

KIDCO Creative Learning, Inc.



Parent Handbook

2018-2019

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Welcome Letter

Dear Parents:

We welcome you and your child to our early care and education program. Here at KIDCO we aim to provide each child with fun and creative experiences that foster their cognitive, social, creative, emotional and physical development.

We make it our priority to surround your child with learning opportunities within a curricular framework that promotes children's total growth and development. In order to meet this enormous task, we count on you to share information about your child as a learner that will become part of their daily experiences. These are valuable contributions you make to your child's education both at the center and at home, today and in the future.

KIDCO recognizes how important it is to provide young children with nurturing, challenging and diverse environments that support active learning and build positive self-esteem. We accomplish these goals by being a quality early care and education program. KIDCO is a professional, community-based organization, with an active Board of Directors, Board of Trustees and Parent and Policy Committees. KIDCO keeps up to date with research-based trends and applies best practices to the daily curriculum. This requires credentialed, well-informed adults. Our teachers, teacher assistants, and service area personnel give children the necessary guidance, structure and flexibility they need, as they become active, life-long learners.

These goals and expectations depend upon your help and cooperation as parents. In this manual you will find important information pertaining to you and your child; information necessary for the school year. We encourage you to read this handbook carefully and come visit us with your questions whenever you need further information.

We are doing all we can to make your time at KIDCO Creative Learning, Inc. an enjoyable, growing experience for you, your child, and your family. We are sure that with your support we will have a very exciting school year.

You may visit our webpage for more information about KIDCO: www.kidcoedu.org.

Thank you,

Board of Directors

KIDCO Executives

Team KIDCO

KIDCO Personnel

Vision

To provide quality early care and education services to children between birth to age five, and extended care including comprehensive services to families and a support system to assist families in their developing role as productive members of society, therefore, making their communities a better place to live.

Mission

To continue providing and expanding our quality, comprehensive, and affordable early care and education services in Miami-Dade County, to children and families in order to assist them in gaining the essential skills young children need to make a successful transition to kindergarten, ready and eager to learn.

Philosophy

We believe that early care and education programs...

- *are essential to our communities and overall society*
- *are a vital part of our country's economic growth*
- *must be available to ALL young children*
- *have an obligation to research-based trends*
- *must support and respect cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity*
- *need to support staff and provide a staff development component*
- *must coordinate and collaborate with other social service programs in each community*
- *must support hands-on, play oriented learning opportunities*
- *involve parents in their children's early education*
- *provide extended hours of care to meet the needs of our parents*
- *supplement children with three nutritionally balanced meals per day*
- *provide children with adequate experiences in and out of our facilities through planned visits and field trips*
- *provide developmentally appropriate curriculum, equipment and materials*
- *provide outdoor play experiences with safe and appropriate equipment*
- *collaborate and participate in community events initiated by our funding agencies*
- *continue our search to increase our funding base to ensure quality services*

"We do no great things, only small things with great love"
- Mother Teresa

My Responsibilities as a KIDCO Parent

- To learn as much as possible about the program, the services offered and to take part in policy decisions.
- To accept KIDCO and the early care and education it offers all children, as an opportunity through which I can improve my life, my children's life and my family's life.
- To ensure that my child has all required screening and health services prior to entering into the program and that these records will be kept up-to-date throughout my child's life.
- To ensure that my child has all required immunizations and necessary tests up to date.
- To take part in the classroom as an observer, a volunteer, or a paid employee and contribute my services in whatever way I can toward the enrichment of the total Agency including providing input to the daily learning curriculum.
- To provide parent leadership by taking part in annual elections and to explain the program to other parents, encouraging their full participation.
- To welcome teachers and staff into my home, if agreed upon, to discuss ways in which I, as a parent, can help the development of my child at home in relation to school experience.
- To work with teachers, staff, and other parents in a cooperative manner.
- To offer constructive criticism of the program, to defend it against unfair criticism, and to share in its on-going evaluation process.

Policies and Procedures

Days & Hours of Operation

DAYS:	Monday through Friday
HEAD START	7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
EARLY HEAD START:	7:30 AM -5:00 PM

Arrival

KIDCO opens at 7:30 AM and you are expected to bring your child in between 7:30 and 8:45 AM before all structured activities and classes begin. Your child will benefit by becoming part of the daily routine, greet their friends, and you will enjoy a

brief but meaningful time with the teacher or assistant in the morning as the children arrive.

The daily routine begins at 8:45 AM. As children begin to make choices and staff guides them through their daily schedule. This is usually done with "large group time". Here children exchange greetings, songs and social experiences as they get ready to make plans for their day in their learning environment.

We strongly discourage tardiness because once children are part of their learning groups, late arrivals become interruptions.

Young children need this time to make choices and transition from one experience to another. When they arrive late and walk into their classrooms they

may feel awkward and uncomfortable. This is not productive or in the child's best interest. Therefore, we expect you to bring your child to KIDCO on time every morning. If for any reason your child arrives late, we ask that you go to the office and pick up a late pass.

Children who arrive between 7:00 AM and 8:45 AM are involved in free choice play, breakfast, and personal needs including brushing teeth.

Breakfast ends at 8:45 AM. For any child that comes in late and wants breakfast, it will be the parent's responsibility to contact their social services worker and be escorted to the kitchen where they will receive the child's breakfast.

The parent is expected to sit with the child in his/her classroom until the child is finished eating. The child is expected to finish breakfast and join their classroom activities no later than 9:30 a.m. NO breakfast will be served after this time.

Children's Safety

Just as we expect children to arrive on time we also observe several steps to ensure the safety of the children as they are brought in to the center by their parents. One safety measure is that parents must walk their children to their classroom, "sign in" and leave the child under the supervision of an authorized adult. Children should arrive at the designated time according to their program (Head Start and others). However, as stated above, all children should be in their classrooms by 8:45 a.m.

A second safety measure pertains to children who arrive at KIDCO in a bus; it is your responsibility as a parent to make sure the bus driver follows this same procedure. The bus driver **MUST** leave each child under the **DIRECT SUPERVISION** of the assigned adult.

And the third safety measure encompasses a 'control' measure for people coming in and out of each KIDCO site. There are the access key pads located at KIDCO IV, V, VI and VII. Parents are assigned a confidential access code when they enroll their child at KIDCO and they must use it to access entrance to the KIDCO site their child is enrolled in.

PARENTS:

Do not leave your purse or wallet in your car while dropping off or picking up your child.

We are not responsible for STOLEN ITEMS.

Dismissal

Dismissal time is the responsibility of the parent or adult who is picking up the child. It is extremely important that each child leaves the center promptly, unless it has been pre-arranged through the office. Parents must come in, "sign out" and pick up their child from the designated areas.

