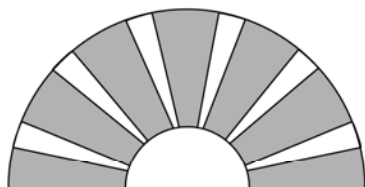


Welcome to the



**Pandas Room
2009-2010**



Child's Day

Preschool · Kindergarten · Child Development Center

2525 Wallingwood Drive # 100 • Austin, Texas 78746

Phone: (512) 327-3274 • FAX (512) 327-3281

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Child's Day, where children come first! We will do our very best to make your time with us a safe, enjoyable and rewarding experience.

We believe young children learn best by doing – through play and meaningful work. They need a safe, happy, stimulating, and nurturing environment offering concrete sensory experiences, positive social encounters and age appropriate learning opportunities.

We believe children can achieve their full potential by experiencing success with activities which encourage development of a healthy self-concept and foster positive interactions with peers and adults. Children learn to feel good about themselves as people when they are treated in a positive, caring manner. Trust and emotional security result when children learn to expect positive experiences with caring, affectionate adults.

We believe each child is unique and part of a family system. Since parents are the most significant adults in a child's life and know their children better than anyone, respectful, supportive partnerships between teachers and parents are critical to meeting each child's needs. Daily communication between parents and teachers is very important.

We believe parents and teachers benefit from child development educational opportunities, enhancing their skills and improving their ability to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners.

Please familiarize yourself with the Parent Handbook and other assorted documents and forms available on our web site: <http://www.childsdays.com/Library.htm>. Additional information and helpful hints about child development are also available from the staff.

We strive daily to be the best early childhood center in Austin. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and expected. As owners, we want to know whenever you have a question or concern. Misunderstanding can occur when communication is lacking, so please be sure to let one of us (Lead Teacher, Director, or Owner) know when something is on your mind. We are proud of the faith you have placed in us and will work continually to justify your trust.

We look forward to having you with us!

Shirley Gamble & Charley Tucker

Child's Day



Dear Parents,

Welcome to PAC!

The Parents' Advisory Committee (PAC) is a volunteer group of parents whose children are enrolled at Child's Day—that's you! You are automatically a member of PAC with your child's enrollment. However, **PAC is defined by your involvement**, so as the 2009-2010 PAC President, I encourage you to join me in setting the agenda and activities of PAC.

PAC provides a wide variety of opportunities for parent participation throughout the school year and we value whatever contributions you can offer: time, creativity, hands-on participation, leadership, etc. Volunteering is a great way to stay involved with your child's experience at Child's Day, and to better enable Child's Day staff to maintain its high quality program.

Historically, PAC has run a "no-fuss" fundraiser (*i.e.*, families make a one-time donation in lieu of organized fundraising activities) to sponsor the events coordinated throughout the year. These events have included:

- scholarships for faculty and staff to enhance their teaching skills
- Family Night Out
- a staff holiday breakfast
- The Week of the Young Child (WOYC)
- Staff Appreciation Week (SAW)
- Parent Education/Child Rearing programs such as CPR and first aid

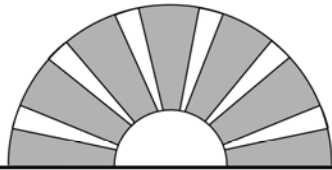
One hour meetings are held once a month from 5:30 to 6:30. By attending the meetings, you help determine how the PAC funds are spent, and can help define and execute the details of each of the events the group sponsors.

You can also volunteer to become your classroom's representative:

- communicate with fellow class parents about PAC events and relevant issues at Child's Day
- coordinate WYOC and SAW activities with or for your classroom teachers
- serve as the communication medium between your class, PAC, and the Child's Day staff.

Please join me in helping PAC sponsor these educational and appreciation events for the children, staff, and parents at Child's Day. I look forward to seeing you at the first meeting on **Wednesday, September 9** at 5:30.

Thanks,
Leah Stewart
2009-2010 PAC President
512-330-9433 or lbs4t@hotmail.com



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Dear Parents and/or Caregivers,

Welcome to the Panda Classroom! The entire Panda's team is eager to begin the upcoming school year with your child. We look forward to lots of discovery, growth, and learning opportunities.

