

# ACTS of Love

## Early Childhood Education Center 2019-2020 Program Policies



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This handbook is designed especially for the staff of ACTS of Love and MUST be combined with the policies and procedures set forth by Opportunities for Williamson & Burnet Counties Head Start Program. It is set up to assist the teachers with their planning and to keep staff informed of teaching policies and expectations.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>Program Overview</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Mission Statement .....	4
History and Purpose .....	4
Goals .....	4
Board of Directors .....	5
Community Partnerships .....	5
Hours of operation .....	5
<b>Staff Expectations</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Staff Roles.....	5
Personal Items .....	6
Appropriate Dress .....	6
Demonstrate Christian Values .....	6
Confidentiality .....	6
Professional Development.....	7
CPR and First Aid Certification .....	7
<b>Eligibility, Enrollment, and Attendance</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Eligibility .....	7
Enrollment .....	8
Recruitment .....	8
Transitions .....	8
Attendance .....	8
Withdrawing From the Program .....	8
<b>Education and Child Development</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Learning Environment .....	8
Lesson Plans.....	9
Individualization .....	9
Discipline and Guidance Policy.....	9
Daily Schedule.....	10
Infant “Daily Sheets” .....	11
Outdoor Activities .....	11
Religious Education .....	11
Cultural Diversity .....	11
Children with Disabilities.....	11
<b>Health and Safety</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Morning Health Check.....	12
Reporting of Suspected or Known Child Abuse and Neglect .....	13
Naptime.....	13
Safe Sleep for Infants .....	14
Diapering .....	15
Hand washing .....	16
Oral Hygiene .....	17

Playground Safety .....	17
Supervision of Children .....	17
Releasing Children.....	18
Encouraging Self Autonomy for Infants and Toddlers .....	19
Biting .....	19
Health and Developmental Screenings and Assessments .....	20
Referrals .....	21
Health Requirements .....	22
Administration of Medication.....	23
Illness and Exclusion From Care .....	24
Accident/Illness/Incident Reporting.....	25
Sanitizing and Disinfection.....	26
Placement of children in protective custody.....	26
Requirements Regarding Gang-Free Zones for Childcare Centers .....	26
Vaccine Preventable Diseases .....	27
Animals in the Classroom .....	27
<b>Nutrition.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Mealtime .....	27
Feeding Infants and Toddlers.....	27
Food Allergies/Dietary Accommodations .....	29
Breastfeeding.....	29
<b>Family And Community .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Family Engagement .....	29
Parent Notifications .....	30
Childcare Licensing.....	30
Complaint Procedure.....	30
<b>Emergency Procedures.....</b>	<b>31</b>
Emergency Plans .....	31
Firs Aid Kits .....	31
Medical Emergency .....	31
Additional Policies and Procedures .....	32
Emergency contact numbers.....	33
<b>ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center Policies Acknowledgement.....</b>	<b>34</b>

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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### MISSION STATEMENT

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At ACTS of Love, it is our goal to provide you and your child with quality, Christ-centered childcare that nurtures and facilitates the growth and development of your child through cognitive, social, physical, and spiritual experiences.

### HISTORY AND PURPOSE

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The idea for what would become ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center came about after it was discovered that many teen-parents in the Leander, Texas area were dropping out of high school due to lack of childcare for their children. Leander Independent School District is not able to offer childcare as part of the pregnancy services available to students and there are no plans to do so in the future. In October 2015, ACTS of Love opened its doors to provide high quality early childhood education to teen-parent families.

ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center exists to serve young moms, dads, and children in the Leander, Texas area, by providing childcare specifically to teen-parent families. We function as a ministry to our immediate community and are dedicated to serving our neighbors by providing quality Christ-centered care that focuses on God's love, forgiveness, and provision. ACTS of Love is dedicated to helping young parents develop a positive lifestyle for themselves and their young families through opportunities such as free and quality childcare, family support, parent education, and the meeting of basic needs such as food, clothing, and diapers.