Your child will not be released to anyone other than the parents; legal guardian or the adults listed as authorized for pick up on the child's registration application.

Anyone else must go to the office first. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the Agency of any pick up arrangements they have made with any adult not on the authorized pick up list.

Please keep in mind that only authorized adults, over the age of 18, will be allowed to pick up a child from school. Picture identification is required for individuals who are picking up a child for the first time.

KIDCO has several different programs, and they each have a set pick up time:

- ◆ Head Start 4:00 PM
- ◆ Early Head Start 5:00 PM
- ◆ Private 5:00 PM*
- ◆ Extended Care (KIDCO V) 6:00 PM

* For Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK), during the school year, three hours a day of instruction are incorporated, while it is 7.5 hours a day during the summer.

KIDCO offers extended care services for parents who are unable to pick up their children on or before their designated program time.

Please note that the extended care program is available at an additional cost for School Readiness and Private programs, and it is also not part of the Head Start program. It is, however, available at no cost to children under City and Miami-Dade County programs.

Staff will be considerate if you arrive late to pick up your child a couple times during the program year. If you know you need the Extended Care Program, please enroll your child immediately.

If parent or designee fails to pick up their child at their program's pick-up time, the teacher or office staff will call the parent's workplace, and/or the persons listed on the emergency pickup card.

IMPORTANT: If no one can be reached, the staff will contact Protective Services for child's pick up.

Again, for safety measures, all parents must understand that no child will be allowed to leave the KIDCO premises with an adult who has not been previously authorized, by the parents or legal guardians.

These authorized persons in the child's file, and any other person on the authorization list, will be asked to present a photo ID at the time of pick up.

No minor, under the age of 18, is allowed to pick up a child unless they are the actual parent or legal guardian of the child.

Fees

KIDCO collects fees for several charges including Extended Care Program and subsidized child care through School Readiness Services. The policies for fee collection and late charges are as follows:

1. Parents who are assigned a weekly fee for 'child care services' must pay that assigned amount each Monday in advance.

Payment must be made weekly in advance

CASH OR MONEY ORDER ONLY

There Are No Exceptions.

2. Weekly childcare fees are to be paid in full regardless of attendance.
3. If a parent or authorized individual is late picking up a child, there is a penalty of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes beyond the end of the program day. This charge will need to be paid the next school day.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO PARENTS

Remember, KIDCO is funded by different programs and each one has different requirements. For example, Head Start/Early Head Start has an income eligibility criteria.

Same way you select KIDCO, KIDCO has selected you as part of our family, therefore we expect and appreciate your cooperation following the rules and regulations.

Attendance

You need to call the office to notify when your child will be absent or late to KIDCO. If the child is absent for three or more consecutive days, you will need to bring a doctor's note in order for your child to be permitted back into the classroom.

Your child's success at our center is closely dependent on regular and consistent attendance. Please telephone KIDCO when your child is going to be absent due to an illness, or any other reason.

Remember, three consecutive absences or more require a note from the doctor. Extended absences of three consecutive days or more will also incur fees depending on corresponding program. School Readiness and VPK, basically all programs except Head Start and Early Head Start, do not pay when child is absent. If the child comes with a doctor's note or documentation of any other extraordinary circumstance, which will be detailed below, then the program will pay a max of 10 days for the month, so the rest will be paid by the parent.

Extraordinary circumstances consist of the following:

- Hospitalization of the child, parent, or guardian with appropriate documentation.

- Illness of the child, parent, or guardian, which requires the ill person to remain at home (doctor's note).
- Death in the child's, parents/guardians immediate family with appropriate documentation (i.e., obituary, death certificate).
- Court ordered visitation with appropriate documentation (court documents).
- Parent or guardian's military deployment (military orders).

IMPORTANT: If you suspect your child is ill, do not bring him/her to the center; take him/her to the doctor immediately.

Dress Code

We encourage parents to dress children in safe and comfortable clothing. It should be appropriate for children to handle their clothing by themselves

and individually complete their personal bathroom needs.

Children are involved in outside activities, using the playground equipment, the sand and water tables and other outdoor experiences. Children must wear closed shoes, like sneakers, that cover their toes, and are not slippery.

We strongly recommend that children do not wear clothing or accessories that can be hazardous to them or to other children in their daily activities. Valuables such as jewelry, and other articles should be kept at home.

KIDCO is NOT responsible for any item that the child brings to the center.

KIDCO will NOT be responsible for any article or clothing that is lost or misplaced by the child.

First Day Tips

- Please walk your child to his/her classroom and stay with him/her until the teacher comes to greet you with your child. It is normal that your child may cry and cling to you at first. This is okay. The children are expressing their feelings, and through their daily experiences in the program they will learn to express their feelings using words. The teacher will come and help you and your child make this transition and ease the child into the classroom.
- At first, your child may prefer to just sit in the classroom when he or she arrives. This is okay too. Children are observing their surroundings and constructing the information they need. This is one way of learning.
- We suggest that you arrive ten to fifteen minutes early, so you may spend some time with your child in the classroom. This may help your child feel more at ease as they come into the program for the very first time.
- Please feel free to call your child's KIDCO site to find out how he/she is doing on their first day at KIDCO. Best time to call your child's teacher is between 1:00 and 2:30 PM during children's rest time.
- Learn the names of your child's teacher and teacher assistant the first day. This is extremely important for you to communicate with them either over the telephone or on a daily basis and also for you to help your child get to know the teaching team quickly.

"Impossible things are simply those which so far have never been done"

-Elbert Hubbard

Children's Records

Information Required

It is important to have every child's record up-to-date. The following standard items are required of all children. Please note that based on your child's program there may be additional information required.

- Student Health Examination Record (HRS 3040) including Lab results
- Florida Certificate of Immunization (HRS 680)
- Dental Examination
- Original - Birth Certificate
- Medical Insurance Card
- Enrollment Record
- Annual Income
- Social Security Card
- Parent / Legal Guardian I.D.
- DCF Child Care Application for Enrollment
- DCF KNOW YOUR CHILD CARE BROCHURE
- DCF Brochure on Influenza Virus, The Flu
- Complete signed application
- Emergency Contacts

All required documentation must be provided prior to enrollment.

Change of Address & Telephone

Due to safe practices and your child's well being you need to provide three (3) telephone numbers of authorized individuals who may act on your behalf in case of emergency. These must be working numbers and the adults must know they are part of your child's emergency list at KIDCO. They are vital contacts in case of any emergency.

It is very important for emergency and administrative reasons that every child maintains an updated address and telephone number on file at the central office.

At any time during the school year, parents, please notify the center immediately of any changes to your child's file including, but not limited to: your address, contact information (telephone number(s), income, guardianship, emergency contacts, etc.

