your question is not answered in the handbook, do not hesitate to call a Moody Early Childhood Center Family Advocate at (409) 761-6930. Our handbook is reviewed yearly by Moody Early Childhood Center Board of Directors and any changes made to our policy will be shared with parents immediately. Our policies and procedures are in accordance with the minimum standards posted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas Rising Star, and NAEYC. You can access a copy of the minimum standards by contacting The Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing Department at 512.834.3195 or at their website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

## Accreditations

Moody Early Childhood Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and accredited school through the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Charter School Association, Texas Rising Star and The National Association for the Education of Young Children as well as is working toward additional state and national accreditations. We strive to ensure that our program meets and/or exceeds all requirements.

## Administration and staffing

### Executive Director

Karin Miller, Executive Director/Executive Director for Moody Early Childhood Center, is an education veteran with more than thirty years of classroom and administrative experience.

Inspired by her own kindergarten teacher, Ms. Miller began her career as a pre-school and kindergarten teacher. After twelve years in the classroom, she moved into program management.

She was an early childhood specialist and federal programs coordinator for Brazosport Independent School District. There she managed district coordinators for all federal programs and established curriculum and staff development for early childhood, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and adult education programs.

Karin has extensive experience in school administration, policies, and procedures through her years as assistant superintendents for special programs at Cleveland Independent School District and supports services at Texas City ISD.

Karin holds a Master of Science degree in educational management from the University of Houston - Clear Lake and a Bachelor of Science degree in curriculum and instruction from Texas A&M University. She has continued her education with several special training programs, certifications, and professional affiliations.

## Staff hiring

When hiring teachers and administrators for our programs, we value diverse education and life experiences. We look for staff members who have a passion for working with young children and their families. All of our staff meet or exceed the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requirements, and our teachers meet state certification standards. They also are trained in CPR/ First Aid for infants, children and adults.

The foundation of our team is built upon staff members who:

- Are knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practices for early childhood learners.
- Are prepared to share their life experiences, talents, and interests.
- Enjoy the outdoors and have a personal connection to the natural world.
- Are professional, creative and passionate individuals experienced in fostering the whole child.

## Teacher-student ratios

We believe in the importance of maintaining high standards regarding staff to student ratios. We also believe that the process of developing meaningful relationships with children is best achieved in small groups. Therefore, we strive to maintain a staff ratio as follows:

- 0-11 months 1 adult: 4 children
- 12-23 months 1 adult: 5 children
- 24 -30 months 1 adult: 9 children
- 30 -35 months 1 adult: 11 children
- 3 years+ 1 adult: 15 children

## Curriculum

At Moody Early Childhood Center, we are deliberate in choosing activities and educational settings that give all our children the opportunity to soar. We have chosen Frog Street Curriculum ® for every age group.

### Infant

Designed around the latest scientific early brain development research, Frog Street Infant curriculum is designed to build strong foundations for little ones ages 0-17 months. This child-centered program includes activities that:

- Equip caregivers to nurture the little ones in their care.
- Optimize key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Are designed with intention and purpose and organized around five developmental learning areas: language, physical/motor, social-emotional, and cognitive.
- Feature Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® strategies to enhance social and emotional development.

## Toddler

Our Toddler program is designed around the latest scientific early brain development research. This program focuses on enhancing the simple joy of childhood. Caregivers help children build self-confidence and foster curiosity through exploration. Our teachers provide a warm nurturing environment, safe for each child to discover the world around them.

Frog Street Toddler, created by Dr. Pam Schiller, incorporates Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® and includes activity choices specifically created for children ages 18-36 months. Activity choices:

- Are organized around five developmental domains: language, social-emotional, cognitive, and physical/motor.
- Offer differentiated instruction options to meet the needs of all learners.
- Can be infused into daily routines, such as diaper changing, transitions, and outdoor play.
- Are designed with intention and purpose to move children forward in their development.

## Prekindergarten

According to early childhood brain research, the cognitive, physical, and social skills of most rapidly developing three and four-year-olds are significantly different from other ages. Frog Street offers activities developed in accordance with early brain development research that incorporates activities that includes all developmental domains. In addition to developmentally appropriate literacy and foundational math activities, Frog Street incorporates Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline activities to ensure all aspects of a child's development are met. Activities:

- Easy-to-use activities developed in accordance with early brain development research.
- A well-rounded scope of activities that includes all developmental domains.
- Individualized/differentiated instruction and activities to target each student at their own learning level.
- Intentional instruction that optimizes key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Social and emotional emphasis featuring Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline®.

## Afterschool Program

MECC offers a program that is engaging for both our teachers and the children participating in the extended day program. We integrate extension activities from the Frog Street curriculum, which is a comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines, with targeted STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) activities to encourage creativity and hands-on learning.

The cornerstones of the program:

- Extensive integration of theme, disciplines, and domains.
- Social and Emotional development including Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline®.
- Differentiated instruction.
- Joyful approach to learning.

## Classroom Goals

Moody Early Childhood Center has classroom goals to ensure quality care for the children. Striving to meet the goals that we set is important to us. Each age group will build upon the previous goals.

## Infant

- To ensure the safety of all of our children during all routines and activities and to be alert and attentive at all times. We constantly make certain that all play areas are safe, secure and we provide a healthy environment.
- To provide an attractive environment for the children with age-appropriate activities that stimulates the use of the five senses.
- To provide physical activities that support large and small muscle development while supporting social and emotional growth through positive guidance and interactions.

## Toddler

Moody Early Childhood Center has designed an environment to meet the overall needs of toddlers enrolled in our program. With the use of age-appropriate activities and interactions, the following goals should be met before the child enters Pre-K.

- Shows pride in new accomplishments.
- Feels safe away from parents.
- Demonstrates initiative and independence.
- Can influence others.
- Helps clean-up.
- Displays an interest in communication.
- Can sit well in a chair.
- Uses a crayon and/or paintbrush.
- Attempts self-care, such as putting on own clothing and washing hands.

## Pre-K

The Pre-K learning environment at Moody Early Childhood Center is designed to develop children using age-appropriate experiences. Because each child has his or her own individual needs, expectations may vary; each child is challenged but not hurried. Ideally, the following goals help to establish a baseline of goals that should be met by the time a child enters kindergarten.

- Will try new activities.
- Has self-confidence.
- Desire to learn.
- Listens attentively.
- Demonstrates self-control.
- Focuses on tasks.
- Tries to problem solve independently.
- Participates in clean up.
- Takes care of own toileting needs.
- Stands up for own rights.
- Resolves conflicts peacefully.
- Courteous and polite.
- Has age-appropriate vocabulary.
- Recites jingles and rhymes.
- Displays good balance.
- Builds with blocks.
- Throws/catches a ball.
- Demonstrates knowledge of colors, letters, shapes, and numbers.
- Recognizes own name (written).
- Knows birthday, telephone number, and street address.
- Knows age.

## Observations and Assignments

All of our teachers are highly trained and qualified. We take great care in placing each student in a classroom that will help them succeed. Please note, we will take parent requests under advisement; however, we cannot promise any particular teacher for your child.

Per TEXAS DEPARTMENT FOR PROTECTIVE SERVICES, children are assigned to classrooms by age. When it is time for your child to move to the next classroom, Moody Early Childhood Center will notify you and develop a transition

plan for the child. Teachers will discuss the decision to move your child's classroom prior to any transition. In all instances, when a child transfers to another educational setting we will work to ensure a smooth transition.