### GOALS

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#### Goals for children:

- To learn about and experience God's love
- To explore the world around them
- To grow and develop as individuals through a variety of positive, age appropriate learning experiences

#### Goals for parents:

- To learn about and experience God's love
- To continue their middle/high school/college education
- To benefit from the services provided, which promote a healthy lifestyle for young families
- To be an active participant in their child's development

#### Goals for staff:

- To learn about and experience God's love
- To pray for the children, their parents and co-workers daily
- To glorify God by providing quality Christ-centered care in the planning and delivery of positive, child focused learning experiences for all children
- To focus on God's love, forgiveness and His provision personally and professionally

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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ACTS of Love is governed by a Board of Directors. Directors meet once a month and serve for 1-3 year terms. The 2019-2020 Board of Directors are: Bonnie Hahn, President; Malissa Ivey, Treasurer; Elizabeth Van Hoorn, Secretary; Rev. Bonnie How; Paul Hargrove; Randy Eickenhorst; and Katie Evans, Director.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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In order to serve our community and our families the best we can, ACTS of Love has formed partnerships with other programs in our community. These partnerships are explained as follows:

Opportunities for Williamson-Burnet Counties Head Start and Early Head Start: Acts of Love has elected to be a Head Start partner. Acts of Love currently serves as an Early Head Start Location. Children enrolled in our center will be dually enrolled in the Early Head Start/Head Start Programs of Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties. This partnership enables us to provide daily meals, diapers, and other consumables to our children as well as various health services. In addition, as children age out of our center, they have the opportunity to transition to Bagdad Early Head Start.

Parents As Teachers: Parents as Teachers is a free early education program provided by Leander ISD for families with children ages birth to 5 who are interested in learning the best ways to ready their child for school success. All children enrolled in Acts of Love will have the access to Parents As Teachers and will be assigned a Parent-Teacher Educator

Concordia University Texas: Concordia University Texas is able to offer exclusive scholarships to any teen-parent who has graduated from high school, has had a child enrolled at ACTS of Love, and wishes to attend Concordia University to pursue higher education

## HOURS OF OPERATION

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The hours of operation for ACTS of Love are from 8:00am to 4:30pm, Monday – Friday.

Our doors will open promptly at 8:00am. Children cannot come into the classroom before 8:00am. All children should be picked up by 4:15 each day. We follow the Leander ISD academic calendar and rulings for all days of operation, holidays, and weather-related closures. A full calendar is posted on the Parent Board. Staff will report to work on all scheduled days during the school year and may be asked to complete/attend trainings during the summer.

## STAFF EXPECTATIONS

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### STAFF ROLES

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The quality of the center staff will determine the quality of the program as a whole. It is vital that all staff work together to best serve our children and their families.

#### Director

The Director is responsible for maintaining the safety, management, and wellbeing of the center itself, the center employees, and the students/families enrolled in the center. She reports to the ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center Board of Directors

### Teacher

The teacher is responsible for maintaining the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual safety and wellbeing of children in our care. Teachers will report to the Director

### Teacher Aid

The teacher aid is responsible for assisting the teacher with all classroom activities and individual child needs. The Teacher Aid will report to the Director

### Substitute Teacher

The Substitute Teacher will lead the classroom on an as-needed basis, in the event that the Teacher or Teacher Aid is unable to work. The Substitute Teacher will report to the Director.

### Volunteers

A volunteer will provide extra support to the ACTS of Love Director and Teachers. Volunteers may serve in a variety of ways, including in the classroom, in the office, delivering meals, and serving on committees. All volunteers will report to the Director.

## PERSONAL ITEMS

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All personal items may be stored in a designated place in the classroom where children are not able to see or access the items. This includes cell phones, purses, food, and drinks. Personal cell phone use is prohibited while in the classroom. All staff should be 100% attentive and focused on children at all times. Cell phones may be used in the event of an emergency, to access ClassTag, and to prep lesson plans. Teachers are allowed to have water in a clear container while in the classroom. All other food and drink must be kept outside of the classroom.

## APPROPRIATE DRESS

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Employees should wear clothing that is suitable and appropriate for working with young children. Clothing should allow full mobility, completely cover midriff and chest, and be neat and clean, and free from any offensive or suggestive words, images, or ideas. Teachers in the classroom should wear closed-toe and closed-heel shoes.

## DEMONSTRATE CHRISTIAN VALUES

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Staff members should interact with other staff, children, and families in such a manner that promotes Christian values. Use patience and practice forgiveness when working with others; be respectful of yourself, your position, the center, the staff, and the families we serve; Take every opportunity to share Jesus' love with everyone who enters our center.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