Illness and Medication

The health and physical well-being of all children is a matter of great concern to us. Children who have contracted any contagious illness such as chicken pox or a stomach virus and have a severe cold - *must remain at home* until a physician diagnoses the child to be free of such illness.

When a child becomes too ill to remain at KIDCO, we will contact you immediately. For this reason, it is most important that we are notified of any changes in telephone numbers or if there is a change in your emergency contact information.

Here are some of the common illnesses for which your child will be sent home:

- Fever of 100 degrees under arm (auxiliary) or higher, and if they also have one or more of the following: diarrhea, earache, shows signs of irritability or confusion, sore throat, rash.
- Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hours.
- Diarrhea - three or more watery stools in a 24-hour period.
- Draining rash or undiagnosed rash lasting over a 24-hour period.
- Eye discharge or pink eye. Children can be readmitted after medical diagnosis to rule out bacterial or viral infection, or 24 hours on antibiotic treatment.
- Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.
- Open oozing sores and scabs, unless properly covered and 24 hours on antibiotic treatment.

- Head lice – until treatment is effective and a follow-up check has been made by school personnel.
- Any other communicable disease.

When a child needs medication during school hours, **it is mandatory that you complete and sign the Department of Children & Families Authorization of Medication Form, each day** in order for the assigned adult to administer the medication to the child.

IMPORTANT

Only medication prescribed by a doctor, verified through a prescription label or a written statement from the doctor will be administered to the child.

Medication will not be given to children unless the form is properly filled, dated and fully complete.

OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION IS NOT AN EXCEPTION UNLESS A PHYSICIAN PRESCRIBES IT. There needs to be a prescription on the bottle, for prescribed as well as over-the-counter medication, or It Will Not Be Given to Any Child. [1304.22(C)(3)]

Reporting Possible Child Abuse and Neglect

KIDCO, as a Community Based Organization, has established viable linkages with other community agencies including Child Protective Services. The safety and well-being of every child at KIDCO is of the utmost importance to the Agency; therefore, we take every precautionary measure to safeguard against child abuse and have outlined specific policies in effect if child abuse is suspected. The KIDCO Employee Handbook also outlines specific policies and procedures regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

Definitions of Abuse, Neglect, and Imminent Risk of Serious Harm:

Child abuse is defined as: *a child or youth that has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means, or a child that has injuries that are at variance with the history given of them, or a child who is in a condition*

that is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment. Child neglect is defined as: a child who has been abandoned, or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to the well-being of the child or youth, or has been abused. Imminent risk of serious harm is defined as "placing a child at risk of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse."

THE FOLLOWING STEPS ARE TO BE TAKEN IF AN AGENCY STAFF MEMBER IS SUSPECTED OF CHILD ABUSE:

- The staff member who has a situation or investigation pending should immediately notify the Program Director or most senior leadership team member in the building.
- The person who suspects abuse should bring it to the attention of the Program Director or most senior leadership team member in the building.
- The supervisor will check on the complaint, and if they agree that there may be abuse, the supervisor will report the incident to DCF and to our licensing agent.
- The Agency will then follow their advice regarding whether or not to suspend the staff member. If, however, the staff member is a Teacher or Teacher Assistant, during an official investigation, the individual would be immediately removed from the classroom with or without pay, determined by the Program Director.

IF A STAFF MEMBER IS FOUNDED IN A CASE OF CHILD ABUSE, WE WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

- We will allow the staff member to appeal the decision.
- The Program Director or an appointed member of the administrative team will meet with the individual to go over the incident and form an opinion as to its

- validity and/or consequences to the Center and the individual.
- Based on the advice of our licensing agent, we will either suspend the team member or allow them to continue their job until the appeal is completed. If the staff member is a Teacher or Teacher Assistant, they would be immediately suspended till the end of the appeal process.
- The staff member will meet with the Program Director or an assigned member of the administrative team during this time and steps will be taken to ensure that there won't be any problems.

If after the appeal the decision is still founded, the staff member will be terminated from their position at the Center.

Child Abuse Reporting Policy (suspected at home abuse):

Staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. This includes, but is not limited to, suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, and if they believe a child is in "imminent risk of serious harm." It is KIDCO's policy that all employees that any and all suspected cases MUST be reported to the department of Children and Families (DCF), who is ultimately responsible to investigate and take charge of the case.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

We are mandated reporters by Florida State law and as mandated reporters; KIDCO is required to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse to DCF or the police.

IF CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, OR IMMINENT RISK OF SERIOUS HARM IS SUSPECTED, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES ARE TO BE FOLLOWED:

- Report the alleged abuse to the Program Director
- Notify the Miami Office of Children and Families at (786) 257-5207 or the State of

- Florida Child Abuse Registry in Tallahassee, Florida at (800) 342-9152
- Documentation of the initial phone contact
- File written report within (48) hours, form DCF-136
- 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.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *KIDCO takes Child Safety very seriously; therefore, it is the Agency's policy that no child is left alone with any one teacher or staff member at any given time. There needs to always be two or more staff members supervising children. All staff members are aware of this policy. [1304.41(a)(2)(vi)]*

Accidents / Incidents

Parents will be notified immediately if an accident/ incident occurs involving his/her child.

Written Accident/ Incident Report form will be completed and given to the parent. If the child must go to the hospital immediate arrangements will be made with the parents or emergency ambulance services.

In case where the child does not have medical insurance KIDCO will use its insurance coverage to ensure that emergency services are provided. If further costs are involved KIDCO will work with the family and other options of insurance coverage where applicable.

In the event that your child needs medical attention and the immediate medical attention for professional medical assistance KIDCO staff will call **911**. You will be contacted simultaneously.

"What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world, remains and is immortal"

- Albert Pike



Lost and Found

Make sure your child's name is on everything the child brings to the center, for example jackets, sweaters, bags, purses and other such articles. Many of these articles are lost and it creates a problem for you, the parent, and for the child.

All items found are kept in the office for up to 30 days.

When the items are labeled correctly it makes it easier to return the item to the correct child; therefore, please label all your child's clothing and personal items with their name on the inside tag with a permanent marker.



Things to Remember

Here are some suggestions for your consideration and times when you need to request consent from the administration in order to help the teachers, children and the total program to run smoothly:

Drop Off, Pick Up & Parking Procedures

You need to bring your child inside the center each morning and make sure you leave him/her under the direct supervision of a responsible adult.

It is mandatory for you to sign your child in on the roster form in his/her classroom. When picking up your child it is extremely important to be on time, and follow the specific directions for your particular KIDCO site. Children who are picked up by a bus service should remain together with their group until the bus driver picks him/her up. Please make sure you inform your assigned Family Services worker regarding your child's drop off and pick up routine so that this information is present in your child's folder. Please also inform your child's teacher on how s/he will be picked up from the center. All authorized individuals dropping off & picking up children must sign the children in & out of their classrooms.

