

HOUSTON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY
“Setting the standard in child education”
OPERATIONAL POLICIES

At Houston Early Childhood Development Academy, our goal is to give each child a warm environment that encourages the development of academic skills, socialization skills, independence, and a positive self-image. We recognize and foster an active partnership between home and school, parents and educators. Our programs are based upon the principles of developmentally appropriate activities and instruction.

HECDA normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 5:30am to 7:30pm. Daily curriculum begins at 8:30am until 5:00pm. All children are required to arrive before 9:00am to minimize classroom disruptions. Students arriving after 9:00am must present documentation stating a reason to excuse tardy (i.e. doctor's return to school slip) *Effective 8/23/10*. Our facility operates for all twelve months of the year, and includes summer programs. Parents of children remaining at HECDA after 7:30pm will be charged a fee of \$20 for the first half-hour and \$1 per minute thereafter. At 8:30pm, CPS will be notified.

HECDA will be closed on: New Years Eve & Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Day (observed), Good Friday, Labor Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Christmas Eve & Day, and Thanksgiving & Friday after. Occasionally, when holidays occur during the week, the center may be closed an extra day. A minimum of two weeks notice will be given to parents/caregivers.

HECDA tuition is calculated per the HECDA tuition/fee schedule and payment agreement. There is a \$100.00 registration fee for the first child, \$50.00 for the second child; \$200.00 maximum per family. At the time of enrollment, parents are required to sign the tuition agreement, pay the registration fee, \$50 supply fee, and one (1) week tuition in advance. **The registration fee and first week of tuition are non-refundable.** The registration fee/tuition will also serve as a security deposit to secure a child's space in a classroom for minimum of one (1) week from the child's anticipated start date. At the end of the week, the child will need to have started at HECDA, or another week of tuition is due. The space is forfeited if the financial obligation is not met. A 10% discount on the lesser amount is available for families with more than one child enrolled at HECDA. **HECDA does not accept cash. Payments must be made via check, credit card, money order(s) or electronic bank draft through Tuition Express.** Each child's tuition is paid on pre-paid weekly basis. **ALL TUITION MUST BE PAID ON MONDAY, BEFORE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, OF THE WEEK IT IS DUE.** A \$35.00 late fee will be charged after close of business Monday. **Children with tuition and late fees not paid in full by close of business Tuesday will not be admitted to HECDA on Wednesday or until payment in full is received.** A \$35.00 NSF or Chargeback fee will be charged for credit cards, electronic bank drafts, or personal checks that are returned unpaid by your financial institution. If this should occur, you will be notified, and payment must be remitted via certified funds immediately. If there is a second incident of NSF or chargeback from your financial institution, all future payments must be remitted via certified funds. **HECDA accepts financial assistance from NCI. The parent portion of the tuition balance that is not covered by NCI is due weekly - every Monday before close of business.** A \$35 late fee will be charged after close of business Monday. **Children with tuition and late fees not paid in full by close of business Tuesday will not be admitted to HECDA on Wednesday or until payment in full is received.** Tuition is required as long as your child is enrolled at HECDA. There are no refunds for days missed. A \$50.00 Arts & Crafts fee is due annually and at the time of enrollment. The Arts & Crafts fee and curriculum fee will be automatically billed to all accounts on August 1st of each year. Additional fees may apply for field trips and other activities. Each family with children enrolled full-time receives one (1) free vacation week to be used during the normal school year, August through May. **A \$45 holding fee will be charged for any other "absent" weeks, please refer to the Parent Handbook for details on the free vacation week and holding fees. Holding fees must be paid in advance of 1st day absent.**

HECDA is committed to helping Toddlers and Pre-K children develop and learn in a fun, loving, and nurturing environment. Our teaching methods are based on the *A Beka* curriculum. Our philosophy is that each child is unique and should be free to mature intellectually, socially, physically and emotionally to their fullest potential. The *A Beka* curriculum supports this philosophy by providing learning programs that are designed to provide a positive experience to build each child's self-esteem, educational development and social skills. The tools learned at HECDA will help build the solid foundation of a child's life. Our infant's day is filled with activities rich in language, movement, and sensory adventures, which support his/her enthusiasm for interacting, exploring, and discovering. Reading begins with the youngest of infants as the children experience the joy, magic, and wonders of sharing a book in the arms of a trusted teacher. Our after-school children are offered homework help to assist each child in achieving academic success. Computer learning and assistance is available.