I would like to provide you with some background information about our team. My name is Carissa Crabtree and I will be the Lead Teacher in the Panda Room. Before I began working at Child's Day, I was a nanny for a family here in Austin for nearly two years. In 2005, I graduated from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a Child Emphasis. I then worked for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) helping children with disabilities, atypical development, and/or developmental delays. I found my work as an Early Intervention Specialist to be very rewarding and the skills and knowledge I gained are extremely advantageous as a Preschool Teacher. I am currently finishing up my Master's Degree in Family and Child Studies with an emphasis on the hospitalized child at Texas State University in San Marcos. I was fortunate enough to have worked as a graduate assistant at Texas State's Child Development Center, gaining experience in child care administration and research development regarding preschooler conflict in a school setting. I also had the opportunity to work with parents of newborns with special needs in the hospital setting. Most recently, I have delved into the world of prenatal care, independently studying under a midwife here in Austin and attending the births of my two goddaughters. As you may have noticed, working with children and their families is my passion in life and it is truly my honor to have the opportunity to work with you and your child.

The Panda's Assistant Teacher is Michael Bustamante. Here's a word from him: Hello, my name is Michael. I have been at Child's for 4 years now. I am also now in my 20th year of my early education career. My career started in Midland, TX! I started working during my senior year of high school. I work for a church based school. Ten years later I moved to San Antonio where I worked for a small school. One year into the school year I became an Assistant Director and I learned the behind the scenes of child care. I can not wait to be working with your family.

The Panda's Float Teacher is Mari Vasquez. Here's a word from her: Hello, my name is Mari—pronounced "Mawdie." I have been working with children for going on seven years. I have worked with many ages, but I would say that 3-4 year olds are my favorite. I look forward to working with your children and know many of them already. Please feel free to ask me about any other information you may need. I can't wait to start the new year and get to know you and your child.

As you can see, our team is educated, experienced, and enthusiastic. We are more than ready to guide your child through exploration of the developing world, while encouraging them to become life-long learners.

Lastly, communication between parents/caregivers and teachers is an integral function regarding the life of a developing preschooler. Our team has created a class email account for this purpose. I have also included my personal contact information. Please feel free to contact us at any time. Our team is here for the betterment of all children at Child's Day and we look forward to the opportunities ahead.

Best Wishes,
Carissa Crabtree

Classroom Email: Pandasclassroom@yahoo.com

Personal Email: cdc6783@yahoo.com

Personal Cell Phone: (361) 548-8342

Pandas Daily Schedule

(Times are flexible and may vary to meet the needs of the children)

- 7:00 Early Arrival in Activity Room/Daily Health Check**
- 8:00 Room Opens/Free-Choice Centers**
- 8:15 Morning Snack Table Open**
- 9:00 Morning Meeting/Calendar**
- 9:30 Spanish**
- 9:45 Center Play**
- 10:30 Outside Play**
- 11:15 Transition to Inside/Lunch Prep**
- 11:30 Lunch**
- 12:00 Quiet Reading Time/Nap Prep**
- 12:15 Nap/Rest Time**
- 2:15 Staggered Wake Up/Free-Choice Centers**
- 2:30 Afternoon Snack**
- 2:45 Free-Choice Centers**
- 3:30 Outside Play**
- 4:30 Transition to Inside**
- 4:45 Small Group Activities**
- 5:15 Late Snack Table Open/Books/Table Top Toys**
- 6:00 Late pick-up in Puffins Room**

PLEASE BRING YOUR CHILD INTO THE CLASSROOM NO LATER THAN 9:00 AM. TAKING PART IN MORNING ACTIVITIES WILL GIVE YOUR CHILD A BETTER FEELING THROUGHOUT THE DAY. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT TIME WHEN CHILDREN EXCHANGE GREETINGS, ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS, LEARN TO UNDERSTAND THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS, AND BECOME COMFORTABLE WITH TRANSITIONS INTO DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES. SHOULD YOUR CHILD HAVE ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, PLEASE TALK WITH US SO WE CAN TRY TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR NEEDS WHILE KEEPING THE REST OF THE CLASS IN MIND.



Parent Involvement

Parents are the most important people in a child's life, and we want you to feel that you hold an invaluable place in the Panda community. There are a number of ways that parents can get involved in the classroom at their comfort level and choosing.