Children WILL NOT be dismissed to anyone other than the parents or an authorized adult identified by the parents on the registration card – others not on the list and authorized by the parent via phone, must provide photo identification.

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL DROPS OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES.

Please follow closely all arrival and departure procedures. *Parents must walk their child into the classroom and "sign-in".* When picking up children, the same procedure should be followed. Children will not be allowed to walk out to the parking lot on his/her own to a waiting parent in the car.

Practical things to do when you park your car to drop off or pick up your child:

- Be considerate with others when parking your vehicle.
- Park in appropriate marked stalls.
- Lock your car.
- Be brief when dropping off and picking up your child.
- **Do not leave anything that is valuable to possible intruders, INCLUDING PURSES.**

Toys

We ask that children leave their toys home. Yet, we will consider two things:

- 1) *If the child chooses to bring an educational book or toy to share with classmates, please clear this with your child's teacher. After receiving their consent, make sure you label the item with the child's name and inform the teacher about the toy or book.* Although KIDCO is not responsible, the teacher will help the child take the item back home.
- 2) *A young infant or toddler who might have a favorite toy and needs it to help make daily transitions, will be allowed to bring such item for a period of time.* Please keep in mind that this is for transitioning purposes and should not be a permanent routine.

Again, be reminded that we are not responsible for any such item and be sure to label all items accordingly. Please inform the caregiver so that they may help in getting the item back home.

Activity Items Request

Throughout the year, your child may be asked to bring in an item from home for an activity that they may be having in their classroom. We ask that you please help your child with these requests so that they may actively participate with their classmates. One favorite example is when you bring in an item for a cooking experience. These experiences enable the child to feel good about what they are doing, to follow through at home and achieve success. These items are generally home items that will not require additional costs.

Special Requests

KIDCO will honor certain special individual requests such as a special nutritional diet, a faith-based diet, or whenever there is a doctor's note describing any particular condition your child might have. (Please see page 19 for allergies and special menus) A request for a special nutritional diet must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

KIDCO will honor and respect your religious and Tribal related concerns regarding either the meals served, or the daily activities and special social events held in the program. We will make the appropriate accommodations for you and your child.

Parents will be requested to provide a **written list** describing and defining the special conditions and the accommodations required due to religious and/or tribal beliefs.

"An understanding heart is everything in a teacher"

- Carl G. Jung





Parent Involvement

We encourage parent participation at all times and request that parents be actively involved in their children's education.

Parents who want to become involved in KIDCO activities need to notify first the classroom teacher and then arrange to meet with the Social Services staff and/or Director to establish preliminary information.

KIDCO offers a wide variety of activities and we count on parents to volunteer and make these activities meaningful for everyone who is participating. Parents need to describe their special talents and also provide a schedule of possible hours and times that they may be involved in KIDCO related activities. Parents who choose to be actively involved will be asked to follow all KIDCO policies and will receive training in their related area. They are also required to complete Volunteer documentation as well as commit to a physical and a background screening.

For example, if a parent chooses to participate as a volunteer in their own child's classroom they are to abide by all classroom rules and regulations. If a difficult situation arises, KIDCO recommends that parents volunteer time doing something else or volunteering time in a different classroom.

There are also many annual social functions where KIDCO truly needs parental involvement. We encourage parents to participate and collaborate in a very formal and purposeful manner. [1304.40(4)(5)]; [1304.40(d)(1)]

The Parent Committee is an integral part of the Agency and will assist parents who want to be part of the involvement effort.

Here are some other opportunities for parental involvement:

- *Parent Committees*
- *Policy Committee*
- *Curriculum Sub-Committee*
- *Classroom volunteers*
- *Field trip chaperones*
- *Reading to the children*
- *Active participation in special events or activities (planning)*
- *Passive participation in special events or activities (attending, bringing a request, etc.)*
- *Screening employment applicants*
- *Tutoring*
- *Classroom substitute*
- *Office clerk/answering phones*
- *Using computers*
- *Up keeping the Resource Library*
- *Male Involvement*

"Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself"
- Chinese Proverb



Systems of Communication and Involvement

Center to Home

Communication lines between teachers and parents must be open at all times. Here are some of the ways KIDCO communicates with all parents on a timely manner:

- Daily Parent Contacts
- Parent Workshops
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Monthly Calendar 'KIDCO Express' with scheduled events
- Contact forms of any incidents we need to notify you. Please read, sign, and return the report to the office.
- Home visits
- Bi-monthly Parent Committee Meetings
- Flyers
- Phone
- E-mail: kidco@kidcoedu.org
- KIDCO website

Home to Center

We look forward to your input and any ideas you may have to share with KIDCO staff. Following are some of our ideas and we hope you will communicate with us on a daily basis especially when:

- 1) You and your family experience a turn of events or information that may be imperative to the child while at school.
- 2) Relate any concerns you may have regarding all program aspects.
- 3) Call to report if your child will be absent or late.
- 4) Call to report if your child has come down with a communicable illness
- 5) **CALL IF YOU ARE RUNNING LATE ON DROPPING OFF IN THE MORNING OR PICKING UP YOUR CHILD IN THE AFTERNOON.**

- 6) Ask teachers, assistants and our Family Services Workers if you have any questions regarding special happenings in the community.
- 7) Set an appointment to meet with the Teacher, Education Facilitator or Family Services Worker if you have any questions regarding your child / or your child's teacher.
- 8) Call to inform of any changes in the telephone numbers listed, changes in your address or any other pertinent information in the family.

We ask that you please write down your concerns and give them to your child's teacher. The teacher will either write back to you or contact you throughout the day in reference to your questions. The teacher might not be able to talk to you in the morning due to the responsibilities that must be taken care of at that time. However, your questions are very important to us.

PARENTS ARE WELCOMED TO VISIT THEIR CHILD'S KIDCO SITE ANYTIME. [1304040(d)(2)]

If you have an emergency and need to reach us, please do not hesitate to call.