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All ACTS of Love staff, including the director, teacher, teacher aids, substitutes, and volunteers must comply with program confidentiality policies. Confidentiality is defined as the assurance that accesses to information regarding a client or family shall be strictly controlled and that any violation of such control will be a breach of faith. Confidentiality includes discussing a child, family, or staff's personal information through verbal and/or written forms of communication. Confidential information may include Personally Identifiable Information (PII), which includes name, address, social security number, phone number, birth date, and school or employer. Confidential information also includes information about a

child or family's living situation, family structure, classroom performance, education. All confidential child records are kept in a locked file cabinet (hard copies) or are password protected (digital copies). Each child's file has a confidentiality sign in sheet to keep track of who viewed the file and for what purpose.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ACTS of Love is committed to employing dynamics, well-qualified staff who possess the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to provide high quality, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive services to children and families in the program. It is important that all employees engage in continuous development and training to ensure they have proper knowledge of caring for and teaching children and to help build a quality program. All staff are required to participate in pre-service training at the beginning of each school year. Please refer to the State of Texas Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers for current annual training requirements.

## CPR AND FIRST AID CERTIFICATION

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ACTS of Love will ensure that at least one staff member on duty at all times has successfully completed training and is currently certified in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). All Teachers, Teacher Aids, and Directors are required to become certified/maintain certification in CPR/First Aid procedures. All other staff are strongly encouraged to become certified/maintain certification. ACTS of Love staff is trained in first aid and are required to have current cards certifying their status. Staff and volunteers may be called upon to administer first aid to children/staff at any time in the program. The incidental nature of this circumstance effectively establishes first aid as a collateral duty rather than the primary one.

# ELIGIBILITY, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

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## ELIGIBILITY

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The Acts of Love Program is available to teen-parents who are continuing their education in one of the following ways:

- Enrolled as full time students in Leander ISD or Liberty Hill ISD
- Enrolled as full time students in an online K-12 program
- Enrolled as full time or part time students in a college, university, or place of higher education
- Enrolled in technical school, on-the-job training, or internships

In order to maintain a low child to teacher ratio (no more than four children to every teacher) and to ensure that each child is receiving quality individualized care, ACTS of Love is licensed to care for eight children, ages 0-2 years old.

If a child turns 2 years old during the spring semester (after March 1), he/she will finish the school year at ACTS of Love and will transition to alternative care for the following school year. However, if a child will turn 2 years old during the fall/winter semester (before March 1), ACTS of Love may require that the family find alternative care. If alternative care is needed, ACTS of Love may assist the family with finding appropriate care.

## ENROLLMENT

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Eligible children and families will be enrolled in the ACTS of Love program during a scheduled period at the start of each school year. Teen-Parents who are pregnant and children who are eligible for care may be placed on the waitlist if there are no openings for childcare. Children on the waitlist may be enrolled throughout the school year as spots for childcare become available.

## RECRUITMENT

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ACTS of Love works close with local Independent School District counselors, Parents as Teachers, and Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties Head Start and Early Head Start to identify potential clients and distribute application and enrollment information.

## TRANSITIONS

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At the end of each school year, children who have aged out of our center may transition to the Bagdad Early Head Start Center to begin attending school and receiving services at that center at the start of the upcoming school year. At that time, the child's entire and complete file will be transition as well.

## ATTENDANCE

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ACTS of Love complies with the State of Texas's attendance requirements with the exception of homeless children. ACTS of Love will make every effort to retain full enrollment by carefully tracking attendance and by filling vacant slots from the prioritized waiting list within 30 days of vacancy. The program-wide target is at 85% for Average Daily Attendance (ADA). If your child is absent, please inform the Director as soon as possible.

## WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM

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If you wish to withdraw your child from care, please let the Director know as soon as possible. She will assist you in collecting your child's belongings and withdrawing your child from the program.

ACTS of Love does not suspend or exclude children from care unless keeping the child in care puts the child or other children at risk. If it is decided that ACTS of Love can no longer appropriately care for your child, the Director and Board of Directors will assist you in finding alternative care.

# EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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ACTS of Love implements a home-like center with well-organized learning environments, developmentally appropriate schedules, lesson plans, and indoor and outdoor learning experiences that provide adequate opportunities for choice, play, exploration, and experimentation among a variety of learning, sensory, and motor experiences.