- Being a PAC representative, attending PAC meetings, and/or participating in school fund-raisers.
- Assisting with field trips or special events here at school.
- Coming in to class to read stories or to play.
- Sharing a special family activity or "family culture" with the class like storytelling, cooking, and/or sharing vacation photos.
- Helping to plan or attending a Panda family party.
- Helping with getting items from a wish list or for a special snack or lunch.
- Picking up a special lunch.

Communication Between Home and School

Since strong communication is the key to a positive, successful relationship, I encourage you to ask questions, make observations, and/or share your ideas. I want to offer several different forms of communication so that I appeal to every one's communication styles.

- The Daily Note will give you daily information regarding their disposition during the day, how long they slept, activities that they enjoyed doing, along with reminders regarding your child.
- A weekly Lesson Plan will be posted on the Parent's Board and copies will be made for all families who wish to have a copy.
- Monthly Newsletters will also be posted on the Parent's Board. The newsletter will include upcoming events as well as developmental milestones the children have been working on, and any other important memos or activities for the upcoming month.
- Whenever we have an upcoming special event, family gathering, or field trip to look forward to, I will place a poster with information about the event on the door.
- Three times a year conferences will be held to discuss development and individual goals for your child.
- "Upon Request" Conferences will be welcomed at any time if you would like to discuss concerns or to get information about your child.
- Overall, communicating via email seems to be the most effective and efficient method for relaying information to parents on a regular basis. Therefore, I created an email account just for the Pandas Classroom: pandasclassroom@yahoo.com.

Our team will make sure to check it daily. Please feel free to contact the Pandas team at any time. Also, you can reach me *directly* either at Child's Day, through my personal email address: cdc6783@yahoo.com, or via my personal cell phone: (361) 548-8342.



Illness Exclusion Policy

Children should remain at home (or will be sent home) with:

Ear temperature of 100.4 or higher. Oral temperature of 100.4 or higher, or underarm temperature of 99.4 or higher, in the past 24 hours.

Conjunctivitis "Pink eye", redness of the eye and/or lids, usually with secretion of yellowish discharge and crusting.

Bronchitis, which usually begins with hoarseness, cough, and a slight elevation in temperature. The cough may be dry and painful but gradually becomes productive.

A **rash** you cannot identify which has not been diagnosed.

Impetigo; red pimples which become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area. When blisters break, the surface is raw and weeping. Look for signs in neck creases, groin, underarms, face, hands, or edge of diaper.

Diarrhea two or more times within 24 hours (watery BM's that look different and are more frequent than usual.)

Vomiting within 24 hours (more than usual "spitting up").

Head Lice; live contagious insects or their nits (egg sacs) that infest hair. Children will not be readmitted without being free of live lice and nits, or must have a written note from a physician, local health authority, advance practice nurse, or physician's assistant stating that they are no longer contagious and may return to school.

Some **unknown illness** without obvious symptoms other than unusual paleness, irritability, tiredness, or lack of interest.

Any **contagious disease**, including Measles, Chick Pox, Mumps, Roseola, Strep Throat infection, Head Lice, until the child has been diagnosed by a physician and the established Center readmission criteria for individual illnesses has been met.

Children may be brought into the Center if they have a mild cold or allergy, an allergic rash, diaper rash, prickly heat, a loose bowel movement, dietary or medication diarrhea, and can cope successfully with the program. Staff should be alerted to anything out of the ordinary.

Children's exclusion and readmission to the program is subject to review by their receiving classroom staff and / or a Director.

If your child has a chronic illness or disability, please discuss a plan for reasonable admission/exclusion criteria with a Director.

By helping us to observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and the others in the Center.

Pandas Special Events and Field Trips

An important goal in the Pandas Room is to expand each child's view of their world and bring formal learning to concrete experiences. Field trips and special events connect children to their community! If you have any suggestions, let me know. The following are just some possibilities.

- Zilker Park
 - Trail of Lights
 - Story time at Barnes and Noble
 - Library
 - Botanical Gardens
 - Pumpkin Patch
 - Fire Station
 - Dentist Office
 - Children's Museum
 - PetsMart
 - Austin Zoo
 - A visit from a Police Officer/Fireman
- Please have your child wear his/her yellow Child's Day T-shirt on days we take field trips.
 - Volunteers & drivers are greatly appreciated since we have an adult / child ratio to maintain.
 - If there is a cost for a trip or special event, please pay by the requested date.
 - If a lunch will be eaten away from the center please provide your child's lunch in a paper bag with no plastic containers. There should be **no warm-ups** and a drink should be included.