KIDCO Central	(305) 576-6990
KIDCO II	(305) 863-6216
KIDCO IV	(305) 758-1664
KIDCO V	(305) 754-2456
KIDCO VI	(305) 573-0447
KIDCO VII	(305) 759-3079

Community Resources

KIDCO staff assists all children and families by raising community awareness and maximizing the use of community resources. [1304.23 (e) (1)] [1304.41 (a) (2) (v) & (vi)]

- 1) KIDCO Registrar and Family Services Workers recruit incoming children and families by actively going out to the immediate community and neighboring communities.
 - a. The recruitment process includes strategies such as: home visitation, letters, flyers, and posters at local businesses and community offices.
- 2) The KIDCO Executive Director, Administrative and Area Staff have established networks and partnerships with the existing community agencies, and therefore, they are knowledgeable about KIDCO and the early care and education services provided. These agencies, in turn, refer children and families to KIDCO and KIDCO updates these partnerships annually.
- 3) Potential incoming candidates complete the KIDCO enrollment process with an assigned Family Services Worker in order to identify family needs and goals. For example:
 - a. Upon registration, the Registrar or Family Services Worker completes agreements and provide comprehensive community resource information to parents and families, including the distribution of a 'Parent Resource Handbook'. Some of the partnerships are:
 - Eugenio María de Hostos Community Center
 - Borinquen Health Care Center
 - New Family Center
 - Isidro López, M.D. P.A.
 - De Hostos Senior Center
 - Therapy Associates of South Florida, Inc.
 - Bio-Behavioral Corp.
 - The Chrysalis Center - (Mental Health)

These resources are also available to children and families under private program; however, these parents don't need to supply us with income information or other economic information.

- 4) Keep parents abreast of all necessary information monthly, through the KIDCO Express, and quarterly during parent meetings.
- 5) The Parent Committees and the Parent Policy Committee are actively involved in the process of sharing comprehensive community resource information with all parents and visitors.

Parent Bulletin Board

A bulletin board is located in each classroom and dedicated especially for you. It holds important information regarding:

- Job opportunities
- Upcoming events
- Career enhancement programs
- Information for subsidized child care
- Health facts
- Menu
- Local Agency and social service offices to assist you in meeting your needs
- Meeting minutes
- Training opportunities

STAY INFORMED!

"KIDCO Express" Newsletter

KIDCO publishes its own newsletter "KIDCO Express" on a monthly basis. It is written in both English and Spanish. In the 'KIDCO Express' you will find, important dates to remember, special events and news, field trips, training, meetings, and a special corner reserved just for you; our parents.

Make sure you get your copy of the "KIDCO Express" during the first week of each month and read it, ask questions, and *GET INVOLVED!*

Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of our Agency. We welcome parents, seniors, community residents and other volunteer candidates who are referred to us

by the local colleges and universities. Parents and other residents who are willing to offer time to assist with the daily happenings of our Agency are highly appreciated.

It is most important that volunteers sign in every time they are in the building and coordinate with the administration the activity they will be involved with during their visit. There is an entry-level interview and general training program in place. Every volunteer has to complete this initial training and complete their personnel file before they can become involved in any aspect of our Agency.

KIDCO appreciates parent's time, energy and talents. PLEASE VOLUNTEER AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE. [1304.4(d)(1)]; [1304.40(d)(3)]

Conferences / Home Visits

We appreciate your keen interest in your children's progress. When you wish to arrange a conference with your child's teacher, please advise him/her of your concerns and together you can set a date and time. If you and the teacher wish to have other KIDCO Staff members participate in your conference, please let them know. Remember, we are here to help you and your children.

Parents Are Welcomed At All Times To Participate And Cooperate In School Activities.

We encourage and like having a "family environment" at our Agency. Here children, parents, and staff come together for one common goal: "The best for our children." [1304.21(a)(2)(iii)]; [1304.21(b)(1)(i.)]

Parent Committees

Enrolling your child at KIDCO automatically makes you a member of our Parent Committee. Here you can share in our development and have responsibility as you meet regularly with other KIDCO parents to work and plan together for the welfare of our children. This is a big responsibility and the primary function of our Parent Committee.

Meetings are held monthly and serve to further share and communicate your ideas, talents, concerns and suggestions about the total Agency. We are extremely proud of our parent involvement and feel that it is an intricate part of our success. "Parent Activity Funds" are designated in the KIDCO Agency budget to support parent activities.

We encourage your participation as a member of the Parent Committee. [1304.40(a)(4)(5)]; [1304.40(d)(1)]

KIDCO strongly urges parents to join this group and become an integral part of their child's lifelong learning process.

Policy Committee

This committee must be established at the Delegate Agency level. It is comprised of parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives as required by the Head Start/Early Head Start program. This committee is part of the Delegate Agency's on-going planning and shared decision-making processes.

At the beginning of the program year notices are sent to all parents to participate in the initial meeting for the Policy Committee. The agenda for this first meeting is to inform parents of the responsibilities held by members of the Policy Committee.

KIDCO staff members assist the Policy Committee in planning, coordinating, organizing and developing program activities for parents.

The Policy Committee is charged with responsibilities that consist of developing Bylaws, the mobilization of community resources to meet the identified needs of the Head Start/Early Head Start program at KIDCO, and the review of the funding applications and amendments for Early Head Start and Head Start.

This Policy Committee also advises KIDCO staff in the development and implementation of local program policies, activities and services for all programs at the Agency.

Parent Trainings

Parent training and workshops are provided on a monthly basis. These are generally announced in the 'KIDCO Express' newsletter or through flyers posted at each KIDCO site and cover different topics. Other workshops, training and seminars are also offered through different agencies such as Child Development Services, Head Start/Early Head Start. Make sure to check the Parent Bulletin Board for further information. [1304.40(b)(i)(ii)(iii)].

If you have topics of interest for workshops, please share them with us.



Employment Preference

Vacant positions are advertised and announced at Parent Committee meetings. Employment preference is given to qualified parents who apply. Every applicant must follow the interview process and must show competence and qualifications for the position desired.

While bilingual speakers are preferred for all positions, Teacher positions require proficiency in the English language.

Children's Behavior

Parents are informed of any changes we notice in the child's daily appearance, health, eating habits and/ or social behavior. We recognize that these changes reflect a new condition in the child that must be addressed by the responsible adult in the child's life [1304.24(c.)(1.)(ii)(iii)]

There is a referral process and an evaluation process in place at the center for any child demonstrating difficult behavior.

Transition

KIDCO works hard at having best practices when it comes to transitional activities with the children and families and any new setting. [1304.40(h)(1)-(4)]

These transitions are often between; Early Head Start and Head Start programs; within KIDCO sites and/or classrooms; and from KIDCO to the children's new and respective elementary schools.

Parents are assisted in understanding what to expect in new environments; and staff assist children and parents throughout the year with transition activities.

KIDCO encourages children and parents to schedule a visit to their new school, take part in sample activities, and meet staff and other children and parents. The Elementary school staff will also visit KIDCO and spend some time with our children.

Towards the second half of the school year, KIDCO will put together a Parent Handbook on transitions available for all transitioning families.



Special Events

Field Trips

Preschool age children will attend field trips regularly while at KIDCO. These experiences are planned to support what the children are learning in the classroom; they are always fun, hands on, and developmentally appropriate.

