

# **KIDCO Creative Learning Inc**



# **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

## **KIDCO - Corporate Office**

761 E. Okeechobee Road, Hialeah, FL 33010

Office: (305) 576-6990

Email: [kidco@kidcoedu.org](mailto:kidco@kidcoedu.org)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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	<u>Page #</u>
<b>INTRODUCTION / KIDCO SITES</b>	3
<b>GENERAL FACILITY POLICIES</b>	4
I. Telephone	4
II. Kitchen	4
III. Equipment	5
IV. Professional Library & Resource Center	5
V. Instructional Materials & Supplies	6
VI. Leave Time	6
VII. Fire Drills	6
VIII. Smoking	7
<b>STAFF HEALTH SAFETY</b>	8
I. General Safety Rules	8
II. Worker's Compensation	9
<b>CHILDREN HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</b>	10
I. General Safety Rules	10
II. Accidents	10
III. Illness	10
IV. Medication	11
V. Outdoor Play	11
VI. Diapering	11
VII. Hand Washing	12
<b>STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	14
I. Staff Responsibilities with the Center	14
II. Staff Responsibilities with the Children	14
III. Staff Responsibilities with the Parents	15
<b>WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT</b>	17
I. Child Abuse	17
II. Reporting Procedures	17

III.	AIDS/HIV	18
IV.	SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)	18
<b>DRESS CODE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT</b>		21
I.	Dress Code and Personal Appearance	21
II.	Professional Conduct	21
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL POSITIONS AND DUTIES</b>		22
I.	Responsibilities of All Children	22
II.	Program Planning of Daily Activities	25
III.	Assessment	25
IV.	Teacher / Child Interaction	26
V.	Classroom Care	27
<b>STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICY</b>		28
I.	Definition	28
II.	Purpose	28
III.	Goals & Objectives	28
<b>COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNITY/ PARENT CONCERNS</b>		30
I.	Policy	30
II.	Procedure	30

# INTRODUCTION

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Dear KIDCO Staff:

KIDCO welcomes you to another school year of service to our community. Since its inception in 1976, our center's goal has been to provide the best quality services to our children and families of this community.

You are an integral part of KIDCO and you are the person who touches our children's lives daily. Your caring and understanding disposition is necessary to make the life of every child a meaningful one.

We are expecting that you follow the rules, regulations and procedures outlined and described in this handbook. These rules have been developed to provide guidance and to provide knowledge to all our personnel regarding KIDCO's physical facilities, staff responsibilities, classroom rules, available resources and materials, staff and children safety, health, codes of conduct, program planning, classroom care and much more.

We are counting on your continued professional growth and your collaboration with the parents, co-workers, administration and guests, to continue to make KIDCO a success.

Have a great year!

*KIDCO Board & Administration*

## KIDCO SITES

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KIDCO Central	761 E. Okeechobee Rd. Hialeah, Florida 33010	(305) 576-6990
KIDCO II	2720 West 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue, Hialeah, Florida 33010	(305) 863-6216
KIDCO IV	6911 NW 3rd Avenue, Miami, Florida 33150	(305) 758-6990
KIDCO V	5510 NE 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Miami Florida 33137	(305) 754-2456
KIDCO VI	242 NE 26 <sup>th</sup> Street, Miami, Florida 33137	(305) 573-0447
KIDCO VII	183 NE 57 <sup>th</sup> Street, Miami, Florida 33137	(305) 759-3079

# GENERAL FACILITY POLICIES

## I. Telephone

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- A. Center phones are for regular school business and for emergency use only.
- B. Personal calls will be transferred between 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. only. Messages will be taken for all other calls and kept in the office. Messages may be picked up between 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. The office will transfer emergency calls/messages to staff.
- C. Staff should be conscientious when using the phone. Lines should be maintained 'open' for important incoming/outgoing calls.
- D. At KIDCO II Line 4 (four) is a private line to be used only by the Executive Director.
- E. Long distance calls may not be made from any telephone in the building. In case of an emergency, contact administrative personnel.
- F. Directory Assisted calls (411) or Operator calls, are not allowed. Telephone Directory Guides are provided at each site in the office.
- G. All Cellular phones should be in the 'off mode' during work hours.

## II. Kitchen

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### A. Washer & Dryer:

- ✓ Access to the washer & dryer has been given to designated staff persons to operate this equipment.
- ✓ Washer & Dryer are to be used for laundering of the children's sheets.
- ✓ A schedule has been implemented so linens are laundered on a weekly basis, or as deemed necessary. In such cases, notify the designated person.
- ✓ Washer & Dryer may also be used for classroom equipment as needed for optimal hygiene. Arrangements with a designated staff person must be in advance.

### B. Freezer:

- ✓ The freezer in the kitchen at KIDCO II is to be used only for the storage of food purchased for children.
- ✓ This piece of equipment is cleaned with a mild soap solution once a week and with a sanitizing solution once a month.

### C. Refrigerator:

- ✓ The refrigerator in the kitchen is to be used only for the children's catered food.
- ✓ Prescription medication for the children will be maintained in the refrigerator in a locked box and labeled in zip-lock bags.
- ✓ Refrigerator and or designated space will be provided for the staff at each site.

### III. Equipment

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**A. Audiovisual:**

Audiovisual equipment is located in the Resource room and/or office available for borrowing. Equipment available includes:

- ✓ Laminator
- ✓ Overhead Projector
- ✓ Typewriter
- ✓ Labeling Machine
- ✓ TV/VCR\*
- ✓ Computer

\*Use of **Television** and/or **VCR** in the classrooms should have a specific educational purpose.

**B. Copy Machine:**

Use of the copy machine should be restricted to designated persons only or with assistance from office personnel. Teaching staff should refrain from excessive use of Xerox copies, as they do not promote developmentally appropriate activities for young children.

**C. Computers and Typewriters:**

Computers and typewriters are available for staff use with assistance from office personnel. Request should be made in advance and coordinated during a mutually agreeable time frame.

### IV. Professional Library and Resource Center

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**A.** The resource center consists of a professional library, working area with appropriate office supplies, and audiovisual tapes/films and equipment.