## LESSON PLANS

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ACTS of Love teachers will provide a weekly lesson plan which provides opportunities for children to make personal connections, explore and experience their environments, and develop his/her abilities according to the child's individual needs. During monthly Parent Meetings, parents and teachers will discuss the child's development and will work together to form School Readiness Goals for the child. Teachers will then plan individual activities in each content area to help children accomplish their goals. Each Lesson Plan should include activities in each content area:

1. Social/Emotional Activities (building trust, learning about feelings, and forming relationships with other)
2. Literacy/Language Activities and specific books to be read each day
3. Fine Motor Activities
4. Gross Motor Activities
5. Cognitive/Math Activities
6. Art/Sensory Activities
7. Religious Education Activities
8. Outdoor Activities

## INDIVIDUALIZATION

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In order to ensure that each child is receiving care that meets his/her individual needs, ACTS of Love conducts standardized assessments as well as observation based assessments to evaluate the child's developmental level and progress. Information will be gathered from the results of health screenings, educational assessments, developmental profile, observations, and the input of parents from the enrollment home visit. Teachers and Parents will develop and goals for each developmental area using the information gathered for each child. Activities, materials and strategies that address identified goals will be implemented. Teachers will document performance of individual goals, social emotional concern and school readiness goals during weekly observations. Teacher will review instructional strategies and ongoing assessments and weekly observations to determine the child's progress and create and/or adjust additional goals.

## DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

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ACTS of Love Staff may use methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, self-direction, and teach positive behavior expectations. ACTS of Love will not expel, or un-enroll a child from the program because of a child's behavior.

When a child exhibits persistent and serious challenging behaviors, ACTS of Love will develop and implement a behavior plan with the Emotional Wellness Coordinator in collaboration with parents.

Discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control, not punishing unacceptable behaviors.

Positive behavior expectations which include at least the following:

1. Providing predictable visual schedules and routines.
2. Providing visual, inside and outside, rules charts stating what good behaviors are expected of each individual in the classroom.
3. Teaching children what behaviors are expected of them during different activities and routines within their classroom.
4. Daily reminding children of positive behavior expectations.

5. Using praise and acknowledgment of good behaviors.
6. Teaching children good manners.
7. Teaching children how to be respectful of others while assertively expressing their own needs and ideas.
8. Teach children how to appropriately ASK for things or for help.
9. Redirecting challenging behavior by telling children what they should be doing, instead of what they should stop doing.
10. Teaching children emotional recognitions, in themselves and others, and emotional vocabulary.
11. Teaching children to recognize when they are getting, angry, frustrated, or overly excited; stop; engage in self-calming skills; and then using problem solving or conflict resolution skills to resolve the situation.
12. Setting up a safety zone (a safe supervised area) where a child can go to calm down when they are angry, frustrated, overly excited, or upset. Teach and coach children how to utilize the safety zone to calm down and then return to classroom activities when they are ready.
13. Teach/coach children on using problem solving and conflict resolution skills.

There must be **no harsh, cruel, or unusual** treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
2. Punishment associated with food, naps, toilet training, or program activity unless a danger to self or others
3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
5. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, yelling or threatening a child
7. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
8. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
9. Placing a child in a chair that has restraints, other than highchairs for feeding purposes, without proper documentation on special services plan
10. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

#### DAILY SCHEDULE

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8:00am - 8:30am	Drop-off/Diaper Change and Morning Health Check with Parent
8:30am - 9:00am	Wash Hands/Pray/Breakfast/Brush Teeth
9:00am – 11:30am	Indoor/Outdoor Play and Teacher-Led Activities
11:30am – 12:00pm	Wash Hands/Pray/Lunch
12:00pm – 2:00pm	Nap Time/Quiet Time
2:30pm – 3:00pm	Wash Hands/Pray/Snack
3:00pm – 4:00pm	Indoor/Outdoor Play and Child-Directed Activities
4:00pm – 4:30pm	Diaper Change/Pick-Up

\*Diapers will be changed as needed

\*Infants will be fed on demand

\*Infants will nap as needed. No child will be made to nap, although rest time is encouraged.

## INFANT "DAILY SHEETS"

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To ensure an ongoing, informative, daily communication between caregivers and families, each child must have a "Daily Infant Sheet" completed each day by the child's caregiver. **All sections** of the form must be completed and given to parents upon the child's pick-up time.

The Director will receive a copy of each daily sheet and the original should be sent home with the parent. The Director will keep forms for 3 months before they may be discarded.

All sections of the form must be completed:

1. Feeding: names and amounts of food eaten and beverages drank
2. Sleep: time and duration of sleep
3. Activities: list some activity done during the day that the child enjoyed or had success doing
4. Mood: how did the child feel that day
5. Medication: note the name, amount time given and any concerns

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

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ACTS of Love promotes each child's physical development by providing sufficient time, outdoor space, equipment, materials and adult guidance for active play and movement. Weather and schedules permitting, children will be allowed to play outside for at least 45 minutes every day. Teachers will provide an assortment of age-appropriate outdoor activities each day.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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There will be daily opportunities to teach about God's love and His truths. This may be through reading a Bible story or through modeling a Christian value. Teachers are encouraged to pray with children throughout the day and before meals, share Bible stories and songs that promote the Christian faith, and model Christian behavior in all classroom activities.