Our children will visit many of Miami-Dade County's fascinating, exciting and educational sites. Some of these sites include: *Museum of Science & Space Planetarium, Metro Zoo, Miami Children's Museum, Miami-Dade Public Libraries, Metro-Dade Parks, Miami Seaquarium, Jungle Island and many, many more fun places!*



Parents are encouraged to participate as chaperones on these field trips. However, they must communicate their intention of participating to their child's teacher as soon as possible as there is usually limited space. These plans must be completed and verified before the date of the trip. Parents are asked to alternate as chaperones in order to allow all parents who volunteer to participate. [1304.21(c)(5)(i)]

Our younger children (the older infants and the toddlers) will participate in different activities such as on-site field trips and special guests.

All other children's related activities and celebrations must be discussed with the child's teacher in advance. This is important in case that clearance and/or permission from the administration is necessary. Remember, we encourage and promote healthy food when possible. [1304.23(6)(1)(vii)]. Therefore, in the event of a party you must make sure you have the teacher's prior approval.

Birthdays

Children will be acknowledged on their birthdays. However, KIDCO will provide a treat at the end of the month to celebrate all birthdays that month. KIDCO does NOT permit any outside food or treats of any kind to emphasize children's birthdays.

Other Events

Throughout the year, KIDCO plans extra-curricular activities / events for the involvement of children, their family, our community, teachers and staff in general. Such events include "Field Day", "Book Fairs", "Parent Breakfasts" and many others.

These activities are the product of collaborative efforts between the parents, staff and children. We encourage all parents to participate in these activities.

"Live as if you were living a second time, and as though you had acted wrongly the first time"

- Victor Frankl

Health & Safety

Meals

KIDCO promotes nutritional wellness by providing daily nutritional meals to complement the meals enjoyed at home. By providing well-balanced meals and fostering good eating habits, we help children establish their positive healthy development. We also help families learn new ways to keep healthy.

KIDCO serves three (3) daily meals; breakfast, lunch and afternoon supplement. These meals are prepared and served according to sound sanitary and nutritional principles and guidelines from the United States Department of Agriculture Child Care Food Program. The menus are posted on the Parent Information Bulletin Board and the site kitchen. [1304.23(b)(1)(v)]

Nutritional needs are met through a variety of healthy foods that respect our diversity in cultural foods in order to expand the child's food experience. [1304.23(b)(1)] [1304.23(c)(1)]

If the child has any dietary restrictions, please provide Family Services Worker with the proper documentation: if it is a medical condition, the Agency requires an original prescription from child's doctor or medical authority, allergy test and a list of foods child eats at home signed by parent or guardian; if it is a religious or tribal specification, KIDCO requires a written, signed note from the parent.

Please do not send your child to school with food. We cannot accept food from home.

Remember, children must arrive at the center before 8:45 a.m. in order to participate in the school breakfast. If the child arrives after 8:45 a.m. and has not had breakfast, the parent must see their corresponding social service worker, and receive a late pass which will be submitted to the teacher. The Family Services Worker will escort the parent to the kitchen in order to obtain the child's breakfast. The parent must remain with child until the child is finished. Absolutely no breakfast will be served after 9:30 AM and between 8:45 AM and 9:30 AM is allowed only in emergency. [1304.23(b)(1)(iii)]

Allergies

When you enroll your child, you must notify us of any religious observations, food allergies, and special diets. The central office will notify the teacher and the kitchen personnel in writing. A original medical prescription signed by the child physician is required in order to make special food arrangements. These need to be discussed with the KIDCO Nutrition Facilitator. KIDCO will accommodate required needs not Personal preferences. The following will also be required for children with allergies:

- a. Original prescription signed by doctor or medical authority stating what child is allergic and what he is allergic to.
- b. Allergy test – must be provided prior to child starting school or upon expiration of current allergy test (allergy test will be accepted two (2) years from time allergy test was conducted). If child health prevents test from being conducted documentation from the doctor will be needed and parent will be given twenty (20) calendar days to submit allergy test. Temporary menu will be provided based on Rx while allergy test is received. If test is not received within twenty (20) calendar days child will need to be placed on program wait list until test are received.
- c. List of foods child eats at home signed by parent
- d. Dietitian may call doctor or medical authority for clarification based on Rx or allergy test.
- e. NO child may commence school if a special menu is needed until it is in place.
- f. In addition, if the child requires an epi-pen then an original medical prescription sign by the physician is also required. If prescription is not received upon expiration date child will not be admitted to school and parent will be given five calendar days to submit epi-pen prescription if not received within five calendar days child will be placed on program wait list.
- g. All program documents as required by KIDCO, Licensing or any other providing agency will need to be completed and submitted within requested time period. If documents are not completed and submitted by parent or guardian

child will be placed back on wait list until documents are received.

Note: once a child goes on the wait list parent/guardian will need to wait till a space becomes available in the program for re-enrollment.

Personal preferences will not be accommodated.

KIDCO is now a peanut free environment due to the severity of this allergy. [1304.22(b)(2)(3)]; [1304.23(c)(6)]

Physicals & Immunizations

Child's Immunization is required to be on file. Immunization must be present prior to child start date and if immunizations expire while child is enrolled parent/guardian will be informed and will be given five (5) business days to submit immunization if not child will be placed on wait list.

Physical exams are also required prior to start date and if child's physical expires parent/guardian will be given thirty (30) calendar days to submit child's physical if it is not received child will be placed back on programs wait list.

Note: Once child is placed on wait list parent/guardian will need to wait for an opening to re-enroll their child into the program.

Additional health requirements:

- a. Hemoglobin screening;
- b. Annual Dental exam (at age one); and
- c. Blood lead test (as required)

Safety Tips

Here are important safety tips to follow with your children:

- Keep medicine, matches, chipping, toxic plants, small objects, balloons and cleaning products away from children's reach.
- Use appropriate car seats at all times.
- Seek out information on safety standards for toys and infant equipment.
- Stay with infants on changing table and during bath.

- Teach toddlers safe use of play materials and playground equipment.
- Teach and routinely model simple safety rules and practices.

Health Screenings

Health and Dental screenings are required for children enrolled in the Head Start /Early Head Start programs. Children in need of further medical intervention, psychological or developmental evaluation will require a signed "Consent for Evaluation" form from the parent or legal guardian. It is important to note that children will not be allowed to enter the program without these health screening documents.

Referral System

If your child has a diagnosed need for a special education program, you will be assisted in the coordination of such services. KIDCO, in cooperation with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Florida Diagnostic Learning Resource System (FDLRS), will assist you in finding a program for your child that will also take your needs into consideration. Our Mental Health/Disabilities Facilitator will begin the evaluation process through age appropriate screening tools, in order to assist families, children and staff to find the most appropriate services for each child.