**B.** The professional library contains over 200 books. Many of these books have been donated by valuable members of KIDCO staff, Board of Directors, and Trustees. The library contains:

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| ✓ Textbooks in Education and Child Development | ✓ Big Books        |
| ✓ Research material                            | ✓ Children's Books |
| ✓ Teacher activity books                       | ✓ Magazines        |
|  | ✓ Journals         |

**C.** The following guidelines should be followed when using the Professional Library and Resource Center:

- ✓ The resource center/professional library is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- ✓ Activity Books, Big Books and Children Books can be checked out for a maximum of five (5) days.
- ✓ Textbooks and research material may be checked out for a maximum of ten (10) days.
- ✓ A maximum of three (3) books can be checked out at one time.
- ✓ Magazines, journals, dictionaries and encyclopedias are only reference material. They may not be checked out.
- ✓ All books must be returned on the due date required.

- ✓ All books not returned, damaged, or lost must be paid in full.
- ✓ Videos checked out are due the next day.
- ✓ Before checking out materials, authorization is needed from the Education Coordinator or other office personnel. A log will be maintained. Staff must sign in/out and date all entries.

**Staff is encouraged to use these resources.**

## **V. Instructional Materials and Supplies**

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- A.** All teaching staff will be required to maintain the classrooms well equipped with materials in useful conditions.  
[HSPS 1304.53(a)(7)]
- ✓ If materials or supplies are needed during the year, the teacher should fill out a "Request for classroom supplies/materials form" stating the items needed.
  - ✓ This form should then be given to the Lead Teachers who will obtain the materials/items from the supplies closet, or if not in stock, evaluate the request and order them, if at all possible.

## **VI. Leave Time**

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- A.** Leave Time is as follows:
- Head Start: (two weeks in holidays and one week of spring break-paid time off) – in addition:
    - 8 hours Leave
    - 24 hours Sick leave
  - Early Head Start: (one week of spring break – paid) – in addition:
    - 24 hours leave
    - 32 hours Sick leave
  - Year-Round Staff:
    - 1year – 2year: 40 hours leave time, 40 hours sick time, 16 personal
    - 3years: 64 hours leave, 40 hours sick leave, 16 personal
    - 10 years: 80 hours leave, 40 hours sick leave, 16 personal

## **VII. Fire Drills**

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- A.** Fire drills will be conducted monthly.
- B.** Teaching staff must become acquainted with fire drill instructions and fire exits as posted for each classroom.  
[HSPS 1304.22(a)(3)]
- C.** The following procedures must always be followed:
- ✓ Teachers should discuss the procedures with students and prepare them for the unannounced drills.
  - ✓ Each class should proceed in single lines walking rapidly, but not running.
  - ✓ One teacher / staff member should lead the children; the other should remain behind the last child.
  - ✓ Orderly and quiet conduct must always be maintained.

- ✓ Teaching staff must carry a copy of the classroom roster, attendance record, and emergency contacts.
- ✓ Children and staff members should remain outside the building until a clear signal has been given.

D. Teaching staff is responsible for logging monthly fire drills.

## **VIII. Smoking**

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- A. No smoking is permitted on premises. *[NAEYC 9.D.06]* [HSPS 1304.53(A)(8)]
- B. Smoking is not permitted during field trips, community activities, etc. in the presence of children and/or when representing KIDCO Child Care.





# STAFF HEALTH & SAFETY

## I. General Safety Rules [NAEYC 9.C.08]

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### A. The following guidelines should be adhered at all times:

1. Job safety is the responsibility of each individual employee. Job safety is often applying common sense to a situation. Use good common sense and stay alert on the job at all times. [HSPS 1304.22(d)(1)&(2)]
2. All injuries, no matter how slight, must be reported to your supervisor immediately.
3. Employees taking prescribed medication should advise the supervisor prior to the start of the shift. Employees under the influence of drugs or alcohol on-the-job will be subject to immediate discharge.
4. If when reporting for work you feel ill or are emotionally upset due to personal problems, discuss them with your supervisor before starting work.
5. Report any unsafe condition to your supervisor immediately, regardless of whether the unsafe condition directly affects you. [HSPS 1304.53(a)(10)(viii)]
6. If at any time you are not sure of how to perform the job you have been asked to do: STOP and CHECK WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR. This is for your safety and the safety of your fellow workers.
7. Good housekeeping practices should be followed at all time. Housekeeping includes dry floors, neat work areas and properly arranged materials.
8. Use the correct method of lifting objects. Remember to lift with your legs, not with your back. If a load is too heavy or awkward, ask for assistance.
9. Do not use flammable liquids, toxic materials, chemicals or acids unless authorized and instructed in the proper procedures.
10. All employees who drive or are passengers while on company business must always wear their seat belts.
11. Always Obey all safety and warning signs.
12. No weapons should be brought on the premises.
13. First Aid kits are readily available and made accessible. First Aid kits must be taken on field trips and to the playground. [NAEYC 9.C.10]
14. Foresight is important. Study all environments to avoid possible accidents.

### B. Equipment use guidelines:

1. Do not start or operate any equipment without the proper authority and safety instruction. Never operate a piece of equipment when guards or other safety devices are not in place.
2. Do not attempt to repair or tamper with equipment that is not working properly. Report the condition to your supervisor immediately.
3. Any employee who is furnished safety equipment (goggles, gloves...) will be required to use such equipment while doing the work for which the equipment was furnished.

4. Good housekeeping practices should always be followed. Housekeeping includes clean tools, neat work areas and properly arranged materials.
5. All electrical power tools and cords must have an operational third wire positive ground. Electrical tools and cords without positive grounding should not be used. Double insulated tools must be so marked.

## II. Worker's Compensation

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- A. All staff members are covered by **Workman's Compensation** during working hours. All employees should adhere to the following guidelines:
  1. All injuries, no matter how slight, must be reported to your supervisor immediately. Even those accidents that do not appear to warrant medical attention must be reported to the Center's office as soon as they occur.
  2. If medical attention is required later, the time and place of the accident must have reported within 24 hours of the incident to Worker's Compensation and on file in order to be eligible.
  3. Submitting false or fraudulent information when reporting injury is a felony crime and will be cause for dismissal and denial of medical/wage loss benefits.
- B. Each staff member is required to complete an "**Emergency Contact Card**" with the office at the time of hiring and should update the information card on a regular basis. Any changes on this card should be reported immediately to the administration.