HECDA uniform requirements for Toddler 2, Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 children are the red HECDA polo shirt Mon – Thurs with **NAVY BLUE** pants, shorts, or skirts and the HECDA T-shirt with denim pants/shorts on Fridays. All pants and shorts must be hemmed, no cut-offs. Boys should wear a brown or black belt and black socks. Girls should wear white socks. Children must wear closed-toe shoes or sneakers. HECDA T-shirts are required for summer programs and field trips. All HECDA uniform shirts must be purchased through HECDA. **Students that arrive without a uniform shirt will have the cost of a shirt billed to their account. Students that arrive without the uniform bottom will be charged a \$10 uniform violation fee.**

HECDA requires that children are picked-up and dropped-off by parents or AUTHORIZED caregivers ONLY. All parents and authorized persons must sign & out upon arrival and departure from HECDA. Photo identifications will be required. **Children will not be allowed to leave HECDA with anyone other than a nominated person or their parent or caregiver.**

HECDA will not accept children who are ill. HECDA will notify the parents of children who become ill during the day and they will be sent home. The child must be symptom free for 24 hours or have a doctor's note before returning to HECDA.

HECDA may dispense prescription or non-prescription medication only if the parents have completed a "HECDA Medical Release" authorization form and only upon written order of a licensed physician. All non-prescription medications must be in the manufacturer's original container with label and clearly state for use by "infants" or "children". **Oral medications will be administered by the Director or General Manager.** Adult oral medications will not be administered under any circumstances. Topical ointments may be applied by staff as needed for sun screen or diaper rash, under written instruction and authorization from the parent.

HECDA will contact the child's parent/guardian immediately should there be a medical emergency. 911 Emergency Services will be contacted for critical emergencies. The local Texas Child Care Licensing office will be notified of all injuries and accidents.

HECDA parental notifications, including changes in policy and procedures, will be placed in each child's mailbox for parental/caregiver pick-up. In addition, current notifications will be posted in our main entrance and on the HECDA website www.hecda.com.

HECDA disciplinary methods used shall be based on guidance to help the child develop inner control, self-responsibility, respect for the rights of others, as he/she learns to cope with the daily experiences of living and working and playing with others. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BE USED OR TOLERATED BY ANYONE** at HECDA. Verbal abuse will not be allowed-this means no yelling, no obscene language and no put downs between adults and children. Spanking, threatening, and withholding food cannot be used to discipline children. Please refer to the HECDA parent handbook for additional policies related to Time-Out and Biting.

HECDA will offer nutritious, balanced meals, including breakfast, lunch and two snacks. **Breakfast will be served from 7am to 7:45am. Breakfast will not be served after 7:45am.** Lunch will be served from 11am to 12pm. Afternoon snack will be served from 2:30pm to 3pm. Late-afternoon snack will be served at 6:00pm. Weekly menus will be posted in the main entrance and in the cafeteria. All meals and food service practices will be in accordance with the Texas Department of Health and Texas Child Care Licensing Regulations. HECDA participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program through the Texas Department of Health & Human Service. **Parents are not to send food or drink in for or with their children.** All parents/guardians are requested to fill out a Child Food Program Eligibility Application form annually in order for the Center to maintain state compliance. Parents must provide formula, and baby food for their infants. Formula must be prepared at home and brought in ready to serve. All bottles and sip cups must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name in permanent marker. **Parents are also required to fill out an infant feeding schedule before the first day of care. Infants will not be fed table food before their 1st birthday.**

HECDA requires all children to have a health statement and current immunization record on file upon admission. Parents are responsible for continuing to meet applicable child immunization requirements, including boosters, specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A Tuberculosis (TB) test and Hearing & Vision screening are also required for children ages 4 and up. Parents must comply with all HECDA health requirements as outlined by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Children who do not meet these requirements may be subject to dismissal from HECDA.