Classroom Philosophy

Childhood is an incredible and unique time of development. A child's earliest years of life are important in numerous ways and the guidance they receive shapes their future developmental processes. Each child is different and special and each new day brings new experiences and challenges. Caregivers need to be aware of each child's stage of development and provide a classroom that respects all children's needs, interests, and growth.

Child's Day philosophy states: *We believe young children learn best by doing - through play and meaningful work. They need a safe, happy, stimulating, and nurturing environment offering concrete sensory experiences, positive social encounters, and age appropriate learning opportunities.*

Children will be learning cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically, environmentally, individually, and independently through hands-on experiences and guided learning. Since children's knowledge is socially constructed, teachers need to encourage and shape meaningful experiences and lessons that are based on the capabilities and readiness of the learners, including their interests and backgrounds. Teachers need to focus on the process and not the product when it comes to children's work. They must also challenge children to do their best while making sure to promote cooperation over competition in order to send the message that every child is valuable and capable.

Giving children the chance to construct their own knowledge fosters the building of self-efficacy which is crucial because it gives children the confidence to initiate new tasks and discover new abilities. As children overcome more obstacles, through their own desires and on their own terms, they begin to establish an intrinsic motivation for learning and this must be nurtured.

In early childhood classrooms, it is paramount that teachers create an environment that is safe and inviting and includes materials that are diverse and culturally representative of the individuals in the class and in the community. When children see themselves being represented in the classroom, their identity is strengthened and they feel a sense of belonging, both of which attribute to the creation of a positive self-esteem. Guidance is used over discipline and positive alternatives such as redirection and discussion are used to resolve conflicts.

Our primary goal in the Pandas classroom is to promote life-long learning for every child!!

Ensuring Academic Success

Your child will be gaining knowledge in “academic subjects” – reading, writing, math, science, and social studies as they interact with the objects and people in their environment. Through hands-on activities and social interactions, children will explore, observe, reflect, and problem-solve as they discover their talents and develop new skills. The following list shows some concepts and examples of how children will be learning these subjects.

Literacy

- ✓ Vocabulary: listening to stories, objects labeled, shared reading
- ✓ Phonemic awareness: singing a song and changing the first sound of the words, rhyming, riddles
- ✓ Pre-Writing skills: tracing, writing their name, writing focus words, and connecting with pictures, shared writing
- ✓ Letter and Number Recognition: creating lists, pointing out signs and symbols, recognizing words in books and in their environment, going over a calendar of events/daily schedule

Math

- ✓ Classifying: having the children with Velcro shoes go into the playground
- ✓ Sorting: making a people graph with children who like broccoli and those who do not
- ✓ Graphing: filling in a bar graph of how you got to school today: Mommy, Daddy
- ✓ Counting: counting bears
- ✓ Whole and part concept: cutting the bread so all get a piece, making a “big” square 4 blocks
- ✓ Addition, subtraction: singing finger plays, setting the tables for lunch
- ✓ Shapes and colors: pointing to objects on a flannel board and describing their attributes, sorting activities, block building, open-ended questions
- ✓ Pattern Recognition: stringing beads, creating art with different shapes and colors, weather graph
- ✓ Sequencing: retelling a story using pictures only

Science

- ✓ Compare and Contrast: adding water to dry sand to see how it changes
- ✓ Physical principles: balancing a horse prop on top of a block structure
- ✓ Chemical Reactions: mixing cookies and then baking them
- ✓ Cause-and-effect: seeing how high they can build before the blocks fall
- ✓ Natural Surroundings: collecting leaves, shells, acorns, and other natural materials
- ✓ The Five Senses: taste testing food, taking a “listening walk,” feeling different textures
- ✓ Tempo and Pitch: dancing and/or clapping to shifts in tempo or beat, experimenting with sound and musical instruments

Social Studies

- ✓ Cooperation: working on an art mural together, taking a vote on how to walk down the hallway to outside time
- ✓ Socially acceptable ways to express needs, concerns and fears: creating a hospital or cave with monsters and playing a make-believe
- ✓ Diversity: Talking about different cultures, discussion of different places around the world, families and communities, bring in volunteers to share experiences, reading stories, sharing family photos
- ✓ Positive self-concept: talking about their finished picture, acting out their dictated story

Pandas Curriculum

The classroom curriculum will be based on the Emergent Curriculum philosophy. Developing interests of the children and the developmentally appropriate learning standards will be the basis of topics introduced throughout the year. The goal will be to provide activities, materials, and experiences that are not only new and interesting, but also relative to each child's needs and developmental level. Using a theme-based approach, our curriculum will focus on the integration of every child's developing areas including their cognitive, socio-emotional, language, physical, and self-help domains.