# CHILDREN HEALTH & SAFETY

## I. General Safety Rules

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1. Infants are more susceptible to bacteria than older children. Take extra care in handling their food, bottles and utensils to make sure they are safe and clean.
2. To ensure the safety of infants and toddlers, baby walkers are excluded from use at the Center. *[NAEYC 9.C.08]*

## II. Accidents

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1. No matter how insignificant as they may appear at the time, accidents must be reported immediately.
2. First Aid must be applied if necessary.
3. The teaching staff must fill out an accident report and call the parents to notify them of the accident. *[HSPS 1304.22(a)(4)]*
4. Accident Reports must be signed, and a copy must remain on file.
5. In any type of emergency, the office must be notified immediately.
6. All students are covered by school insurance
7. If the accident requires immediate medical attention, the administration along with the staff member will notify emergency paramedics.

## III. Illness *[NAEYC 5.A.04]*

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1. The health and physical well-being of all children is a matter of great concern to KIDCO. Any child having contracted any contagious illnesses and/or have a severe cold must remain at home.
2. When a child becomes too ill to remain at the Center, Staff will contact the parent immediately. In cases where we cannot reach the parent, the persons listed on the emergency contact list will be notified.
3. Children too ill to participate and/or are suspected to be contagious will be excluded and made comfortable in the office where they are supervised by a familiar caregiver until the parent and/or designated person arrives.
4. When children are kept and/or sent home due to contagious illness, they must remain home until a physician diagnoses the child to be free of such illness and ready to return to the Center.
5. In cases where children have contracted any contagious illness, staff will notify parents verbally and/or in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child might have been exposed. Information provided includes, but now limited to:

✓ Symptoms	✓ Control measure implemented by program
✓ Mode of Transmission	as well as those families should implement
✓ Period of Communicability	at home <i>[NAEYC 5.A.05]</i>

## **IV. Medication** [NAEYC 5.A.11 & 10.D.10]

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1. Medication belonging to a child must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form.
2. Teaching staff must have the parent complete the Medication Authorization Form in order to administer the medication to the child.
3. All medication to be given must be prescribed and include the child's first and last name, date, name of licensed health care provider, assigned dosage, storage instruction and expiration date. [HSPS 1304.22(c)]
4. The entire form must be completed, dated and signed by the authorized adult. Staff required to administer medication and/or medical procedures, must demonstrate competency. Staff must follow written instructions provided by the health care provider on performing procedures. [HSPS 1304.53(a)(10)(iii)]
5. Medication should be stored in a zip-lock bag with child's name written outside.
6. It should be placed in the refrigerator in a locked box.

## **V. Outdoor Play** [NAEYC 5.A.07]

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1. As part of the daily routine, children of all ages will have opportunities for outdoor play; permitting weather conditions, air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk.
2. Teaching staff must ensure that children wear clothing to protect them from the weather accordingly (heat, cold, etc.).
3. The playground area is designed to provide shaded areas. Teaching staff must ensure that children can play in these areas.
4. In cases where advisories have been posted by the public health authorities, staff will take measures to protect children from: air pollution, high UVB & UVA index, and insect-borne disease. Time outside and physical activity will be limited and/or excluded during periods of alerts. [NAEYC 9.D.03]

## **VI. Diapering**

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### **A. General Information** [NAEYC 5.A.08]

1. Unless specified by a physician for medical reasons, teaching staff will only use commercial, disposable diapers and/or pull-ups.
  2. In instances where cloth diapers are prescribed, teaching staff must ensure the absorbent inner lining is completely covered by waterproof material. When changing children, cloth diapers and outer covering are changed as a unit.
  3. Staff must check children in diapers and/or pull-up at least every two hours when awake and when they awaken. Children with wet and/or soiled diapers must be changed immediately. Areas within each Center have been designated for changing diapers, pull-ups, and/or soiled underwear. Staff must ensure the exclusive use of these areas and ensure they are not used for the temporary placement of other objects, especially anything involved with food.
  4. Staff must always maintain a hand on the child when changing a child.
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## B. Procedures

1. Organize needed supplies within reach.
2. If needed, place disposable covering on the portion of the diapering table where you will place the child's bottom.
3. Put on disposable latex gloves.
4. Using your hands only, carry the child to the table and lay him/her down. Staff should avoid cradling the child to not risk soiling their clothing.
5. Remove soiled diaper and/or clothing.
6. Clean the child with a dampened, single-use, disposable towel.
7. Put disposable diapers and diapering materials in a plastic-lined trash receptacle. Receptacles must have: lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device, always maintained closed, and are inaccessible to the children. *[NAEYC 5.A.08]*
8. Soiled cloth diapers and/or clothing are placed in a plastic bag for parents.
9. Diaper and dress the child.
10. Wash your hands and wash the child's hands under running water.
11. Return the child to the activity area.
12. Clean and disinfect the diapering area, all equipment and supplies. Wash hands again, if necessary.

## VII. Hand Washing *[NAEYC 5.A.09]*

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### A. General Information

1. The single most effective practice that prevents the spread of germs is good hand washing practices.
2. All children and adults are required to wash their hands and implement procedures as outlined.
3. Staff will assist and/or supervise children with hand washing, as needed.
4. The use of latex gloves, pre-moistened towels and/or waterless hand cleaners should not be used as a substitute for hand washing.

### B. When... Children should wash their hands

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ✓ Upon arrival                            | ✓ After handling animals/pets, cages and/or pet objects/supplies |
| ✓ Immediately before and after eating     | ✓ When moving from group to another                              |
| ✓ Before using water tables               | ✓ Whenever hands are visibly dirty                               |
| ✓ After using the toilet or diaper change | ✓ Before going home  |
| ✓ After handling bodily fluids            |  |
| ✓ After playing outdoors                  |  |

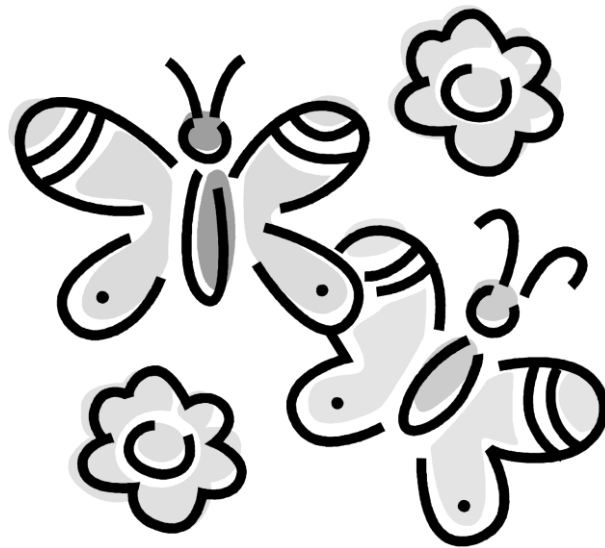
### C. When... Adults should wash their hands