We value your child's experiences. When your child starts at Moody Early Childhood Center, observations and ongoing assessment will occur throughout their time here and the results will be sent home and discussed with you. This will help us provide the best care academically and socially for your child.

## Logistical information

### Hours of operation

Moody Early Childhood Center is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, year-round except for observed holidays and professional development days.

### **Infant and Toddlers**

**Infant and Toddlers** will enter from the Avenue L entrance and may arrive at 7:00 a.m. Academics begin at 9:00 a.m. No student will be allowed to enter after 9:00 a.m. without a doctor's note.

### **Pre-K Students**

**Pre-K** students may enter through Avenue K and may arrive as early as 7:45 a.m. Staff will be outside to assist getting your student out of your vehicle from 7:45-8:15 a.m. If you need to park, you will enter through the Avenue L entrance. After 8:15 a.m., parents must enter through the doors on Avenue L to sign the tardy binder before students may go to their classrooms. Classes begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. and are released at 3:55 p.m.

Breakfast will be served from 7:45 a.m.- 8:15 am in the classroom. All food must be finished or thrown away by 8:15 a.m. and car riders arriving after 8:15 a.m. will not be served breakfast. Breakfast is not permitted in the classrooms after 8:15 a.m. Children participating in the MECC extended day program remain on campus after the school day ends and can stay until MECC closes at 6:30 p.m. Parents picking up extended day students must enter through the Ave L entrance.

### Tuition

Tuition is based on a 12-month calendar. Parents are encouraged to pay the full tuition prior to the first day of school but may choose to pay in monthly or weekly installments.

- Monthly payments will be due by the first day of the month for the following month.
- Weekly payments are due by the close of the business day on Monday each week.

Parents have the convenience of using our 'Pay Online' option using the link included on your electronic invoice.

### **Tuition is based on enrollment not attendance.**

- Illness: Refunds or credits will not be issued for illnesses (including COVID)
- Vacations: (For students in the Infant & Toddler program only), refunds or credits will not be issued for vacations that are less than 2 weeks in duration. For vacations for 2 weeks or more:
  - Parent/guardian must give a note to the Director of Administrative Services at least 2 weeks prior to a vacation.
  - Tuition may be reduced to half price for the time the child is on vacation.
  - There will be no credits or refunds for students enrolled in the PreK program.
- Holidays: Refunds or credits will not be given for holiday closings.
- Inclement weather closings: Refunds or credits will not be given for inclement weather closings.

Moody Early Childhood Center accepts cash, credit or debit cards, money orders, and cashier's checks.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at Moody Early Childhood Center; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please

discuss the matter with the Business Office or your Family Advocate immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the Business Office.

### Late payment fee

**Weekly Tuition:** Payments are due by the close of the business day on Monday. Payments not received by the close of day will incur a late fee of \$20.00 that will be added to the tuition payment.

**Monthly Tuition:** Payments are due by closing on the first business day of each month. Payments not received by the close of day will incur a late fee of \$20.00 that will be added to the tuition payment.

Parents who are late on a payment will be counseled on their options. Students will not be able to return on Wednesday if they are behind on their payment, and we will begin to fill their spot with another family (see withdrawal procedure below). In addition, repeated late payments may be grounds for withdrawal.

### Scholarships

Moody Early Childhood Center offers Scholarships to qualified families when funds are available. The prospective family will need to fully complete an application including documentation they have applied to Workforce Solutions, a class schedule, and/or three months of recent income statements. A tuition amount will be set if funds are available.

#### Scholarship Eligibility Requirements:

Each month, Moody Early Childhood Center Scholarship Committee will meet to review the family's economic status, attendance, child(ren) growth and development, as well as Workforce Solutions status, parent's meeting dates with their Family Advocate, and Family Engagement activities. Each family's status will be brought to review every three months based on the scholarship approval date. Following the scholarship review process, tuition may incur an increase, decrease, or stabilize.

### Childcare Subsidies

Moody Early Childhood Center accepts childcare subsidies. Families that receive subsidies must have the Texas Workforce Commission Case Manager call the Business Office to authorize care before the child(ren) can start care. Families that receive subsidies must also meet with a Moody Early Childhood Center Family Advocate before the child(ren) may start care. If a Co-Pay is authorized by Texas Workforce Commission, parents are required to fulfill their obligation with Texas Workforce Commission and pay their co-pay by Monday at the beginning of the month or we will have to report non-payments to Texas Workforce Commission. Parents of a subsidized child(ren) must complete all required paperwork on time to continue enrollment at Moody Early Childhood Center. Parents must contact Texas Workforce Commission in the event a family is unable to pay the co-pay designated by Texas Workforce Commission.

### Why timely pick-up matters

Transitions are particularly difficult for children during early childhood. Arriving on time helps to ensure that your child will be able to transition in and out of the classroom with ease and reinforces the successes of the day. Please be considerate and pick your child up in a timely manner. If you would like to stay and chat with other parents after the school day is over, please do so outside. This helps us ensure that all the students still waiting to be picked up are safe and accounted for. We must provide constant care for our students, so if you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment rather than having a conference during pick up or drop off.

### Late pick up fees

#### Pre-K:

Classes end at 3:55 p.m. and it is imperative that students are picked up in a timely manner. Families more than 15 minutes late must pick up the student in the office. Parents will be counseled at the first late pickup. The late charge will be \$5.00 for every minute/child for the second infraction, and will increase by \$5.00 a minute/child for any additional incident.

Cases in which children are repeatedly picked up late will be referred to our Family Advocate; failure to pick your child up on a continuous basis could be viewed as neglect.

### **Infant, Toddler, and Extended Day:**

Parents picking up children after 6:30 p.m. are considered late. Families will be charged late fees when they are late picking up their child. Parents will be counseled at the first late pickup. The late charge will be \$5.00 for every minute/child for the second infraction, and will increase by \$5.00 a minute/child for any additional incident. Any expenses accrued will be added on and collected with the following tuition payment.

### **Holding fee**

**Infant & Toddler:** Moody Early Childhood Center provides a “future date of enrollment” option for families. A fee of \$75.00 will be required to hold a slot for your child to attend. Spots can be held for up to two (2) months. Priority will be given to siblings of children currently enrolled in Moody Early Childhood Center. When all spaces are full, children are placed on the waiting list. As spaces come available, and there are no presently enrolled children ready to move up, the next child on the waiting list (based on the date of application) who fits enrollment criteria will be notified. At that time parents can either accept the open slot by paying the full tuition or decline the slot in which case the spot will go to the next child of the appropriate age on the waiting list. Due to these factors and the number of names on the waiting list, MECC cannot guarantee or predict a start-date at the time of application.

To be placed on the waiting list. A registration form must be completed and submitted to the Register Office. A \$75.00 **non-refundable** holding fee is required. When the child is accepted for enrollment, the \$75.00 registration fee will be applied to the first week’s tuition.

### **Additional expenses**

All parents should anticipate occasional, small expenses throughout the year; these may include but are not limited to field trips, photos, and special projects.

### **School closures**

As much as possible, Moody Early Childhood Center will follow the Galveston Independent School District for inclement weather closings. However, as your children’s safety and learning experience is paramount to us, on occasion inclement weather or pandemic may cause the limitation or cancellation of school hours independent of the public-school system. In case of closure, we will always do our best to notify you as far in advance as possible. Delays and cancellations will be posted via Procure and sent to parents by email. If the school should need to close early due to weather, you will be notified by phone.