Family counseling services are also provided in collaboration with local agencies, mental health institutions, clinics, and other institutions. If you feel that you need assistance, please contact our central office and speak to one of our Social Workers.

Health, Safety & Hygiene

Health, safety and hygiene are three major components in the total maintenance of our quality standards at KIDCO.

A careful approach to upkeep all physical environments both indoors and outdoors, in a clean, sanitized and environmentally safe manner is one of the biggest challenges KIDCO faces each day. In order to achieve this important objective,

we count on everyone to pitch in and become part of a clean, safe, and well-maintained Agency.

KIDCO's hygiene is affected by everyone who enters our doors and is impacted by everyone who is in contact with those who attend the program each day. Therefore, our Agency follows these guidelines to upkeep a clean and sanitized child care facility.

Center Hygiene

- All employees wash their hands upon entering their work shift. Parents are also encouraged to wash their hands upon entering the Agency.
- Adults / Employees will follow Universal Precaution when handling any body fluids. For example, employees will use gloves when diapering children and/or wiping children after toilet use.
- Employees will wash hands and use gloves before any meals, before serving or providing children or adults any food item.
- Employees will clean work areas, particularly table tops with a sanitizing solution before and at the end of any food related activity, and encourage children's help.
- Employees will clean their work areas after regular use.
- Maintenance personnel will clean up after each major spill, and will follow the appropriate Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) steps in keeping a safe, clean, and sanitized environment. [1304.23(e)(1)]

Unpredictable Emergencies

KIDCO has an emergency plan for the continuity of operations based on the unpredictability of emergencies and their impact in program services.

Emergencies are defined as unplanned events that can cause significant injury, to employees,

customers, or the public. They can disrupt or close down operations, cause physical or environmental damage, or harm the organization's public image. Emergencies today include acts of nature (flood, hurricane, tornadoes...), technological emergencies, civil disturbances and terrorist incidents.

Therefore, KIDCO developed a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Guidebook. This plan is key for establishing continuity of services and/or supporting efforts of operation.

The plan includes procedures for alerting, notifying, activating, and deploying employees; it identifies the mission of essential functions, establishing alternative facilities and establishing a personnel roster with decision making authority and the knowledge of its functions.

KIDCO's COOP Plan Guidebook components are:

- 1) *Plans and Procedures*
- 2) *Mission Essential Functions*
- 3) *Delegation of Responsibility*
- 4) *Orders of Succession*
- 5) *Alternative Facilities*
- 6) *Training and Testing*
- 7) *Interoperable Communications*
- 8) *Vital Records and Databases*
- 9) *Personnel Issues and Coordination*
- 10) *Facilities Preparation*
- 11) *Extreme Heat*
- 12) *What to do During A Fire*
- 13) *After a Flood*
- 14) *Recommendations for Early Childhood Programs For the 2017-2018 Flu Season*
- 15) *Techniques for Diffusing a Family / Community Distressed Event*
- 16) *Easing Disaster-Related Stress*

In case of extreme emergency, KIDCO will follow Dade County Public Schools' Plan for school remaining open or closing within our area of service.

Extended Care Program

Hours of Operation

The extended care program generally operates from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

General Information

KIDCO recognizes the needs of working parents and offers an Extended Care Program for children. Extended care is available for children on regular school days. The program begins at 2:00 PM or at their program dismissal, and runs until children are picked up by parents, but students may stay no later than 6:00 PM

A responsible, trained adult will supervise children who are part of the Extended Care Program.

Activities will include play, outdoor fun, field trips, outdoor water play, table games and many more enrichment and entertaining activities.

If you are interested in having your child enrolled in Extended Care Programs, please stop by the central office to register.

If you need to contact your child's teacher after office hours (5:30 pm), please dial 305-576-6990.

To Head Start Parents:

Extended care fee is not part of the regular Head Start Program. It begins at 2:00 PM, after the Head Start program hours end and it is not part of the Head Start program at all.

KIDCO office hours are:
8:00am to 5:00pm

"Anticipate the good so that you may enjoy it"
-Ethiopian proverb



Summer Program



A summer program is also available following KIDCO's schedule and policies. A responsible, trained adult will supervise children who are part of the summer program.

Activities will include play, outdoor fun, field trips, movies, outdoor water play, table games and many more enrichment and entertaining activities.

Enjoy summer fun!

Curriculum

Overview

KIDCO strives to provide each child with an individualized balanced curriculum. A developmentally appropriate curriculum is planned for the age span of the children within each group and is implemented with attention to the different needs, interests and developmental levels of the individual child. This curriculum is implemented in the infant, toddler and preschool classrooms.

For our younger children whether in *Early Head Start or any other program* birth to three years our Teachers follow the Creative Curriculum. Older children 3 to 5 whether enrolled in *Head*

Start, School Readiness or VPK, follow the High Scope Approach.

Our staff, parents, and children form part of a multicultural community. Our teachers strive to individualize the attention to each child. Their culture, ethnic background and native language is respected, nurtured and enhanced throughout the curriculum.

A developmentally appropriate curriculum is based on hands-on, real life and concrete experiences and opportunities for children. Four main areas of child development are emphasized in our daily activities:

Physical Small & large motor skills Pre-Writing skills	Emotional Positive self esteem Compassion Respect
Cognitive Critical thinking skills Problem solving skills Reading readiness Math readiness	Social Self-control Independence Social acceptable behavior

At KIDCO your child will be involved in activities, using materials and equipment geared to stimulate his/her social, physical, emotional and intellectual (cognitive) development.

INFANTS will be involved in activities and utilize materials that will encourage focusing, sound distinction, fine and gross motor skills, stimulation, and language development in the warmth and nurturing care of our specialized staff.

TODDLERS will participate in activities with materials that promote sensory development, increase attention span, fine and gross motor skills, language, social development as well as fostering their independence.

PRESCHOOLERS will actively explore, discover, create, analyze, investigate, solve, and plan their daily activities supported by the teacher's guidance. Manipulative skills will be stimulated to foster "key experience", creativity and real-life experiences.

*We appreciate your ideas and comments regarding the activities and the experiences your child participates in while at KIDCO. Please feel free to stop by the office and leave or discuss any comments you may have with our Education Coordinator. We also strongly urge you to join our KIDCO Education Advisory Committee. You are invited to become a member of this group and make contributions to our curriculum and see how our children learn.