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| ✓ Upon arrival | ✓ Immediately before handling food, preparing bottles and feeding children |
|----------------|--|

- ✓ After using the toilet, assisting children with the toilet and diapering
- ✓ After contacting bodily fluids
- ✓ After handling garbage and/or cleaning
- ✓ After handling animals/pets, cages and/or pet objects/supplies
- ✓ After removing latex gloves
- ✓ Before applying any medication or ointment
- ✓ Before going home

#### **D. Procedures**

1. Always use running water and liquid soap.
2. Wet the hand and apply small amount of liquid to soap to hands.
3. Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 10 seconds. Be sure to scrub between fingers, under and around any jewelry, under fingernails, around the top and palms of the hands, and wrists.
4. Rinse hands under running water. Leave the water running while drying hands.
5. Dry hands with clean, disposable towel.
6. Turn the faucet off using the towel.
7. Discard the used towel in a trash receptacle that is lined with a plastic bag and preferably has a hands-free lid.



# STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff have responsibilities toward the children, the parents, other staff, the center and ultimately the community. Our reputation is of utmost importance. Be professional on site and at other activities.

## **I. Staff Responsibilities with the Center**

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- A. Each staff member must arrive at the designated time of arrival ready to work. Staff must be at their assigned work areas by their designated time. If you know in advance you're going to be late, your supervisor must be notified in writing (See attached form). Otherwise, please advise the office as soon as possible so arrangements can be made until you arrive.
- B. It is the responsibility of each staff member to notify their supervisor in writing if they will be absent. The earlier this is done the greater the possibility to obtain a substitute and the less disruptive for all at KIDCO. Please be respectful to the children and your co-workers and give notice whenever possible.
- C. Each staff member is expected to practice and maintain a professional disposition with all other staff members.
- D. Each staff member will be willing to attend training and workshops recommended by the administration. All staff must comply with continued training as required by each agency such as Children & Families, Head Start, Pre-K, and Child Development Services.
- E. Each staff member is responsible to oversee the condition and operation of the furniture, materials, and equipment in the center. Any equipment in need of repair or in need of other service should be reported to the administration immediately.
- F. Each staff member is encouraged to participate in educational/community-oriented activities recommended by the administration to increase professional competence and development.
- G. Ensure all times and that all information pertaining to center documents and/or family documents are maintained confidential.

## **II. Staff Responsibilities with the Children**

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- A. Each staff member must maintain a physical environment that is conducive to the overall wellbeing of the children and families that we serve.
- B. Teaching staff must record attendance, complete health check and meal roster on a daily basis for each child in attendance.
- C. Each staff member will model appropriate behavior at all time when talking, eating, and participating in activities with children.
- D. Each staff member will encourage and value each child's creativity throughout the overall program.

- E. Each staff member will guide and redirect a child's inappropriate behavior to appropriate behavior through open communication, low tone of voice and tender touch and eye contact on a one to one communication, whenever possible.
- F. Provide infants with the correct foods and allow them the opportunity to enjoy new textures and new flavors. Help establish good eating habits. [HSPS 1304.23(c)(5)]
- G. Respond to early signs of hunger. Infants should be fed before they start to cry or become upset. Feeding an infant should be a continuous and smooth process. Feeding should continue until the infant indicates it is full. Test the temperature of foods before feeding to make sure is not too hot.
- H. Each staff member will maintain confidentiality of student records and related matters. This includes all discussions with other staff, parents, etc.
- I. Staff members should never use physical punishment nor engage in psychological abuse or coercion.
- J. Staff members should never use threats or any kind of remarks nor withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.
- K. Teachers are not permitted to use Cell Phones during working hours
- L. Ensure all HIPAA requirements are always met.

### **III. Staff Responsibilities with the Parents**

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- A. Staff members will acknowledge the presence and welcome all parents and families to the Center with appropriate communication skills.
- B. Staff members will facilitate and guide all parents through the Center, meeting each family's individual needs.
- C. **ENROLLMENT / INTAKE**
  - 1. Social Service staff/Receptionist Clerk will complete enrollment/intake forms with those families who are interested in registering their child in the program.
  - 2. Families will be provided a copy of the KIDCO Parent Handbook
  - 3. Information about the program to include, but not limited to:
    - ✓ Program Philosophy
    - ✓ Curriculum
    - ✓ Hours of Operation
    - ✓ Fees (if applicable)
    - ✓ Guidance and Discipline
  - 4. Families will be given a tour of the facilities.
- D. Staff members will participate in activities designed to assist parents in the education of their children, themselves and for the betterment of their community.
- E. Staff members will encourage and welcome parent participation and involvement at the Center.
- F. **PARENT ORIENTATION**
  - 1. Orientation is offered to new families entering the program. Orientation includes, but is not limited to:
    - Social Services and Family/Community Partnerships
      - ✓ Goals and Needs



- ✓ Parent Involvement
    - ✓ Community Resources
  - Health
    - ✓ Physical, Lab Work, Immunizations
  - Mental Health and Disabilities
    - ✓ Developmental, Sensory & Behavioral Screening
    - ✓ IEP's and IFP's
  - Nutrition
    - ✓ USDA: Food Pyramid
    - ✓ Menu: Nutrition, Food Portions, Diversity
    - ✓ Special Diets
  - Education
    - ✓ Curriculum: Daily Routine, Lessons Plans
    - ✓ Galileo: On-going Assessments, Goals & Objectives
    - ✓ Home Visits/Parent Teacher Conferences
- G.** Teaching staff will inform the parents of any incident, accident or unusual case by telephone, in writing or in person.
- H.** Communicate daily with the parents the meals being fed under your care. Coordinate with parents what meals should be provided at home to introduce new flavors and new textures.
- I.** It is the responsibility of each staff member to attend and participate in staff meetings and training.
- J.** Staff members should document meetings, personal and phone conversations, as well as general concerns discussed with parents.