### **Calendar**

School closures and holidays are provided in a calendar to families, in the appendix of this handbook, are posted on the website at [www.MoodyChildhoodCenter.org](http://www.MoodyChildhoodCenter.org), and included in Procure.

### **Withdrawal policy**

#### **Infant and Toddlers**

If you choose to withdraw your child from Moody Early Childhood Center, you must fill out a 30-Day Notice of Withdrawal form (available upon request). You will be responsible for all final payments through the end of the notice period. No refunds will be issue.

\*Center administration reserves the right to give verbal notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance.

## Enrollment and admission

### Enrollment requirements

Children are admitted to Moody Early Childhood Center regardless of sex, race, color, religion, political, affiliation, national origin, or opinions. The parent must participate in an intake session with the registrar in order to complete all admission forms before a child may begin attending MECC. Enrollees must meet immunization and health requirements set by Texas DFPS Minimum Standards.

In order to enroll in the **Infant and Toddler** program at MECC, your child must:

- Be at least six weeks old and not turn 3 years old before September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Be current on all immunizations.
- Submit all required documentation and complete the appropriate paperwork.

In order to enroll in the **Pre-K** program at MECC, your child must:

- Be 3 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>
- Be current on all immunizations.
- Submit all required documentation and complete the appropriate paperwork.

If your child is older than the ages we serve, our Family Advocates can help find the appropriate program for your child.

### Forms

Parents are asked to submit and regularly update all forms provided to them in the welcome packet.

### Parent and Emergency Contact Information

**Infant & Toddler:** Parent and emergency contact information can be updated at any time by filling out the Student Information Change form at the front desk.

**Pre-K:** Parent and emergency contact information must be updated via Skyward Family Access. For assistance, please contact the front desk.

### Court Orders

In cases where the child is the subject of a Court Order (i.e.: Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protective Order) Moody Early Childhood Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments. All Court Orders on file with Moody Early Childhood Center will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with Moody Early Childhood Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Moody Early Childhood Center cannot, without a Court Order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, and a conflict arises, Moody Early Childhood Center staff will contact the local police.

For the safety of the child, please provide Moody Early Childhood Center with all amended and updated Court Orders. Once presented with a Court Order, Moody Early Childhood Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of Moody Early Childhood Center cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Court Order to be violated. Moody Early Childhood Center will report any violations of these Orders to the court.

## For enrolled families

### Communication

We use Procure, a safe and secure software to create daily reports and share information with parents by text and email. We can share daily reports, photos, videos, notes, and reminders instantly to parents' emails throughout the day. We'll let our parents know what we're working on in school so that they can extend the education at home. We'll send emails out to our parents or notify all parents by text message of school closings or other urgent messages.

Read more about Procure [https://www.myprocare.com/#page-nav\\_parents](https://www.myprocare.com/#page-nav_parents). You can also download Procure Parent app for iPhone, iPad, or Android:

ANDROID LINK: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.kinderlime.dev&hl=en\\_US&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.kinderlime.dev&hl=en_US&gl=US)

IPHONE AND IPAD LINK: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/procare-childcare-app/id1309822135>

## Why attendance matters

As with arriving on time, attending consistently establishes an important routine for your child. Good attendance is a habit that children need to form. If they don't do so early, attendance suffers later. Plus, we want to maximize the fun learning experiences of every child. Interactive and instructional playtime begins at 8:15 a.m. for our PreK students and at 9:00 a.m. every day for our Infants and Toddlers. To ensure all students have ample time to learn and explore during the day, we need the students to be here on time and ready to learn.

## Attendance

**Infant and Toddler:** Regular attendance is an important element of your child's success here at Moody Early Childhood Center. Academics begin at 9:00 a.m. and children must arrive before 9:00 a.m. to attend school. After 9:00 a.m., they must have a doctor's note to attend. Please speak with your child's teacher or Attendance Coordinator if an extended absence is anticipated.

**PreK:** Regular attendance is an important element of your child's success here at Moody Early Childhood Center. Academics begin at 8:15 a.m., therefore, children arriving after 8:15 a.m. will be marked tardy, and parents must pick up a tardy slip in the office before taking their child to class. Children arriving to class without a tardy slip will be sent back to the office.

## ATTENDANCE – ABSENCES & TARDIES

Regular school attendance is extremely important to your child's education; therefore, parents should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Students arriving at school after 9:30 will be counted absent for the day.

The State of Texas recognizes the following as valid reasons for absence:

- Illness of the child
- Sickness or death in the family
- Weather or road conditions making travel dangerous
- Religious holy days (please submit a written request prior to the absence)
- Days of suspension
- Participation in court proceedings
- Other unusual circumstances deemed appropriate by the campus principal

All absences are counted against the student's attendance record. Pre-K students are subject to compulsory school attendance while they are enrolled in school. On enrollment in pre-K, a child must attend school. After excessive tardies and/or five absences, families will be required to meet with Moody Early Childhood Center's Attendance Team to discuss an improvement plan to ensure consistent attendance.

**Three Day Rule:** When returning after an absence, students are required to bring a note signed by his or her parent/guardian describing the reason for the absence. Also, MECC now accepts parent absence notes via Skyward. If the note is not submitted to the school office within three days of the absence, the student's absence will be considered unauthorized or unexcused. MECC does not accept absence notes after three days.

**Ten Day Rule:** Once your child has been absent a total of 10 days, throughout the school year, a doctor's note will be required in order to excuse his/her absences.

## Dress Code

Your child's attire should be age appropriate. Clothing should never display inappropriate pictures or wording. Underpants should always be covered. If a child is wearing a dress, they must have shorts or bloomers underneath. Also, should spaghetti straps be worn, they must fit correctly. If they constantly slip off and expose the child's chest, a t-shirt will be placed on the child unless alternate clothing is provided, at which time we will have the child changed. Clothing malfunctions can often produce unnecessary inappropriate conversations.

Children are required to wear their shoes throughout the entire day. This rule is aligned with our new shoe policy: Shoes should be comfortable and provide adequate protection for the feet during outdoor play. We ask that children wear rubber-soled tennis shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, crocs are not allowed, as this type of shoe is a safety hazard.

Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed, as they are a distraction, and they may be lost or broken while at school. Earrings that are anything other than a stud are not allowed. Earrings larger than a stud are a safety hazard to the child wearing them, as well as the other children around them. We ask that no toys, money, gum, candy, and cosmetics be brought to the center.

**Infant and Toddler:** Children should wear comfortable age-appropriate clothes that can be worn for multiple activities. Please dress your student in clothes that they can easily handle themselves when going to the bathroom (if potty trained). Dress your student appropriately for the weather. Long sleeves and long pants or sweat suits are appropriate when it is chilly and short sleeves and short pants or skirts when it is warm.

**PreK:** PreK students are required to wear our school uniform. The PreK uniform consists of a navy blue polo shirt and your choice of pants/shorts/skirts with closed-toed shoes. All dress code requirements as stated above apply.

## Clothing and Personal Belongings

All children should have at least one complete set of clothing that is to be kept in the classroom or backpack in case of accidents, spills, etc. The clothes should have the child's name on it and should be seasonally appropriate. Parents of children using diapers are asked to provide diapers and wipes.

## Labeling

Please label all clothing and other belongings with your child's name. Accidents happen and it's easy for clothes to get mixed up.

## Accidents

Your child will occasionally have accidents. Please keep an extra change of clothes, including socks, underwear, and shoes in a large Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name in your child's cubby every day. You will need to replace the clothing in the bag once they have been used.

If your child does have an accident, we will send the soiled clothes home in a labeled plastic bag at the end of the day.

## Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding moms are welcome at all times on campus! They are provided with a comfortable and padded rocker for their use in the Family Engagement Room. Every opportunity will be made to give our moms the level of privacy that she feels comfortable.

For moms having difficulty or challenges with breastfeeding, please talk with your Family Advocate for additional support and help.

Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care.

## Supplies

Please refer to the supply list in the enrollment packet for all needed supplies.

## Inclement Weather/Outside Activities

Active play time is absolutely vital: it is recommended that children get a minimum 60 minutes a day of rigorous physical activity to stay strong, promote muscle development, and maintain a healthy weight.

Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) focus is on the safety of our students and staff. There is an unsafe threshold for outdoor activities. Decisions to cancel outside activities for our students are not exclusively based on temperature; heat index and wind chill factor can be a driving force which can create unsafe temperatures for sustained outside activities. The totalities of all environmental factors are considered in making the determination to allow for outside activities.

### SUMMER/HOT WEATHER

Classification	Heat Index	Effect on the body
Caution	80°F - 90°F	Fatigue possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity
Extreme Caution	90°F - 103°F	Heat stroke, heat cramps, or heat exhaustion possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity
Danger	103°F - 124°F	Heat cramps or heat exhaustion likely, and heat stroke possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity
Extreme Danger	125°F or higher	Heat stroke highly likely

MECC wants to keep all staff members and students in our care and review multiple resources. Caring For Our Children, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education is a collection of national standards that represent the best practices, based on evidence, expertise, and experience, for quality health and safety policies and practices for today's early care and education settings. <https://nrckids.org/CFOC>

In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers recommendations such as avoiding taking children outside for long periods of time if the heat index is greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Prolonged outdoor exposure on extremely hot days can cause children to overheat quickly. Heat stroke in children can occur without proper hydration or rest.

- If temperatures exceed 90 degrees, stay in the shade and keep an extra eye on the children.
- If the heat index reaches 100-degree, **it's best to stay inside.**



## WINTER/COLD WEATHER

Children are more at risk from the cold than adults. Because their bodies are smaller, they lose heat more quickly. Outside activities in temperatures or wind chills below 32° Fahrenheit should be avoided. At these temperatures, exposed skin begins to freeze within minutes.

- Outside activities will be canceled if there is any precipitation and the temperatures or wind chills below 60° Fahrenheit.
- Outside activities will be canceled if the temperatures or wind chills below 50° Fahrenheit.

## Your child's first day

Please bring the following to school on or before your child's first day:

- All required enrollment packet forms.
- Backpack.
- Extra set of clothing (including socks, underwear and shoes).
- **Infant and Toddlers:** bottles, milk/formula, and diapers if appropriate. (Bottles must be made are ready for use.)

## Adjustment to Moody Early Childhood Center

Starting school is a big step for most kids. Some children are excited to participate, and they easily acclimate to class. Other children are nervous at first but quickly 'warm-up' as they are engaged in activities. Still others may have a longer adjustment period as they gradually become comfortable with a new environment and expectations. Occasionally a child who is eager at first may have difficulty later upon realizing the change is a permanent one. There is no right way for a child to "adjust" to school. Our expectations are open-ended, and we understand children will acclimate in their own unique way, and we will provide support and encouragement to help each child adapt to our program.

As a parent/guardian, you have a unique insight as to how your child reacts to new settings. There are many ways to prepare your child for class, such as talking about it one week before school starts. “Next week you’ll be going to Moody Early Childhood Center! Won’t that be fun?!” As your child asks questions, answer them honestly. “You’re going to meet friends, sing songs, make art, go on adventures and learn new things — you will have lots of fun!” Try to address the upcoming change in as natural a way as possible and acknowledge your child’s feelings about it.

When you drop your child off, assure him or her that you will be excited to hear all about the day when it is time to be picked up. You might even give your child a challenge: “While you are in class today, pick your favorite thing to tell me about — I can’t wait to hear about your day!” If your child is experiencing a very difficult transition, please share your concerns with the teacher so that she can help provide a smooth and happy experience.

## Saying goodbye

Figuring out the best way to support your child at drop-off can be an anxiety-inducing process for parents as well as children. It is important to recognize that if a child does not know when the parent is leaving, there can be constant stress waiting for that moment and he/she may never fully settle. If you or your child is concerned about saying goodbye, we are more than happy to work with you to make a plan ahead of time. The most important thing is to tell your child exactly what will happen and then follow through decisively. Planning and practicing a routine the night before can be comforting for everyone involved. Let them learn how to let go and find their rhythm, make friends, and discover their favorite school-time activities while also communicating your confidence that they will do fine. It can be difficult to walk away on that first day of school, but in so doing you will assure your child that it is all right for them to do the same, adjust, and join in with their peers. A quick, direct exit from the classroom will provide secure boundaries for your child and signal to them that you are confident they are going to be happy and safe. If your child is upset when you leave, just relax and know that children usually calm down and are participating before a parent reaches the parking lot. Please feel free to call at any time to check on your child.

## Parent participation

### Open door policy

*Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.*

Families may begin to schedule visits after the first month of school. All visitors will need to check in to obtain a visitor’s ID badge before entering classrooms. While visiting Moody Early Childhood Center we ask that parents observe and encourage their child to adhere to school rules and routines. If you wish to visit for an extended period, please arrange a time with your child’s teacher to avoid scheduling conflicts or multiple visitors. To assure as smooth a transition as possible, we ask that you refrain from visiting during the first month of school. This is a special time, both for your child and the staff. Also, if your child is having a difficult time with adjustment, we may ask for you to refrain from visiting the classroom beyond the first month until they have successfully made the adjustment. Our Family Service Department will be happy to meet with you and your child to make a smooth transition. We do ask that if you plan to bring friends or other family members you specify that in advance.

Please, also remember that drop-off and pick-up times are very busy periods of time for the facility. For safety reasons, we highly discourage Prekindergarten pickup after 2:00 p.m. unless your child has a doctor’s appointment. Also, these periods are not the best times to discuss your child’s progress or growth especially if he or she is standing with you. Therefore, conferences may be held at any time throughout the year, at either the request of the parent or the teacher. Parent meetings will be held at various times throughout the year. These include both social and educational events.

## How to get involved

We always appreciate parents who can help with cooking projects, join us for a walk, read a story, or share something special about themselves with the class. Please discuss these possibilities with your child’s teacher. For the safety of our children, all adults volunteering and interacting with other students at Moody Early Childhood Center (including parents), must undergo a background check, training, and must always wear a visitor’s ID badge, and always be under the supervision of regularly scheduled teaching staff at all times.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Family Engagement activities
- Photography
- Reading to students
- Marketing assistance
- Musical presentations
- Work Parties
- Cultural Celebrations
- Chaperoning
- Birthday Celebrations
- Holiday events
- School programs

Newsletters will be sent out via Procure that outlines important dates and upcoming events at the center. An archive of these various resources will be stored with the parent resources for your reference. Each of these resources are also placed on the bulletin board in the front office as well as on the Parent news board in each classroom.

## Communication

An open line of communication enriches the educational experience of our students and is an essential element for building partnerships. Your input is important to us. We are always happy to schedule time to discuss academic, social, emotional, or developmental questions either by phone, e-mail or in person. Please keep the lines of communication open with us and let us know of any significant events in your child's life. Visitors, work trips, moving, new babies, divorce, illness or death can affect children in class. When we are informed about these changes, we are better equipped to offer support and encouragement to your child.