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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The children and families served at ACTS of Love reflect multiple cultures and beliefs. All children and families deserve services that are responsive and respectful to their families, communities, and ethnic/racial/linguistic backgrounds. Staff are expected to work collaboratively with families and minimize the differences between the home environment and the school environment so that children are comfortable to learn. Family diversity is to be celebrated both in and out of the classroom with books, music, games, dramatic play items and even at mealtimes with a variety of traditional foods.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

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Children who are enrolled in ACTS of Love who have a diagnosed disability or who are identified as a child with a suspected disability will receive individualized support through Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties' partnerships with LEA's, ECI, private therapy companies according to their IEP, IFSP, or service plan. Children and families will receive all applicable program services in the least restrictive environment possible and are able to fully participate in all program activities. Teachers will have access to records such as IEP, IFSP and service plan goals to ensure the child's needs are met in the classroom setting.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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### MORNING HEALTH CHECK

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Morning Health Checks are an opportunity for the parent and teacher to discuss any abnormalities in the child's appearance, health, or behavior. Morning health checks are conducted by observing the child, speaking with parent/guardian, and speaking with the child. These checks are conducted as soon as possible after the child enters the facility and whenever a change in the child's behavior or appearance is noted. **The morning health check should be done at drop off, before the parent or guardian leaves, so that a child who appears to be ill or injured can be taken home or to the doctor/clinic as appropriate.** The health check should be performed in a relaxed, comfortable manner that respects the family's culture as well as the child's body and feelings.

ACTS of Love staff should do a visual check of the child upon arrival and consult with the parent about any concerns they may have regarding their child's health. The following is a list of possible visual signs/symptoms to check. Any injuries noted are documented on the Daily Morning Health Check.

- Fever (warm to the touch)
- Hair (clean; quick visual check for signs of lice or ringworm)
- Face and head (cuts, bruises, sore spots)
- Eyes, ears, nose (redness, discharge, swelling, pain)
- Mouth (sores, missing teeth, swelling, pain)
- Arms and legs (cuts, bruises, burns, sores or wounds, pain)
- Hands (sores, wounds, burns, unusual scars)
- Feet (limping, pain; may check during nap time for sores, wounds, burns)
- Skin (rashes, irritation, insect bites; pale or flushed; sores; swelling; bruising)
- General appearance (body, hair and clothing clean; energy level; extreme hunger; Is the child clinging to the parent, acting cranky, crying, or fussing?; Does she appear listless, in pain, or have difficulty moving? Does the child have any foul or unusual odors?)
- Breathing (Is the child coughing, breathing fast, or having difficulty breathing?)
- Obvious signs of illness (droopy appearance; listless; upset stomach)
- "Hidden" areas (listen for the child to complain of signs of physical or sexual abuse during first bathroom break - bruising, pain during urination or bowel movement, bleeding)
- A tactile check involves gently rubbing your hand on the child's back, shoulder, or head as you greet him or her. This is one way to observe signs of possible illness or injury on areas of the body which are covered by clothing or hair. General feeling of warmth, indicating possible fever. Possible bruising or soreness; the child may flinch or pull away from your touch

If a serious injury is noted (ex: burns, black eyes, broken bones, stitches, etc.), an incident report and body mark chart is to be completed. If the parent gives a plausible explanation of the injury, that information should be documented on the incident report.

If a child presents with an injury that causes the staff to suspect the child has been abused, an incident report is completed and the Center Director, Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, Health Coordinator, and/or Program Director should be notified. The staff suspecting the abuse should report the incident/injury to CPS.

## REPORTING OF SUSPECTED OR KNOWN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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**If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected while in our program or anywhere else, you should immediately contact Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at their Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>**

No one likes to talk about child abuse, but it is a real issue and it happens to real children. ACTS of Love staff are required by law to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or sexual molestation to the Texas Department of Regulatory and Protective Services. Failure to report be a staff member is a Class B Misdemeanor. Aside from the legal implications, the failure to make a report would mean neglect on our part to protect children in our care. We will not knowingly fail to protect a child.

ACTS of Love staff are required to complete one clock hour of annual training focused on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including factors indicating child abuse, warning signs indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect, internal procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect, and community organizations that have training programs available to childcare center staff, children, and parents.