**K. ON-GOING COMMUNIATION WITH FAMILIES**

1. Teaching staff play a vital role in establishing relationships with families.
  - ✓ Greeting families
  - ✓ Welcome signs (3 languages)
2. Communication with parents should be carried out in the parent's primary preferred language. Staff or interpreter will be available to verbally communicate with parents in their primary language, if requested.
3. Effective two-way communication between staff and parents includes, but is not limited to:
  - ✓ Monthly Newsletter (English & Spanish)
  - ✓ Parent Activities, Meetings (Parent & Policy Committee) and Training
  - ✓ Home Visits and Parent/Teacher Conferences (English & Spanish)
  - ✓ Announcements, Flyers and Special Events (3 languages)



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

## I. Child Abuse [HSPS 1304.22(4a)(5)]

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### A. The current law reads:

*Section 415.504 Florida Statutes* requires mandatory reporting of all cases of child abuse. This statute applies to suspected or confirmed reports against any person, regardless of occupation, who is alleged to be involved or any person who is alleged to have committed any act of child abuse. School reporting of child abuse is mandated even when a fellow employee is suspected or confirmed as the abuser.

- B. Any person, including, but not limited to, physician, nurse, teacher, social worker, or employee of a public or private facility serving children, who has reason to believe that a child has been a subject of child abuse, shall report or cause reports to be made to the Children and Families.
- C. Knowing and willful failure to report or cause to be reported suspected or confirmed abuse and knowing and willful prevention of another from making such a report is a crime punishable by up to two months in jail and up to a \$500.00 fine, **Sections 775.082 and 775.083, Florida Statutes** and may be subject to disciplinary action of KIDCO Child Care. It is suggested that once a report is made, the principal or appropriate school administrator must be notified.
- D. Child abuse is defined to include harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare and/or willful or negligent acts, which result in: neglect, malnutrition, sexual abuse, physical injury, mental injury, or failure to provide sustenance, clothing, shelter or medical treatment.

## II. Reporting Procedures

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- A. Staff should inform administrative personnel of suspected child abuse/neglect for appropriate documentation and action.
- B. Anyone aware of child abuse, suspected or confirmed, shall immediately make a report to the administration. The designated person will call the Miami Office of Children and Families at (305) 634-4074 or the State of Florida Child Abuse Registry in Tallahassee, Florida at (800) 342-9152.
- C. Reasonable Force and Child Abuse must be distinguished. In some instances, a need may exist to differentiate reasonable force and child abuse. **Florida Statute 232.27** states:

*Subject to law, each teacher or other member of the staff of any school shall have such authority for the control and discipline of students as may be assigned by the administrator.*

The Statute further provides that:

*Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a teacher or other staff member, a principal or designees, or a bus driver shall not be civil or criminally liable for any action carried out in conformity with the state board and district school board rules regarding the control, discipline, suspension and expulsion of students.*

- D. An Administrator must report to Children and Families (C&F) all cases involving employees *when excessive physical force and physical contact was greater than necessary.*

- E. When child abuse is suspected from an outside source an administrator must report to C&F and follow through with a written report within forty-eight (48) hours. **REPORTS TO C&F OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES ARE NOT TO BE REPORTED TO SIU.**
- F. Reporting of incidents to C&F and/or SIU is not prima facie evidence that child abuse has taken place. A subsequent investigation or administrative review will ensure protection of the employee and the student. However WHEN IN DOUBT, REPORT CHILD ABUSE.
- G. Should any employee or citizen report a suspected case of child abuse to the administrator, it becomes the responsibility of the administrator to make report to C&F, based upon the information received. The administrator, within forty-eight (48) hours, shall confirm the oral report in writing to the local C&F office.
- H. The report should include the child's name and other identifiable information, e.g., date of birth, ethnicity, sex, reporting date, and a very brief narrative of the alleged abuse. All written reports are confidential and shall NOT be placed in the student's Cumulative Record folder. Also, the name of the person reporting child abuse or neglect shall, in no case, be released to any person other than employees of C&F responsible for child protective services.

### **III. AIDS/HIV**

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- A. HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, has been found in significant concentrations of blood. Other body fluids such as feces, vomit, nasal secretions, tears, sputum, sweat, and saliva, do not transmit HIV, unless they contain visible blood. However, these body fluids do contain potentially infectious germ from diseases other than HIV/AIDS.
- B. It is good hygiene policy to treat all spills of body fluids as infectious in order to protect you from becoming infected. When handling situations and incidents where blood and body fluids are exposed, make sure to follow the following guidelines:
- ✓ Wear disposable, latex gloves anytime you come into direct hand contact with body fluids, when treating bloody noses, changing soiled clothes/diapers, and cleaning spills by hand.
  - ✓ Proper hand washing is required after wiping a runny nose, applying pressure to a bleeding injury, or helping a student in the bathroom. All staff members should practice proper hand washing techniques.
  - ✓ Handle any contaminated disposable items (tissues, paper towels, and diapers) with gloves and dispose of these items carefully and properly.
  - ✓ Cover Open Wounds and broken skin to prevent infected blood fluid coming in contact with them
  - ✓ Clean spills with disinfectant liquid spray immediately.

### **IV. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)**

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[HSPS 1304] [NAEYC 5.A.12]

- A. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is a syndrome marked by the symptoms of sudden and unexplained death of an apparently healthy infant aged one month to one year. This syndrome may also be referred to as cot death or crib death.
- B. In order to reduce the risk of SIDS, Teaching should adhere to the following:
- ✓ Infants are placed on their backs to sleep on their backs on a firm mattress surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the US Consumer Product Safety Commission. (Exception is exclusive to orders made by physician)