To keep you informed (and well supplied with pictures of your child!), we use Procure system to communicate ASAP with parents. We encourage you to sign up and use it regularly.

## Parent Code of Conduct

Moody Early Childhood Center requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect at all times. One of the goals of Moody Early Childhood Center is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Moody Early Childhood Center but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the Center. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on the property thereafter. Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding disenrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

## Cell Phones

Every moment you spend with your child can help develop a positive relationship. In order to facilitate parent-child, and parent-teacher interactions cell phones are not permitted to be used inside the building. Please complete your calls/text/emails prior to entering or after leaving the building.

## Swearing/Cursing

Parents must be responsible for their behavior at all times. No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on Center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, Moody Early Childhood Center will not assume the risk.

## Smoking

For the health of all Moody Early Childhood Center employees, children, and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking area of Moody Early Childhood Center. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking area.

## Interactions

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Moody Early Childhood Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

## Daily schedule

Though Moody Early Childhood Center opens at 7:00 a.m., our core curriculum hours for the infant and toddler program are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and are 8:15 a.m. to 3:55 p.m. for our PreK students. A copy of the week's schedule and activities will be made available on Procure. After 4:00 p.m., enrichment activities will be provided for infant and toddlers and after 3:55 p.m. for PreK students attending the extended day program.

## Arrival/Drop off procedure

*Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.*

**Infant and Toddlers:** To access MECC, please use the Avenue L entrance. Parents must park in the designated spaces, and turn off their vehicles when they arrive. All children must be signed-in by the parent or guardian each day when they first arrive. There is a logbook in each classroom. All children should be escorted into the building by a parent or guardian. Children should arrive at school with clean clothes (not pajamas), diapers, hair, face & hands, including fingernails cut, and ready for the day. A small animal to soothe students during naptime can stay in cubbies for students 18 months and up. We ask that children wear rubber-soled tennis shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, crocs are not allowed as this type of shoe is a safety hazard. Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed because they can become a choking hazard.

**PreK:** Pre-K students may enter through Avenue K and may arrive as early as 7:45 a.m. Staff will be at the door to greet and meet your student from 7:45-8:15 a.m. If you need to park, you will enter through the Avenue L entrance. After 8:15 a.m., parents must enter through the doors on Avenue L to get a tardy slip before students may go to their classrooms. Classes begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. and are released at 3:55 p.m. Students are considered tardy after 8:15 a.m. and need be escorted into the office on the Ave L by a parent or guardian to pick up a tardy slip. Children should arrive at school in their uniform, with clean hair, face & hands, including fingernails cut, and ready for the day. We ask that children wear rubber-soled tennis shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, crocs are not allowed as this type of shoe is a safety hazard. Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed because they can become a choking hazard and easily broken or lost while playing. **Toys from home are not allowed.** Students will not be able to enter the classrooms after 8:15 a.m. with breakfast from home.

All children will be required to wash their hands upon arrival. Infant and Toddlers will use the sink in the classrooms. Children in PreK will use the restrooms closest to their classrooms. While this has always been a preferred habit, MECC would like to make sure it becomes a consistent positive habit, especially considering the health concerns of 2021. In addition, if your child (Prek) arrives after 8:15 a.m. we would like you to walk them to their classroom after they have washed their hands. This is extremely important to the children and will aid in Parent/Teacher communication.

### Pick-up/check-out procedure

No child will be allowed to leave Moody Early Childhood Center without being accompanied by those designated as primary caregivers on his/her enrollment form as an Authorized Person or after that, in writing, by using our Authorization for Release of a Child form. Giving a note or verbal permission to your child's teacher is unacceptable.

You must add/remove people from the pickup list in person at the registrar's office. Please let us know if someone other than yourself will be picking your child up. Please inform them to have proper identification when they arrive, as this will be required. If they are not on the list and/or fail to provide proper identification (state ID), your child will not be released.

**Infant and Toddlers:** If you are picking up your child early, please let the office know if you will be bringing your child back after your appointment. When you pick up your child, you must park and turn off your vehicle, and then sign them out using the classroom logbook.

**PreK:** If you must pick up your child before 3:55 p.m., you need to park and turn off your vehicle, then go to the office Ave L to sign your child out. **Students will not be allowed to leave after 2:30 p.m. unless a doctor's note is provided upon return.** After school, parents must enter office Ave L and go to his or her student's classroom and sign them out.

### Napping/Rest time

It is required that all children under the age of five and in care for more than 4 hours have a rest time.

**Infant and Toddlers:** Children under the age of 18 months will sleep in a crib and may not sleep with covers or toys. We will provide children over the age of 18 months with a cot and cover for naps. A toddler can bring a small blanket or stuffed animal from home to have at naptime. Children that are not sleeping after ½ hour rest can get up to have quiet play, like books, puzzles, coloring, etc. If a child falls asleep, he/she will be allowed to sleep for the entire naptime.

### In order to reduce the risk of SIDS the following rules will be applied:

1. All infants under one year of age will be placed on their backs to sleep.
2. When an infant is able to roll over from back to belly, they will be put down on their backs but will be allowed to adopt whatever sleep position they prefer.
3. No pillows or blankets are allowed in any infant rooms.
4. Infants will not be allowed to sleep in a restricted device, such as a swing or bouncy seat.
5. Infants and Toddlers will not be put down with bottles.
6. Pacifiers will be removed from an infant's crib once they have fallen asleep.
7. The infant's head will remain uncovered at all times.
8. If your child is asleep when arriving we will wake them in order to keep them on schedule.

If you have any questions about this or need further information, please ask or call the SIDS alliance at 1-800-221-SIDS or Back to Sleep Campaign at 1-800-505-CRIB.

**PreK:** Students will be given a 1 hour rest period. Children who are not sleeping after ½ hour rest can have quiet playtime, like books, puzzles, coloring, etc. If your child falls asleep, they will be allowed to sleep for the entire naptime.

## Food

### Mealtime philosophy

Moody Early Childhood Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and provides all necessary food and beverages throughout the day, for children 12 months and older. Food from home is allowed, with Department

Administrator approval. School food will be offered even if the student brings food from home, as it is required to be offered to all students without a medical or religious preference document. If students have a medical or religious preference for food, proper documentation must be filled out with the front office before the modifications will be made. We approach diverse family values around food in the same way we support the individuality of each child. Meals are a time for coming together as a community and sharing the observations of the day.

Breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack are provided for all children eating solid food through the Galveston ISD Child Nutrition Department.

**PreK:** Breakfast is served 7:45-8:15 a.m. Food will not be served after 8:15a.m., and all food must be finished or disposed of by 8:15 a.m. Breakfast is not allowed in the classrooms, so as not to interfere with instructional time. If you would like for your child to participate in our breakfast program, please make sure your child arrives before 8:15 a.m. Please refer to Procure for your child's snack and lunch schedule.

**Infants:** We ask that parents supply all milk, breast milk, and formula for bottle-feeding children as well as baby food for those working up to solid table food. Bottles should be brought to the Center labeled with the child's name and the date they were prepared, and "ready to feed." Bottles will be refrigerated and warmed with water by the teachers. Empty bottles will be rinsed and placed in your child's diaper bag.

**Toddlers:** Breakfast is served 8:00-9:00 a.m. Food will not be served after 9:00 a.m., and all food must be finished or disposed of by 9:00 a.m. If you would like your child to participate in our breakfast program, please make sure your child arrives before 9:00 a.m. Students will not be allowed to bring in outside food for breakfast after 9:00 a.m. Please refer to Procure for your child's snack and lunch schedule.