HECDA child enrollment packets are available in the HECDA administration office. The enrollment packet includes a registration form, authorized caregiver form, tuition agreement, a health statement and current immunization record, emergency care & medical release form, infant feeding schedule (if applicable), transportation form (if applicable), and field trip permission form. Parents must also supply current photos of each child and each person that will be authorized to drop-off or pick-up the child, including the parent. Children will not be accepted to HECDA without the required documents and photos. HECDA will require updated and current information from the parent, as requested. It is the responsibility of the parent to report to the HECDA administration office any change of address, telephone numbers (home or work), employment, emergency contact person, authorized caregivers and medical information.

HECDA nap time is from 12:00 to 2:00pm. Parents will be required to provide mats for their children. Please provide a small blanket for nap-time. The blanket should be picked up every Friday afternoon to be laundered and brought back to the center on Monday mornings. Please label your child's blanket and all personal items with his/her name or initials. Children who cannot sleep will be allowed to participate in a quiet activity until the nap-time is over. Infants and toddlers who sleep in cribs will be taken out of the crib for other activities when they awake.

HECDA field trips will be taken periodically throughout the year. Children are required to wear HECDA T-shirts, which parents are required to purchase for their child. A field trip fee may also apply. HECDA does not offer water-play activities.

HECDA will have a monthly fire drill to acquaint your child with our evacuation procedures. A copy of evacuation procedures will be made available to parents. There is a sanitation procedure for each classroom and the infant room, and each room is disinfected three times per day. All children and staff must wash hands after restroom breaks.

HECDA Parents and grandparents are encouraged to participate in all aspects of their child's learning and development at HECDA. Parents are invited to attend field trips, visit at any time during the day and provide feedback and suggestions. No appointment is necessary; however we would appreciate advance notice. We are committed to continuously improving the quality of our child care. We want to partner with parents to provide the best experience possible for your child. Twice a year, HECDA will host parent-teacher functions, as a way to demonstrate and foster open communication among parents and providers.

HECDA operates in accordance with the Minimum Standards of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. HECDA licensing inspections will be posted the parent sign-in center located in the main entrance. A copy of the Minimum Standards will be available at the parent center. The Licensing Department can be reached at the following numbers: Local Childcare Licensing: 713-940-3009 or www.dfps.state.tx.us Local Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400.

HECDA informs parents that under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty. Also HECDA reserves the right to refuse service to any family whereas any family member or responsible party to a child is suspected to be involved in organized criminal or "gang" activity.

NO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS WILL BE ALLOWED ON HECDA PROPERTY.

HECDA – Other Items: During periods of inclement weather, HECDA will follow school closings or delays in accordance with the Spring Independent School District. HECDA reserves the right to close or not open if travel is extremely hazardous. Late openings and closings will be posted on our website www.hecda.com. You may also call 281-444-KIDS (5437) for updated instructional messages on HECDA's message line. Children will receive their own cubby space or box for their individual belongings and parental notifications. We strongly discourage any toys or personal items brought from home, as they tend to break or become lost. HECDA is not responsible for any personal items from home that may break or become lost. Children should dress in simple and washable clothing, in accordance with the uniform policy. Appropriate clothing will aid the child in their toileting and outdoor play. All walking children must wear shoes every day. Parents should provide at least eight diapers per day for infants and four diapers per day for toddlers. Wipes should be replenished weekly. There will be a \$3.50 charge for wipes if HECDA needs to replenish your supply, and a \$1.00 charge for each diaper that is used for your child. Birthday Parties will be accommodated at snack time or lunch time. ***Cakes or Cupcakes must be store-bought and in the original, sealed container.***

Your signature here indicates you have read, understand and agree to HECDA operational policies as outlined above.

Your signature will also serve as consent to HECDA to use photos taken of your child throughout the year for the following purposes:

- Yearbook Publication (paper and digital)
- HECDA Newsletters
- HECDA's Website

This consent does not give HECDA permission to sell any photos to a third party.

NOTE – This applies ONLY to parents that are friends of HECDA on Facebook. By signing this document, parents give consent to HECDA to have their child's picture displayed on HECDA's Facebook page. This page is restricted to families with children that are enrolled in our center. Any family that decides to withdraw their child from HECDA is immediately deleted from our friend list.

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Note: The "Operational Policies" are a condensed version of HECDA policies. For additional information on HECDA policies, please refer to the HECDA Parent Handbook.