- ✓ The infant's head must remain uncovered during sleep.
  - ✓ Pillows, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys and other soft items are not allowed in the infant's crib during sleep.
  - ✓ A sheet or thin blanket may be used. When used, the infant should be placed at the foot of the crib. The sheet or thin blanket should be tucked under the mattress and should only reach the infant's chest.
- C. An infant, after being placed on their back for sleep, may be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.
- D. **Many SIDS deaths can be avoided by simply making sure that the infant always has access to fresh air.**  
Everyone who cares for infants should know these simple steps:
1. Don't confine the baby so that it can't move its arms, legs and head.
  2. Don't place the baby in a "protective" valley of pillows, blankets or clothing that might cause an 'air dam'.
  3. Don't raise the heat in the baby's room (cool is just fine).
  4. Check the baby often, and don't be afraid of entering baby's room in order to avoid waking him or her.
  5. Introduce air currents in baby's room. A fan blowing up to the ceiling or against a wall can create gentle air currents in an open crib.
  6. Have a source of fresh air that can enter the room -- open a window, or keep the door partially open.
  7. Make sure window treatments don't obstruct the inflow of air. Always leave shades or blinds up a bit to let air in.
  8. If bumpers are used, make sure there is space for the flow of air.
  9. Bumpers should never be used in playpens.
  10. Don't place baby in the middle of a multitude of toys and stuffed animals that might cause an 'air dam'.
  11. Carriages and portable cribs with raised sides should never be used indoors.
  12. Consider placing baby in an inclined sleeping position. Having the head in the up position lets exhaled air slide down to the feet.
  13. Keep infants off the floor and at least two feet above the floor. Heavy gases can concentrate in the bottom of a room.
  14. Be very cautious if you cook with gas, heat with gas, or use fireplaces, kerosene heaters, or when using a barbecue indoors. (Heating an apartment or house with a gas oven is very dangerous to everyone in the house.)
  15. Homes with attached garages can be a source of harmful fumes in adjacent rooms when cars are left running.
  16. Painting the inside of a house produces harmful fumes, as do cleaning solvents and furniture polishers.
  17. Put off having rugs and furniture cleaned until the infant is at least 6 months old. Some carpet cleaning chemicals use carbon dioxide as the cleaning agent.
  18. Postpone any home improvements until the infant is 6 months old to avoid large amounts of airborne dust.
  19. Try to avoid having baby sleep in a basement. Heavy fumes tend to collect in them without an easy escape route.
  20. New carpeting is another source of fumes that could be harmful to an infant.

- E. Be sure to check this site periodically for updates to this list.
- F. The danger period for SIDS is primarily between two and four months. For the first two months of a baby's life, baby doesn't sleep long enough to reach a dangerous condition. After four months the baby is much larger and more animated during sleep. The 5 month old baby has then "grown out of" the danger zone for SIDS; however, we know of cases as old as eleven months. During the first six months it is a good idea to always travel with a fan in or with the diaper bag, and never let down your guard.



# DRESS CODE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

## I. Dress Code and Personal Appearance

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### A. DRESS CODE

1. All Staff members are required to dress appropriately for the duties / responsibilities he/she performs. There are overall restrictions to certain clothing and accessories that would endanger you, the safety of the children and other staff members of the center.
2. The following clothing and accessories are not suitable to the child care environment:
  - ✓ Thongs, flip-flops, sandals or open shoes
  - ✓ Tight mini-skirts nor skin tight pants
  - ✓ Tank tops, off shoulder shirts, see-through blouses
  - ✓ T-shirts with rude or religious sayings, halter tops, spaghetti string shirts
  - ✓ Long nails
  - ✓ Excessive jewelry
3. *Bermudas* are permitted only on special activities, on casual days and field trips.
4. Presentability, comfort and practicality are paramount as criteria for appropriate dress for teaching staff. Staff members working with infants, toddlers or in housekeeping may choose to wear the Center's jacket over their clothes to protect them from frequent contact with fluids and spills.
5. Staff members at KIDCO Creative Learning Inc are expected to portray a professional, clean and neat personal appearance every day.
6. An improperly dressed employee will receive a reprimand and this will affect annual evaluations.

### B. GROOMING

1. Grooming is also part of the personal appearance. Your grooming must be simple and neat. Employees with long hair should maintain it neatly and away from their face.

## II. Professional Conduct

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- A. Professional conduct is expected at all times. Courteous atmosphere must always prevail. All staff is expected to treat all co-workers, parents, visitors and children with respect and promote the unique identity of each as well as refraining from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.

[HSPS 1304.52(h)(l)(i)]

# INSTRUCTIONAL POSITIONS AND DUTIES

## I. Responsibilities of All Children

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### A. SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN [HSPS 1304.52(g)(5)]

1. No child will be left alone or unsupervised.
2. Teaching staff will be assigned to provide direct supervision to a specific group of children and be present with that group of children at all times.
3. Every teaching staff is responsible for supervising their students at all times during the school day. Teaching staff will provide direct supervision by directing and observing children's activities within the same room or designated outdoor play area responding to each child's needs.
4. Staff must always be facing the children or at a minimum, have them within view. Teaching staff supervise infants and toddlers/two's by sight and sound at all times.

Teaching staff supervise pre-school children and/or school aged children by sight. Supervision by sound is permissible for short intervals, as long as teaching staff frequently check on children who are out of sight (e.g. those children in the library area or napping. [NAEYC 3.C.02 & 04]

5. To ensure safety and order in the hallways, these procedures must be instituted:
  - ✓ Establish and review hallway behavior rules.
  - ✓ Children should travel with teaching staff through the halls.
  - ✓ Teaching staff must accompany children to the bathroom before or after outside playground time or during classroom time if necessary and provide direct supervision when children use the bathroom.
  - ✓ Children should not be permitted to walk through the building on their own, when class is outside.
  - ✓ Specific activities should be planned to do with children when outside. During playground time, teaching staff should remain separate from each other for a better view of the children and playground.
  - ✓ Plan and communicate with your teaching teammate on what to do when unusual circumstances happen.

### B. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE [NAEYC 10.D.06]

1. It is mandatory an adult brings the child into the Center and leaves him/her under direct supervision. The adult dropping off the child must "sign-in" the roster form in their child's classroom.
2. Children will not be dismissed to anyone other than the parents or an authorized adult identified by the parents. The adult picking up the child must "sign-out" the roster form in their child's classroom.
3. Children will not be allowed to walk out to the parking lot on his/her own to a waiting parent in the car and will not be released to a minor.

4. Families have the option in electing to contract with a private bus to drop off and/or pick-up their children. Parents must inform the program in writing and understand that bus drivers must adhere to the Center's arrival and departure procedures.