Though I am unable to elaborate more specifically on which topics of interest may arise until we work more closely with the children, I expect the topics to include but not be limited to:



- Names
- Numbers
- Colors
- Weather
- Seasons
- Holidays
- Animals
- Plants
- Health
- Families
- Insects/Bugs
- Pets
- Community
- Friends

More to come...

PANDAS ROOM HELPFUL HINTS

- Each child should have several changes of clothing in case of any accidents or spills.
- Each child may bring a small blanket or towel for rest time. "Cuddlies" and small pillows are also welcome. Please take them home **every Friday** for washing.
- Tell us if your child has any special needs and/or allergies including those to sunscreen or insect repellents.
- "Medication Authorization Forms" must be filled out and signed as needed. Please bring meds in original bottles, labeled with your child's name, and include a medicinal measuring device. All "over-the-counter" medication administration requests must match age/dosage recommendations printed on the package or must come with a written physician's note/authorization. Please give medication to the teachers so they can check it and then be placed in the locked medicine cabinet.
- Please be sure to **sign your child IN and OUT each day** on the attendance sheet in the hallway beside the door to our classroom. **This is a state regulation.**
- Please be sure to empty your child's outside cubby daily.
- We believe that any food offered in moderation is important in meeting nutritional needs. Thus, we allow children to make independent food choices at lunch. Please avoid sending candy and/or sodas.
- It is helpful if you can notify us in advance of vacations. It is also our expectation that you call on the day of an absence or illness.
- Reminders about birthday parties: Child's Day requests no balloons, popcorn, or lighted birthday candles. This is for your child's safety as well as the Center's. If you would like alternative ideas, we will be happy to assist you. All birthday celebrations in our room will take place after nap. Please let the teachers know in advance when you will want to have one.
- We ask that if outside/home toys are brought into the classroom, they are to be immediately placed in your child's cubby. We will periodically have "share day" for our friends to show and tell about their special toy from home. If your child wants to bring in a stuffed animal or "cuddly" for nap time or transitioning, that is ok, as long as it stays in their cubby until nap-time.

Label every item with your child's name in permanent ink.

Child's Day Parent Volunteer Opportunities

Research shows that children are more successful when their parents are involved in their classroom experience. Volunteering in your child's class or at the PAC school-wide level is one way to help meet this goal. Please take the time to read through the opportunities listed below and determine where you would like to help this year. Your time and efforts will be well spent while enriching the children's learning experience. We encourage both parents to sign up and volunteer.

Volunteer's Name	Email Address	Phone #
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Volunteer's Name	Email Address	Phone #
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Child's Name	Classroom	Teacher's Name
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* Volunteer Opportunities *

Please indicate areas of interest by checking below:

- Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Classroom Representative: PAC meets on the second Wednesday of each month for one hour to discuss how to create the richest possible environment that promotes the learning, health and well-being of all of the children at Child's Day.
- PAC Classroom Alternate: Attends PAC meetings when the regular PAC representative cannot.
- PAC Special Events Volunteer: Assist with one-time, special PAC events such as the Staff Holiday Breakfast
- PAC Family Night Out (FNO) Volunteer: Assist with the annual FNO event by either helping to plan, setup, coordinate food, welcome table, t-shirt, or clean-up
- PAC Staff Appreciation Week (SAW) Classroom Representative: Coordinate classroom recognition activities during SAW
- Room Parent: Supports teacher and classroom and helps organize classroom events such as family social events.
- Story-time Reader: ___ Once a month; ___ every other month; ___ on occasion
- Material Preparation: Helps the teacher to make, color, cut or collect materials to be used in the classroom
- Talent Search: Share your interests, hobbies, work/job experiences with the children, PAC, and the school.
Specify: _____
- Miscellaneous:
 - ___ Computer Work
 - ___ Field Trip Driver
 - ___ Special Projects Helper
 - ___ Photo Helper

Please return this form to the office. Thanks!