Until children are able to eat the meals provided by the Center, parents are required to supply formula and baby food. When your child is making the transition to table food, we will offer appropriate selections from the daily menu. Milk and fruit juice will also be available.

We will begin transitioning out of pacifiers in the 6-11 month rooms, and out of sippy cups in the 12-17 month room. Pacifiers and sippy cups will not be allowed in the subsequent older rooms.

## Allergies

If your child has an allergy or food restriction or special diets, documentation must be on file with Moody Early Childhood Center. For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan" form, detailing any allergies, or food allergies, the child suffers from at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered.

This form must be completely filled out by your child's Physician as well as the Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s) and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide Moody Early Childhood Center with a copy of any additional Physician's Orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy. This form can be obtained from the Business Office.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases Moody Early Childhood Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan" form, provided Moody Early Childhood Center to exercise reasonable care in taking such actions. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with Moody Early Childhood Center Medication Policy.

## Potty Training

When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, we ask that you begin teaching at home. We will follow through and encourage your child while they are in our care. Daily communication between the parent and day care provider is very important. We will assist in potty training with the understanding that it will only be successful if we work together. Your child will not learn if they do not do it while in our care and at home.

- We use a low-key approach with lots of praise. Please realize that this should be your child's accomplishment and not yours or ours.
- Clothing should be easy to manage to encourage self-help skills. Buckles, belts, onesies, and suspenders when in a hurry to use the bathroom may create a problem and we ask that you do not dress your child in these types of clothing.
- We also require that each potty-training child bring training pants or pull-ups.
- We also require additional clothing in case your child has an accident.

## Setting limits

### Behavior policy

**Please see the attached 2022-2023 Student Code of Conduct.**

If a negative behavior occurs in the preschool, staff will address and seek to resolve it directly with the child. It is important that parents, teachers, and administration work together, but the consequences and problem-solving need to be immediately tied to the behavior. Our policy is as follows:

- Hurting another child or throwing a tantrum leads to being away from the group until the child is calm enough to rejoin the activity.
- Abuse of an activity or object leads to a loss of the privilege of using that object or material for a specific length of time
- Repeated, unprovoked hurting of another child and/or using object as weapons to injure staff or children leads to a conference with the parent, teacher, and our Department of Family Services to determine additional interventions
- Biting is subject to the same behavior actions as hurting another child and repeated, unprovoked hurting of another child
- Issues may arise when a student's behavior become a safety and/or learning environment issue. Our goal at MECC is to work with both the student and their family to manage these behaviors. MECC complies with the discipline guidelines in the Texas Education Code for school-aged students.

## Discipline and Guidance

The goal of discipline is to develop self-regulation. Our early childhood program fosters an environment in which children learn to respect others and their surroundings. We teach and encourage children to use problem solving and conflict resolution skills. Other discipline techniques we employ are

1. **Prevention** - Children are explained the rules of the classroom frequently so that all know the guidelines.
2. **Teacher shadowing** – The Child works one on one with a teacher and mimics positive behavior.
3. **Redirection**- We offer alternatives to children engaged in undesirable behavior by presenting a different activity.
4. **Positive modeling** – We ask a child to stop and think about his/her behavior to enable the child to work at self-control.
5. **Gentle reminders**- We explain to the child the inappropriate behavior and show him/her the appropriate way to handle the situation.

Discipline will be fair, consistent, and appropriate for the age and maturity of the child. Physical punishment, such as spanking, is strictly prohibited. Any cruel and unusual discipline that is frightening or humiliating is never used.

Every effort will be made to help parents and children resolve difficulties that may arise in the program. Steps toward resolution include:

- Community resource connections and referrals for your child and family to help with issues at school and home.
- Scheduling a conference with the parent/teacher/ and our Department of Family Services.
- Developing a written plan of action agreed upon by parent, teacher, and Family Advocate.
- A referral to assess if there seem to be developmental or behavioral concerns.

## Celebrations

### Birthdays and holidays

*Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.*

Here at Moody Early Childhood Center, excitement and adventure abound. We celebrate each child's special day. You are welcome to bring a special store-bought snack, but please do not feel obliged! We like to emphasize that your child's life is the most important treat of the day. Please check with your teacher beforehand to make sure there are no dietary restrictions that need to be met and avoid excessive sweets. Muffins, fruit, yogurt, bubbles or stickers are great! If you choose to bring a treat, please provide for all children in the class. Parents are invited, but we understand scheduling often gets in the way of your ability to attend. No pressure!

If you are planning a birthday party for your child outside of school, please do not have invitations passed out at school unless all students in the class are invited. We will not be able to provide students' full names or addresses.

### Staying healthy

*Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.*

### Sick child policy

Parents are required to keep children home if they exhibit any symptoms of illness as listed below. We understand the difficulty of this for working parents, but per the Texas Department of State Health Services this must be done to maintain a healthy environment for everyone.

Parents are asked to not give their child medicine to lower their fever prior to coming to school. If your student has a temperature of 100 or higher, please keep them home from school. Parents are also asked to not put medication in a child's bottle or sippy cup.

Parents are obligated to report any communicable disease or condition (i.e., conjunctivitis, head lice, chickenpox, etc.) to the staff so that we can alert other parents as soon as possible, in order to prevent the spread of symptoms.

Students who miss three or more days of school due to illness will need a doctor's note to return.

As required by the Texas Department of State Health Services, please keep your child home if he/she has any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100+: Must be 24 hours fever free without fever-reducing medication before returning.
- Diarrhea: (2 loose stools within 24 hours): Must be 24 hours diarrhea free before returning.
- Vomiting: (2 episodes of vomiting within 24 hours): Must be 24 hours vomit free before returning.
- Severe coughing with a runny nose and colored mucus.
- Rashes: (un-identifiable or non-typical rash). Must have a doctor's note before returning.
- Pinkeye (conjunctivitis): Redness to the white of the eye, swelling of the eyelid and/or area surrounding the eye, with creamy discharge: Must be treated for 24 hours with improving symptoms before returning.
- Change of color of skin or eyes (may be signs of hepatitis). Yellowish hue to the color of skin or eyes: Must have a doctor's note before returning.
- Unable to participate in normal activities including outdoor play.
- Head Lice or Nits: Must be treated and have no lice or nits before returning.
- Scabies: Must be treated before returning.
- Ringworm: Must be 24 hours past the first dose of treatment before returning.

If your child becomes ill while at the Center, you will be called to pick-up your child as soon as possible. If you have a permission slip for your child to be seen at the Teen Health Pediatric Clinic, staff will take your child to see the Physician's Assistant.

A student may not return to school the following day if sent home with contagious symptoms. A student must be fever, diarrhea, and vomiting free for 24 hours, or on medication for 24 hours (1 calendar day) before returning to school after illness. Families will be notified if their student has been exposed to a known outbreak of contagious disease. Please note the MECC Pandemic Plan will be implemented in the case of any future pandemic. Procedures listed in the Pandemic Plan are based on CDC recommendations and will supersede MECC's policy for normal operations.