### What to do when you suspect or know of child abuse or neglect:

1. Discuss concerns or suspicions of abuse or neglect with Center Director when a problem is noted. **Do not** question the child but document **anything** the child has said to you.
2. Fill out the appropriate parts of Incident/Accident report and the **Body Marks** form with center director assistance. This report needs to be completed and sent immediately to the **Central Office** to be reviewed. The Center Director will maintain a confidential location for all abuse/neglect concerns and reports.
3. Center Directors in turn need to report this information **immediately** by phone to the Head Start Program Director and Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.
4. And the person who identified the suspected abuse or neglect will be responsible for calling or complete the online report for DFPS with the assistance of the Center Director, Family Advocate, or Family and Community Engagement Coordinator. Document the reference number given by the DFPS intake worker and e-mail it to the Program Director and/or Family and Community Engagement Coordinator. Any call made from our agency must not be made anonymously.

### **At no time does a staff member contact the parent in regards to this situation.**

**NOTE:** If staff has concerns regarding a particular child, notes can be made more frequently than every week in weekly observations. This can be done through direct email or documented on the observation form with notification given to the Center Director and Family Advocate. This information will be shared by the Center Director to appropriate Coordinator as concerns arise. Staff is responsible to follow-up with Center Director if there are any further concerns. Center Directors are responsible for **immediately** informing Program Director and Family and Community Engagement Coordinator if there are concerns of suspected neglect or abuse.

## NAPTIME

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ACTS of Love will ensure that all infants/toddlers/children enrolled in our program option will be provided a safe and hygienic environment. Teachers will offer a 2 hour rest time every day. However, infants and toddlers will be allowed to rest as each child needs. If a child wakes up early or does not want to nap, he/she will not be forced to nap. Teachers will provide an alternate activity such as reading books or playing quietly with toys.

### Cribs

Infants younger than 12 months of age shall be placed fully on their backs on a firm tight-fitting mattress covered by a tight-fitting sheet in a safety approved crib. Cribs will be labeled with the child's first name and last initial. No other objects may be placed in the crib with the infant (this includes blankets, burp rags, bottles, toys, etc.) Cribs should be positioned far enough apart to allow caregivers easy access to each child and prevent children from reaching into another child's crib. Each classroom should have a posted nap mat that shows where each child's crib is located.

### Cots

Once the child starts walking, the teacher/caregiver should start the process of transitioning the child to a cot. The parent/guardian should always be included in the process and respect to individual cultures or family beliefs should always be considered. (State Licensing Standards state that a child, unless directed by a physician due to a medical condition or disability, must be transitioned out of a crib by the age of 18 months). Cots will be numbered and a Nap Mat will should where cots are to be placed during nap time and which child sleeps on each numbered cot. Cots should be positioned far enough apart to allow caregivers easy access to each child without stepping over a cot. Children should not be able to reach from their cot and touch another cot or child. After nap, cots should immediately be picked up, cleaned, and stored/stacked so that they do not touch one another and do not interfere with classroom activities.

### SAFE SLEEP FOR INFANTS

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**Infants are to be placed on their backs when put down to sleep** unless directed to do otherwise by the infant/toddler's physician. If a health professional has determined that placing an infant on their back poses a health risk, or if the infant requires special accommodations during sleep, an Infant Sleep Exception From 2710 must be signed by the child's health care professional prior to making the accommodations. Documentation of approval will be kept in the child's file from PCP (Primary Care Physician) & Child Care licensing approved Physician. If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position. Infants that roll during sleep do not need to be repositioned.

**Infants younger than 12 months of age should not have any item in the crib, including:** Soft or loose bedding (such as blankets, quilts, comforters, and pillows), Soft toys/animals or soft objects (such as cloth diapers, bibs), Bumper pads, liners or sleep positioning devices. Toys, including mobiles and other types of play equipment that is designed to be attached to any part of the crib should be kept away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments.

**Infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time** by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing.

**Infants should not nap or sleep in a car safety seat, bean bag chair, bouncy seat, infant seat, swing, jumping chair, play pen, or play yard, high chair, futon, or any other type of furniture/equipment that is not a safety approved crib.** If an infant arrives or falls asleep in a device other than a crib (listed above), move the infant to a crib immediately.

**Only one infant should be placed in each crib.** Infants should have their own assigned crib. Cribs are for sleeping purposes only and should never be used as punishment or a substitution for supervision.