Things You Can Do to Enhance Your Child's Development

Infants & Toddlers (Birth – 2 years)

Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give your child lots of opportunities for large muscle activities, such as crawling, scooting, running, jumping, etc.- Encourage your child to play with a variety of toys like the pull/push toys, shovel to scoop sand, and turning knobs.- Provide opportunities for sensory development, small and large muscle development, like play-dough, stringing beads, puzzles, and ride-on-toys.
Cognitive Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Encourage your infant to imitate sounds and make faces.- Provide lots of time to figure out cause and effect, and how things work.- For toddlers, pose simple problems at home for your child to solve with your help.- Provide a variety of opportunities for your child to independently explore around the environment and solve problems.
Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Make eye contact with your child often.- Take advantage of opportunities for social play with your child during feeding time, bath, and dressing times.- Take advantage of mealtimes as opportunities for the entire family to socialize. Help your child be part of the conversation. Teach table manners and introduce new foods.- Encourage your child to develop listening skills. Play listening games like the "whispering game", where you tell your child something in his/her ear in a very soft voice.- Listen to your child and help him/her find the words to express himself when he/she needs your support.
Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Get down to your child's eye level when you talk to him/her; interact with them or play with them.- Let your child know through your actions, such as touching, hugging, kissing, smiling, that she/he is an important part of your life and is loved very much.- Express support and kindness when your child is having difficulties.- Understand the meaning of your infant's different types of cries. Respond quickly. Use supportive words to console him/her.- Provide opportunities for your toddler to learn self-help skills. Recognize what he/she is capable of doing independently. Support him/her by providing things like a small water pitcher that he/she can handle to pour his/her own water or milk, etc.

Preschoolers (3 - 5 years)

Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give your child lots of opportunities for large muscle activities appropriate to his/her developmental level, such as crawling, scooting, running, jumping, dancing, skipping, hopping, etc.- Understand the importance of active outdoor play such as swinging, seesaw riding, jungle gym climbing, cartwheels, etc.- Play outdoor games, like ball, hula-hoops, jump rope and also provide art experiences outdoors.
Cognitive Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give your child the time he/she needs to problem solve, be creative and curious, and practice communicating with others.- Help your preschooler understand relationships between cause and effect, means and ends by giving him/her lots of practice in activities such as telling stories and leaving the ending for your preschooler to finish, and pouring water from one cup to another.- Keep your child stimulated by providing a variety of active experiences like visits to the library, supermarket, zoo, public transportation, art galleries, walks in the park, window-shopping. Explain things to your child often in words he/she know so that they can understand what they are seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting.
Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Help your child learn respect for the property of others at home and at the center.- Make eye contact with your child often.- Encourage your child to cooperate with playmates rather than compete.- Encourage your child to express feeling in words.
Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Offer children choices but make sure you set the limits. Let them know how proud you are of them when they make their own choices.- Express support and kindness when your child is having difficulty in different experiences such as waking up too soon from nap.- Give you child plenty of opportunities to experience success.

"Happiness is a daily decision"

- Andrew Matthews

Assessment of Your Child's Development

One of KIDCO's priorities is to maintain open communication with parents. Strategies include sharing your child's growth in all areas of development - physical, cognitive, social and emotional.

The *Early Head Start Program* uses the Denver II to screen children from birth through three years of age.

Children in the *Head Start Program* (for age's three to five) are screened using the *Acuscreen & DECA (Devereux Early Childhood Assessment)*; they are also screened in speech and language. For those children in the program under *Child Development Services*, children are screened using

the Lap-D. These tools are designed for children between three and four years of age.

Based on the results of the respective screening and in combination with both Teacher/ Parent observations, the staff then utilizes *Galileo* to establish individual developmental goals for each child.

Teachers schedule a *Home/School Visit* and a *Parent/Teacher Conference* to share the children's development throughout the school year. During this time, the Teacher describes the observations kept on each child's development and the goals set for each developmental area. Parent input is also very important and encouraged throughout the Agency. Parents' input, help set individual goals.

**The Above Methods Truly Support the Child
As an Active Learner**



"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children"
- Nelson Mandela

Complaint Procedures for Community / Parents

It is the policy of the center to practice fair and just procedures regarding complaints leading from community / parents' concerns about the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, as well as any other program within our Agency.

1. Any community members / parents may present complaints regarding their concerns.
 - a) Any circumstance or condition believed to be unjust has the ground for complaint.
 - b) Complaints can be of the following natures:
 - 1) Any of the Head Start/Early Head Start components
 - 2) Physical facility, including classroom environment
 - 3) Interpersonal relations.
2. KIDCO recognizes the fact that a satisfied community member / parent is a more productive parent and welcomes constructive complaints which will enhance the operation of the program.
3. PROCEDURE:
When a complaint arises, the procedure followed is as such:
 - a) Community member / parent may bring complaint to any of the following employees:
Teachers, Family Services Workers and Program Director.
 - b) Employee shall listen to community members' / parents' concerns and schedule a meeting with designated Family Services Worker.
 - c) The designated Family Services Worker shall use Performance Standards as a guide to bring a positive conclusion to the complaint.
 - d) A meeting shall be scheduled between the Family Services Worker, parent and person who received the complaint to reach a positive consensus.
 - e) If community member / parent concern is still unresolved, it shall be brought to the Grievance Committee for input and recommendation.
 - f) If concern is still unresolved, it shall be brought to the Executive Director's attention for input, who shall consult with the Grantee for alternatives to reach a positive conclusion.
 - g) The Program Director shall be responsible to see full implementation of Action Plan or final determination.



Agency Services Calendar

Standard Holidays

The following is the list of eleven (11) Standard Holidays approved by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties and the Division of Child Development Services for the contract year:

Independence Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	1 st Monday in September
Veteran's Day	November 11 th
Thanksgiving	4 th Thursday in November
Day After Thanksgiving	4 th Friday in November
Christmas Day	December 25 th
New Year's Day	January 1 st
Martin L. King's Birthday	3 rd Monday in January
President's Day	3 rd Monday in February
Floating Holiday	Good Friday
Memorial Day	4 th Monday in May

KIDCO Creative Learning, Inc.

Administration

Nilda Velázquez, Executive Director/President/CEO

Dr. Silvia La Villa, Chief Business Dev. Officer Education/Human Resources Director

Ivette Riaño, Chief Operations Officer/Head Start/Early Head Start/Director

Rosa Casamor, Chief Services Officer/Family Services Director

Frank R. Emmert, Chief Financial Officer

Board of Directors

Esther Chisholm, Chairperson

Jean-Robert Menard, Vice-Chairperson

Nora Smith, Secretary

Ida Ovies, Treasurer

Nora Smith, Parliamentarian

Janette Solis, Member At Large

Board of Trustees

• Roger Croteau • Luis Hernández

• Steven Lofton • William López

• Dr. George S. Morrison • Suzanne Salichs • June True

Funding Agencies

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade and Monroe ~ Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) and School Readiness (ELC)

Florida Department of Health ~ USDA Food Program

Miami-Dade Community Action Human Services Department (CAHSD) ~ Head Start Youth & Family Services

Miami-Dade County Office of Management and Budget ~ Office of Grants Coordination