### **C. DAILY ROUTINE**

1. The schedule reflects the daily routine and approximate times that activities will be carried out.
2. The schedule must be in writing and followed unless there is a planned or otherwise appropriate reason to depart from the daily schedule.
3. Staff follows the schedule the majority of the time and makes changes as indicated by individual children's needs or interests.
4. One of the teammates will be assigned to be responsible for turning on lights after naptime to ensure that set schedule is maintained.
5. Transitions between activities should be planned. Children should be given advance notice to be prepared for change. Waiting time should be minimized. Minimize wait time by planning and being prepared.  
*Smooth transitions should occur between activities.* [HSPS 1304.21(a)(3)(ii)]
6. During learning center time (work time), children need the opportunity to choose learning center and to choose activities within those center. The teacher must be involved with the children.
7. Staff must accompany children to the bathroom. Groups going to the bathroom must be divided by gender. No child must go to the bathroom by him/herself under any circumstance.
8. Children older than one year of age will be provided opportunities to brush their teeth and clean their gums at least once on a daily basis. Infant's teeth and gums are wiped with a disposable tissue or cloth after each feeding. [NAEYC 5.A.13 & 16]

### **D. MEAL SERVICE**

1. Meals are prepared, serviced and stored according to sound sanitary and nutritional principles and guidelines from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). [NAEYC 5.B.01]
2. Children with food allergy must be documented and kept in the classroom where it is readily available. This information is confidential. The child's folder should be identified "CONFIDENTIAL". [HSPS 1304.23(c)](6)]
3. Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. [NAEYC 5.B.07]
4. Allow children to serve themselves, this promotes child independence and development of motor skills.  
[HSPS 1304.21(a)(3)(i)(B) & 1304.21(a)(5)(i)]
5. Once the meal is served, staff must sit with the children and engage in pleasant conversation with them.
6. Staff is required to eat with the children; the menu must be the same. This includes beverages, except for water.
7. Children must sit at tables for meals and snacks. Proper utensils must be provided and children are encouraged in using them accordingly (teacher to model).
8. Staff work with families of infants (who are informed by their child's health care provider) to ensure that the food is based on the infant's individual nutritional needs and developmental stage. [NAEYC 5.B.08]



9. The program supports breastfeeding of infants by
- ✓ Ensuring that families who choose to breastfeed their infants provide human milk in ready-to-feed containers
    - labeled with infant's name and date
    - stored in a refrigerator for no more than 48 hours and no more than 24 hours if previously frozen
    - stored in a freezer in a freezer at 0 degree Fahrenheit or below for no longer than 3 months.
  - ✓ Gently mixing and not shaking human milk
  - ✓ Providing a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinating feeding with the infant's mother  
*[NAEYC 5.B.09]*
10. Formula and infant food provided comes from factory-sealed containers and is prepared according to manufacturer's instructions. This includes:
- ✓ Ensuring that formula or human milk is not warmed in water that exceeds 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than 5 minutes.
  - ✓ **No infant milk, formula or food can be warmed in a microwave.**
  - ✓ Bottle feeding does not contain solid foods unless written instructions for medical reasons are provided by health care provider.
  - ✓ Left over formula or human milk is discarded immediately or after one hour if left without refrigeration. *[NAEYC 5.B.10]*
11. Solid foods and fruit juices are not offered to infants less than six months of age, unless prescribed for medical reasons by a health care provider. Infants are limited to four ounces of 100% fruit juice per day.  
*[NAEYC 5.B.11]*
12. Infants (under 12 months) are not fed cow's milk and children between 12 to 24 months are provided whole milk. *[NAEYC 5.B.13]*

#### E. REST TIME

- A. The napping area should be quiet, with no loud noises or talking.
- B. Lights must be dimmed during nap.
- C. Children should have a cot, bed or mat. Sheets must be used to cover the child and the mat/cot. Cots must be placed at least 18 inches apart from each other. *[DCF Mandate]*
- D. Infants who use a crib and will nap in proper position, facing up or on his/her backside. *[HSPS 1304.53(B)(3)]*
- E. DO NOT COVER CHILDREN'S HEAD WHILE NAPPING and NO BOTTLES IN CRIBS.
- F. All shoes must be removed for napping. *[DCF Mandate]*

## II. Program Planning of Daily Activities (Lesson Plans)

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- A. Lesson plans should be visible and accessible for use on Monday morning.
- B. Plans for the last six weeks must be available with written observations. Dates must be in the plans and not whiten out or crossed out.
- C. Turn plans in to the Education Coordinator **one week** in advance.
- D. Materials and activities are prepared in advance.
- E. Teaching teams should meet and plan activities together. Activity plans need to indicate that your environment has been prepared. Key experiences should integrate the theme followed. Daily opportunities are included in every area of the classroom.
- F. Outdoor experiences must be planned and implemented.
- G. Small group activities must be written on the plan. [HSPS 1304(a)(l)(iv)]
- H. Large group activities, circle time, should be planned.
- I. Staff should plan for stories, poems, and finger plays to be read to the children.
- J. Changes in plan must be indicated on written plan.
- K. Staff should provide opportunities for children to see their works in print, through experience charts, group stories, allowing children to dictate their thoughts.
- L. Television, videotapes, and other forms of media should only be used for special events, rather than as regular daily routines.

## III. Assessment

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### A. PURPOSE & VALUE [NAEYC 4.A.01 & 03]

1. Supporting children's development is of utmost importance and a key factor in providing quality educational services to the children in the program. KIDCO conducts assessments as an integral part of its program to:
  - ✓ Identify children's interest and needs
  - ✓ Describe developmental progress
  - ✓ Guide teaching practices and enhance learning environments
  - ✓ Plan program improvement
  - ✓ Involve families in their child's education and well-being
2. A variety assessment methods, such as observations, checklists, screening, etc., are utilized throughout the program to ensure the collection of comprehensive data is obtained for each child including information on: development and learning; cognitive skills; language; approaches to learning; social-emotional development; health; and physical development. When implementing assessments, the program takes into account and is sensitive to various factors such as: home language; culture; children's abilities and disabilities. As often as possible, assessments are conducted in settings familiar to children. [NAEYC 4.B.01]

## **B. HEALTH**

1. It is important to have a full picture of the child in order to best understand their level of development and meet any needs they may have. It is with this in mind that health screenings are required for each child in the program. Children's records include a current physical and immunizations. During enrollment/intake, parents provide information on any allergies and/or health issues their child may have.
2. Children's records in the Head Start program also include lab work (sickle cell, hemoglobin & lead) as well as vision, hearing and dental screening. Children in the Early Head Start are required to provide documentation of periodic head circumference. *[NAEYC 10.D.05]*
3. The Health Facilitator reviews records to ensure health documentation is up-to-date and communicates with families .