**Caregivers/Teachers should ensure that the temperature in the room is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.** If an infant needs extra warmth, use sleep clothing such as sleepers or footed pajamas. Remove all bibs, necklaces, and clothing with ties or hoods before placing the infant on their back in the crib.

**Infants must be directly observed by sight and sound at all times**, including when they are going to sleep, are sleeping, or are in the process of waking up.

**Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest.**

## DIAPERING

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ACTS of Love will ensure the health and safety of infants and toddlers during diapering and will ensure proper equipment is being used. Proper preparation before beginning is essential to ensure the safety of the child when on the changing table. Diaper changing procedure should be posted in the changing area and should be followed for all diaper changes.

### Diaper Changing Procedure:

1. Prior to bringing the child to the diaper changing table, have all supplies such as wipes, gloves, diaper, clean clothes (if needed), disposable plastic diaper bag within reach
2. Wash your hands following the Hand Washing Procedures
3. Put enough fresh table paper on the changing table to cover from the child's shoulders to beyond the child's feet.
4. Put on gloves
5. Place child on changing table on top of fresh table paper AND buckle the safety belt.
6. The safety belt should remain buckled around the child at all times while the child is on the table.
7. Unfasten the diaper, but leave the soiled diaper under the child
8. Lift the child's legs as needed to use disposable wipes to clean the skin on the child's genitalia and buttocks and prevent recontamination from a soiled diaper.
9. Put the soiled wipes into the soiled diaper or in the disposable bag.
10. Remove the soiled diaper and clothing (if necessary) without contaminating any surface not already in contact with stool or urine.
11. Fold the soiled surface of the diaper inward and place in the disposable plastic bag if the child had a bowel movement, tie the bag and dispose into a trash can. If child did not have a bowel movement, place diaper directly into the trash can.
12. Remove gloves using proper de-gloving technique and dispose in a hands free trash can
13. Wipe your hands and the child's hands with a clean, disposable wipe
14. If a signed medication authorization indicates, apply topical cream/ointment/lotion wearing clean gloves, then remove and place in trash can.
15. Apply new diaper and dress the child
16. Wash the child's hands or assist child with hand washing and return the child to a supervised area.
17. Remove soiled table paper and discard in trash can
18. Clean and disinfect changing table and any equipment following the Cleaning and Disinfecting procedures

### Diaper Cream

ACTS of Love staff may administer over the counter diaper cream (ex: Desitin) with written permission from the parent. Prescription diaper cream (ex: Nystatin) may be administered with written permission from the parent and a physician. Administration of Medication procedures should be followed when

applying all types of diaper creams. If a parent requires use of diaper cream on their child, the parent must fill out and sign the Medication Packet Authorization to Administer Medication (Page 1). A doctor's signature is not required for over the counter diaper cream. If the diaper cream is a prescription (i.e. Nystatin) then a doctor's signature will be required before staff may administer. Diaper cream should be labeled for the individual child with the child's first and last name and only used on that child. Diaper cream should not be shared between children. Keep all diaper cream containers out of reach of children.

## HAND WASHING

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ACTS of Love requires all staff, children, visitors and parents to practice hand washing procedures to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff. Teachers are required to wash their hands and assist children in learning and practicing correct hand washing procedures. Infants unable to be raised to the faucet must have hands washed with a disposable cloth with soap and water followed by a cloth used to rinse with clear water. Hand washing procedures must be posted next to each sink.

Staff, children, parents, visitors, and volunteers should wash their hands in the following situations:

1. Upon arrival at work (staff)
2. Upon arrival in the classroom (children, parents, and visitors)
3. Before feeding a child (staff and volunteers)
4. Before serving and handling food (staff and child)
5. Before giving medication (staff)
6. Before giving first aid (staff)
7. Before water play (staff, children, and volunteers)
8. After using the restroom (staff, children and volunteers)
9. After changing a diaper (staff, children, and volunteers)
10. After handling bodily fluids (staff)
11. After caring for a sick child (staff)
12. After touching nose, mouth, eyes (staff, children, and volunteers)
13. After coughing, sneezing or blowing nose (staff, children, and volunteers)
14. After playing with animals (staff, children and volunteers)
15. After handling money (staff) After handling garbage (staff and volunteers)
16. After outdoor play (staff, children, and volunteers) or as frequent as hands are thought to need it.