## Illness at school

We will follow this procedure if a child becomes ill while on campus:

- If a child exhibits possible symptoms of an illness, we will move the child away from others and have them lie down quietly and rest. The on-site nurse will be on-hand for consultation.
- If your student becomes ill while at school, you will be called and/or messaged via the student management system (ProCare) to pick up your student as soon as possible, within the hour.
- If you would like for your student to be seen by the Physician Assistant with Teen Health Center here on MECC campus, she can be reached at 409-761-6950 to schedule an appointment.
- If your student has an appointment scheduled, staff is able to escort them to the Teen Health Center office. (Be sure to complete the consent form for Teen Health Center during enrollment, if you would like to utilize this incredible free resource during the school year.)
- If primary contacts cannot be reached, a relative or emergency contact will be called to pick the student up.
- In the case of minor injury, the student's primary contacts will be notified and an Incident Report will be completed.
- In the case of a head or eye injury, the primary contact will be notified by phone.
- In the case of an emergency involving serious illness or injury, 911 and primary contacts will be called.
- Staff members will follow the same exclusion criteria as students.

## Medication policy

Medications will be administered only with a Medication Authorization form signed by the student's parent or guardian. These authorization forms are required for all types of medications, including non-prescription medications such as non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers, sunscreen, lip balm products, lotions, and ointments, etc.

### **Please follow the procedures below:**

- Prescription medications must be in the original prescription bottle/package with the following information on the prescription label: student's full name, prescriber's name, prescription name, prescription number, pharmacy name and phone number, instructions for administration, dosage needed, administration time(s), and dates for medication use. The prescription label must be current and legible.\*\*
- Non-prescription medications must be in the original container with the student's first and last name and the date it was brought to school written on the container.\*\*
- Medication will only be administered to the limit of the instructions on the label.
- All medications will be dispensed by the school nurse or clinic assistant, except for over-the-counter medications such as diaper cream, sunscreen, and bug repellent. Prescription diaper ointments will be administered either by clinic staff or classroom staff at diaper/pull up changes.

### **Before we can administer any prescription or non-prescription medication to your student, you will need to do the following:**

- Keep them home for 24 hours after the 1st dose and monitor for possible allergic reactions.
- Sign a Medication Authorization Form.
- Bring prescription and non-prescription medications following the criteria listed above.\*\*

### **Nonprescription medications may include but are not limited to:**

1. Antihistamines,
2. NON-aspirin fever reducing/pain reliever

3. Decongestants
  4. Anti-itching ointment or lotions
  5. Diaper rash ointments or lotions
  6. Sunscreen
  7. Cough syrup
  8. Teething gels
  9. Insect repellent
- Non-prescription medications that need to be taken differently than indicated on the labels or for more than 5 consecutive days, will require a note from a physician.
  - If you would like to have medications in the locked medicine cabinet in the Nurse's Office to have on hand in case it is needed during the school day, please let us know.
  - If your student will be on long term daily or "as needed" prescription medications, a note from their doctor will be required to put in student files.
  - If you do not bring your student's prescription medication at drop off, you will be asked to bring it to the school or take the student home to give the required medication.
  - If your student has a chronic condition, such as asthma or a food allergy, the student will need an Asthma Action Plan or Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action Plan on file with guidelines from their doctor on management of their chronic condition.
  - We have a medication log that you can review at any time to see when your student was given their medications. In addition, you will find medication administration documented in "Daily Activity" under "Medication" in the student management system.
  - Medications that are no longer being used or have expired will be sent home.
  - Prescription inhalers, nebulizers, epi-pens, and other prescription medications can be kept here in the locked medicine cabinet to be used as needed or as required.
  - Please inform administration and the school nurse at enrollment if your student has a health condition that requires extra caution or care during the school day by filling out your student's Health Services form and scheduling a meeting to discuss your student's unique health needs.

### Immunizations and hearing/vision screenings

We require that all children be vaccinated. Families must submit a vaccination record prior to the start of school and update them periodically as additional vaccinations are due. Families have the right to choose not to vaccinate their children for personal, philosophical, or medical reasons; however, for the safety of the other children at Moody Early Childhood Center, we cannot enroll a child who is not current on their appropriate vaccinations.

The State of Texas requires all children age 4 and older to receive hearing and vision screenings. Some of our children are not of the required age, we do not provide screenings for all children; however, if parents or teachers are concerned about developmental hearing or vision issues the school nurse may be tapped to coordinate screenings for the child.

### HIV/AIDS and blood-borne pathogens awareness

Every staff member is required to attend an HIV/AIDS / BBP awareness course. We will follow the Texas Guidelines when working with bodily fluids. All staff members will use universal precautions when exposed to bodily fluids with universal precautions, including:

- Using gloves or some other barrier when dealing with a bleeding wound.
- Washing hands thoroughly after dealing with blood or bodily fluids, even if gloves were used.
- Disposing of bloodied gloves, tissues, etc., by sealing in two plastic bags and placing in a waste receptacle.
- Cleaning and disinfecting all exposed surfaces.

### Tuberculosis policy

MECC requires that all staff receive TB testing. PreK students also must complete a form prior to enrollment.

## Additional policies

### Field trips, water activities, and transportation

**Infant and Toddlers:** By signing the contract and enrollment form you are giving your child permission to participate in all activities at the Center.

**PreK:** We will have additional notification forms and permission slips regarding field trips and activities going on throughout the school year. It is your responsibility as a parent to check your child's folder and Procure for notifications of events. For your child's safety, the student will not be able to attend the event if a permission slip is not signed.

### Video monitoring of school

Video surveillance will be utilized in and around MECC. Cameras may be equipped with audio recording capabilities as well. Video surveillance is for safety and security purposes only and shall be used in accordance with applicable laws. Video and Audio monitoring is not permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

### Child abuse reporting

As required by Texas State Law, suspected child abuse and/or neglect will be reported to Child Protective Services (CPS). Employees are responsible for submitting reports. Under the law, employees do not notify parents when CPS has been called about possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation except on the recommendations of CPS or police personnel.

All Moody Early Childhood Center staff receive recurring training on identifying the signs of child abuse and reporting procedures. Additionally, our Department of Family Services has ongoing relationships with the Texas Department of Family Services as well as other agencies that assist families in crisis, including Family Services Center. Moody Early Childhood Center will periodically host Family Information nights that may highlight the warning signs of child abuse or neglect.

If you have questions about the signs of child abuse, please consider our Department of Family Services as a resource. Additionally, you may contact the abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or visit the Texas Department of Family Protective Services at <https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>.

### Anti-harassment

We are committed to providing an environment where staff and families are treated with respect. We will not tolerate harassment from staff, families, vendors or visitors. Harassment takes many forms, and can include unwelcome comments, slurs, jokes, innuendoes, cartoons, pranks or other verbal or physical conduct that creates an uncomfortable working environment.

### Grievance and licensure check policy and procedure

We recognize parents as the first and most important influence in their child's life, and that a positive working relationship between the parent and Moody Early Childhood Center is of primary importance. If a grievance occurs that cannot be satisfied by discussion with the staff, families are advised to contact their teacher, first. If it cannot be resolved by the teacher, the Education Advocate shall be notified for further assistance. Should further support or discussion be required, the Director of Education shall be contacted. If the grievance is related to registration, tuition, or other business office matters, the Director of Administration shall be notified for further assistance. If the grievance is related to Family Services, the Director of Community, Family, and Student Services will be contacted. If necessary, the grievance process will be followed culminating with a meeting with the Deputy Executive Director and/or Executive Director.

Parents may review a copy of minimum standards and Moody Early Childhood Center most recent licensing inspection by inquiring in the business office or contacting the Executive Director directly.

The local licensing office is located at 2221 West Loop S, Houston, TX 77027.