## **IV. Teacher / Child Interaction**

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- A. Staff must talk with children using eye contact and at child's level and affectionate (at close proximity) in an affectionate and positive matter.
- B. Staff must encourage children to talk by being obviously available and listening to them, responding with appropriate responses, such as "Tell me more", or reflecting what the child said back to him and using eye contact. Promote language communication.
- C. Staff must encourage positive behavior in children, such as cooperating, helping, taking turns, sharing, and talking to solve problems.
- D. Staff should encourage children with cleaning up, dressing, in use of proper social skills while eating, etc. This promotes independence.
- E. Staff listens and responds individually to children using eye contact and any individual responses.
- F. Classroom sounds and atmosphere must be pleasant at all times. Loud, harsh voices and rough physical use will not be permitted.
- G. Staff will ask open-ended questions spontaneously of individual children continually and throughout all parts of the daily routine regarding the subject or activity the child has chosen to play with.
- H. Staff must move around the room interacting with children at all times.
- I. Prompt attention must be given to face and hands washing, toileting assisting, and other basic needs.
- J. Self-toileting means that the child is beginning to develop skills. If self-toileting is beginning or occurring, the staff must NEVER embarrass shame or punish the child in relation to toilet training.
- K. When toileting emergencies occur... positive techniques must be used to guide the children's behavior throughout the day. Staff should use redirection, positive encouragement, positive verbal and nonverbal language, facial expressions and positive language.
- L. Staff should model positive and appropriate behavior at all times.
- M. Staff must assist children to develop alternate means of resolving conflicts. Children should be encouraged to talk about their feelings and discuss possible solutions in a positive manner without being made to feel that their feelings are inappropriate.

- N. Positive and appropriate classroom management and behavior modification techniques, such as redirection and communication, should be used. Appropriate use of time out may be used only as a last resource.
- O. Staff must state classroom limits/rules in positive terms. Consistent, clear limits must be developed in conjunction with children and discussed with them to make sure they understand.
- P. Staff must be in direct supervision where children are present. No classroom must be left without the supervision of an adult from the center.

## **IV. Classroom Care**

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- A. Floor, equipment, materials, tables, chairs, toys & equipment should always be cleaned, labeled, inventoried, and must be kept neat and uncluttered. [HSPS 1304.53(b)(1)(iv)(vi)]
- B. Teacher storage areas should also be maintained organized and clean.
- C. Before the end of the day, staff should leave their classrooms ready for the next day. Classrooms should be cleaned at the end of the day, swept and mopped.
- D. Garbage should be taken out by teaching staff throughout the day, before leaving at the end of the workday, and/or as needed.



# STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICY

## I. Definition

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- A. To develop potential to support the internal goals of the program by providing:
1. In-service training
  2. Registration to Early Childhood Conferences Workshops
  3. Career ladder guidance
  4. Guidance for enrollment in undergraduate & graduate early childhood credit courses
  5. Child Development Associate (CDA)
  6. Child Care Credential
  7. 45 hr. training

## II. Purpose

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- A. Staff development is implemented in the program to:
1. Help individual staff member explore, create and pursue personal developmental goals while gaining knowledge and skills related to their current position
  2. Create training aimed at helping the program achieve its defined goals
  3. Meet Head Start Performance Standards, NAEYC Criteria, DCF Requirements and those set by other funding sources including School Readiness Coalition/Universal Pre-K program.

## III. Goals & Objectives

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- A. KIDCO Creative Learning Inc provides continued personalized staff development by carrying out the following objectives:
1. Conduct comprehensive assessment of staff's training needs. To begin at staff orientation and fostered over time.
  2. Orientation to encompass:
    - ✓ Program's goals, philosophy and history
    - ✓ Documentation and data management systems
    - ✓ Policies and procedures
    - ✓ Core services: child development, parenting education, self-sufficiency, and mental and physical health
    - ✓ Assessment: purpose, value and implementation [NAEYC 4.B.06]

3. Identify current training needs in the fields of early childhood and family support.
  - ✓ Read research journals and magazines
  - ✓ Attend conferences
  - ✓ Talk to colleagues in wide variety of Head Start programs across the country
4. Classify ideal program outcomes, according to program's goals and objectives
5. Staff's formal training needs assessment / Individual Training Plan (ITP) to obtain staff's feedback according to their knowledge and skills. Staff members should continually determine their own training needs (bi-annually)
6. Develop a Training Calendar of at least 6 months
7. Establish training and evaluation methods (\*)
8. Every level of staff to participate in planning meetings. Staff to receive mentoring to increase motivation
9. After orientation, provide on-going weekly training sessions on:
  - ✓ Relationship building
  - ✓ Communicating with parents
  - ✓ Child development
  - ✓ Supporting children with disabilities
  - ✓ Case management
  - ✓ Working with fathers
  - ✓ Child abuse and neglect
  - ✓ Documentation
  - ✓ Home visits
  - ✓ Adult development



# COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNITY / PARENT CONCERNS

## I. Policy

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It is the policy of the center to practice fair and just procedures regarding complaints leading from community / parents concerns about the Head Start program and other funding agencies.

- A. All community / parents may present complaints regarding their concerns.
  - 1. Any circumstance or condition believed to be unjust has the grounds for a complaint.
  - 2. Complaints can be of the following natures:
    - ✓ Any of the Head Start components
    - ✓ Physical facility, including classroom environment
    - ✓ Interpersonal relationships
- B. KIDCO recognizes the fact that a satisfied community / parent is more productive parent and welcomes constructive complaints which will enhance the operation of the program.

## II. Procedure

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- A. When a complaint arises, it must follow this procedure:
  - 1. Community / parent may bring complaint to any of the following employees: Teacher, Lead Teacher and Director of Early Childhood Programs HS/EHS
  - 2. Employee shall listen to community / parent concern and schedule a meeting with Family/Community Services Worker
  - 3. Family/Community Services Worker shall use Performance Standards as a guide to bring a positive conclusion to the complaint
  - 4. A meeting shall be scheduled between Family/Community Worker, parent and person who received the complaint to reach a positive consensus
  - 5. If community / parent concern is still unresolved, it shall be brought to the Executive Director's attention for input, who shall consult with Grantee for alternatives for a positive conclusion
  - 6. Center Director shall be responsible to see full implementation of Action Plan or final determination.