## Gang-free zone

Moody Early Childhood Center is in a 'Gang-Free Zone'. Moody Early Childhood Center will report any and all criminal activity within the 'Gang-Free Zone'. Moody Early Childhood Center will post all policies and notices associated with being a gang-free zone in the main office.

## Emergency preparedness plan

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, Moody Early Childhood Center will notify families via Procure. Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. If the staff is unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. If there is a reason that children need to be moved from the childcare center to another safer location, all employees are trained to assist children to the designated location when deemed safe to do so by administration and law enforcement officials. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person of the pick-up location.

## Confidentiality

Moody Early Childhood Center respects the privacy of every child and family and holds confidential all records regarding your child's personal information. All records will be kept secure in the child's file in the office. Only the Executive Director and lead staff have access to these records. Moody Early Childhood Center will always seek your permission to share information with other professionals.

## Video and Audio Monitoring Policy

### Use of Video and Audio Monitoring

The Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) recognizes that maintaining the safety and security of students, staff and school property is best implemented with a multifaceted approach. To the extent technology provides tools to maintain safety and security, the use of technology such as video surveillance cameras is supported by the Executive Director.

Video surveillance may be utilized in and around school property. Cameras may be equipped with audio recording capabilities as well. Video surveillance shall be in accordance with applicable laws pertaining to such use. The school also shall comply with applicable law related to maintaining video recordings.

The Executive Director is directed to develop regulations governing the use of video surveillance in accordance with applicable law and school policy.

### Exclusions

Video and Audio monitoring is not permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Recording of teacher instruction for purposes of completing a licensed personnel performance evaluation is not intended to be covered by this policy and shall not be permitted except as provided by state law. Recording of students for purposes of their educational programming is also not intended to be covered by this policy.

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. §12329 (*Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974*)

34 C.F.R. §99.1 *et seq.* (*FERPA regulations*)

C.R.S. 24-72-113 (*limit on retention of passive surveillance records*)

## Placement and notification

- Video/Audio surveillance equipment may be installed in and around the MECC building where there is a legitimate need for video surveillance, as approved by the Executive Director.
- Video/Audio surveillance equipment will not be used or installed in areas where the public, students and/or staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.
- Video/Audio surveillance equipment may be in operation 24 hours per day on a year round basis at any and all times, whether or not school is in session and whether or not the facilities or buildings are in use.
- Video monitors shall not be located in an area that enables public viewing.
- Conduct and comments in publicly accessible places on school property (e.g. school hallways, cafeterias, libraries, customer service contact points, etc.) may be recorded by video and audio devices.
- The school shall notify students, staff and the public that Video/Audio surveillance systems are present. Such notification will be included in staff and student handbooks.
- Specific notification will not be provided when a recording device has been installed or is being utilized in a school vehicle or building.

## Use

- The use of video surveillance equipment on school grounds shall be supervised and controlled by the Deputy Executive Director. The use of video surveillance equipment on school vehicles shall be supervised and controlled by the Galveston Independent School District.
- Staff and students are prohibited from unauthorized use, tampering with or otherwise interfering with video recordings and/or video camera equipment. Violations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action shall be consistent with applicable MECC policies and regulations and may include, but not be limited to, written reprimand, suspension, demotion or termination for staff, depending upon the nature and severity of the situation.
- The Deputy Executive Director will review the use and operations of the video surveillance system with the school on a periodic basis.
- Video recordings may be used as evidence that a student, staff member or other person has engaged in behavior that violates state law and/or MECC policy.

## Storage/security

- The school shall provide reasonable safeguards including, but not limited to password protection, well-managed firewalls and controlled physical access MDF/IDF rooms to protect the video/audio surveillance system from hackers, unauthorized users and unauthorized use.
- Video/audio recordings will be stored for a minimum of 30 school days after the initial recording. If the Deputy Executive Director knows no reason for continued storage, such recordings will be erased.
- Video/Audio recordings held for review will be maintained in their original form pending resolution of the incident. Recording media will then be released for erasure, copied for authorized law enforcement agencies, or retained in accordance with applicable law and MECC policy.
- To ensure confidentiality, all video storage devices that are not in use will be stored securely in the Deputy Executive Director's office. All storage devices that have been used will be numbered and dated. Access to the storage devices will be limited to authorized personnel.
- Video/audio recordings held by MECC as student education records and/or personnel records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable law and MECC policy.

## Viewing requests

Requests for review of video recordings that are considered a student education record or personnel record will be as follows:

- All viewing requests must be submitted in writing. Requests for viewing will be limited to those parents/guardians, staff and/or school officials with a direct interest in the recording as authorized by the Deputy Executive Director. Only the portion of the recording concerning the specific incident at issue will be made available for viewing.

- A parent/guardian may only inspect video if no other students are pictured.
- Requests for viewing may be made to the Deputy Executive Director within 6 school days of the date of recording.
- Approval or denial for viewing will be made within 1 school day of receipt of the request and so communicated to the requesting individual.
- Recordings will be made available for viewing within 1 school days of the approval of the request.
- Prior to a parent/guardian viewing video, a affidavit stating that they have not committed any crimes against juveniles must be signed.
- Actual viewing by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties such as parents will be permitted only at the Deputy Executive Director's Office unless otherwise required by law.
- All viewing will include the designated school administrator or designee.
- To the extent required by law, a written log will be maintained of those viewing video recordings including the date and location of viewing, reasons for viewing, date the recording was made and the viewer's signature.
- Recordings will remain the property of MECC and may be reproduced only in accordance with applicable law and MECC policy.

### Notice Informing Individuals About Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Requirements

Moody Early Childhood Center complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Moody Early Childhood Center does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Moody Early Childhood Center:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters.
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats).
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters.
  - Information is written in other languages.

If you need these services, contact Antonio Ford, Deputy Executive Director. If you believe that Moody Early Childhood Center has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. with: Antonio Ford, Deputy Executive Director, 1110 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Galveston, TX 77550, Telephone (409) 761-6930, Fax (409) 750-7177, Email [antonio@moodychildhoodcenter.org](mailto:antonio@moodychildhoodcenter.org). If you need help filing a grievance, Antonio Ford, Deputy Executive Director, is available to help you. You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
 200 Independence Avenue, SW  
 Room 509F, HHH Building  
 Washington, D.C. 20201  
 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)  
 Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

# Provider's Guide to Parent's Rights

Senate Bill 1098 from the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Regular Session added Section 42.04271 to the Human Resources Code and states that a parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:

- Enter and examine the child-care facility during its hours of operation and without advance notice;
- File a complaint against the child care facility;
- Review the child care facility's publicly accessible records;
- Review the child-care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;
- Receive inspection reports and information about how to access the child care facility's online compliance history;
- Have the facility comply with a court order that prevents another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the child;
- Be given the contact information for the child care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that:
  - Video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
  - The parent or guardian does not retain any part of the video depicting a child that is not their own; and
  - The parent or guardian of any other child in the video receives prior notice from the facility;
- Obtain a copy of the facility's policies and procedures handbook;
- Review the facility's staff training records and any in-house training curriculum; and
- Exercise these rights without receiving retaliatory action by the facility.

## Required Notifications

- The child care facility must provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any other child captured in a video before allowing a parent to inspect a recording.
- The child care facility must provide a parent or guardian with a written copy of the rights no later than the child's first day at the facility.

## Helpful Tips

Since a parent may perceive an action taken by a child care facility as retaliatory, keep in mind:

- Documentation is essential in supporting your actions; and
- Follow the suspension and expulsion policy outlined in your operational policies and update your policy, if needed.