Children and staff members should wash their hands using the following methods:

1. Turn on warm water to a comfortable temperature
2. Moisten hands with water and apply soap (not antibacterial) to hands
3. Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears. Hands should be out of the water stream. Continue to lather hands for at least 20 seconds (sing "Happy Birthday" twice)
4. Rub areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and back of hands
5. Rinse hands under running water. Leave the water running while drying hands
6. Dry hands with a clean, disposable paper towel
7. Turn off faucet with a paper towel
8. Open door with a paper towel
9. Dispose of paper towel in the trash can

## ORAL HYGIENE

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ACTS of Love practices oral hygiene daily as part of the classroom curriculum and routine. All Children will participate in their oral care once a day, according to their developmental abilities. For children 0-12 months, teachers will wipe all surfaces of the gums with clean and moistened gauze. For children over 12 months of age, teachers will assist the child with brushing his/her own teeth. When assisting with oral hygiene practices, staff must always wear gloves and prevent cross contamination between toothbrushes and toothpaste.

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY

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Playground safety checks are done every morning before children are allowed to play outdoors. This is documented daily on the Daily Maintenance Checklist and more formally on a monthly basis on the Playground Safety Checklist. To ensure the safety of each child, teachers are required to have a face to name list, cell phone, first aid kit, and water for children to drink, at all times while outside. Children will not be allowed to play outside if the temperature falls below 32 degrees or rises above 102 degrees. Please make sure all children are dressed appropriately before going outside.

### Protection from the Sun:

ACTS of Love will ensure sun safety for staff and children. Sunscreen may be used with written authorization by a physician and the child's parents. A Medication Administration Packet must be completed by the child's parent before sunscreen may be applied by staff. The Authorization to Administer Medication (Part 1) form must be completed by the child's parent before sunscreen may be applied. Sunscreen should be applied on all exposed areas, especially the face (avoiding the eye area), nose ears, feet, and hands and rubbed in well. Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. "Broad Spectrum" sunscreen will screen out both UVB and UVA rays. Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes before going outdoors as it needs time to absorb into the skin. Sunscreen should be applied to the child at least once by the parents/guardians and the child observed for a reaction to the sunscreen prior to its use in child care. Staff should practice safe sun exposure for themselves and all children in their care: Children and staff should be protected from the sun by using shade and sun protective clothing. Sun exposure should be limited between the hours of 10 AM and 2 PM when the sun's rays are the strongest. Protective clothing (including long sleeves, long pants, and sun hats) must be worn for infants younger than six months.

### Protection from Insects

ACTS of Love staff may not apply insect repellent to a child without written permission from the child's parent or guardian. Whenever possible, staff should encourage parents to apply insect repellent to their child before dropping them off at the center. Insect repellent is to be treated as medication and all medication administration procedures should be followed. Insect repellent is never to be applied to children under 2 months of age. Insect repellent with DEET is prohibited.

## SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

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ACTS of Love staff prioritize children's safety by providing continuous supervision. Keeping children safe is a top priority for all staff and staff must "ensure no child is left alone or unsupervised by staff, consultants, contractors, or volunteers while under their care. Classroom environments (both indoor and outdoor) must be set up in a way that allows staff to see and hear children at all times. A Face to Name check should be done after each transition.

In the event of a child is left alone or unsupervised inside or outside of the classroom:

1. Teacher will report to Center Director
2. Center Director will report to Program Director

3. Center Director will report to Parent
4. Center Director will report to Child Care Licensing.

## RELEASING CHILDREN

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ACTS of Love staff is to ensure that the parent/guardian or anyone else listed on the child's pick up list is able to care for the child and does not appear to be under the influence of any mind altering substances. Each child must be signed in and out of the center by the adult dropping/picking up. A child may only be released to their parent/guardian or anyone listed on the child's emergency contact list. A court order must be on file in the child's folder if biological parents are not allowed to pick up a child. All staff needs to be made aware of the court order. Any person on the pick-up list must identify himself or herself by presenting a valid Driver's license or any other picture ID. Any person who picks up a child must be at least 14 years of age, and an authorized adult must provide consent. A copy of the identification must be made and placed in the front of the child's folder upon the 1st time pick up. Persons requesting to pick up a child without written consent may not leave with the child unless telephone authorization is given in emergency situations **only**. Staff who accepts such authorization from the parent or legal guardian will call the previously documented number of the parent to verify that the parent is activating the phone authorization for release of the child. The staff person will document the results of this call in the child's record, as well as the time and to whom the parent gave authorization for release of the child.

### If a parent is unable to care for a child

If a parent/guardian/alternate pick-up person seems unable to care for a child at the time of pick-up (apparent influence of drugs/alcohol, abusive), the Center Director or Staff in charge must do the following:

1. Notify the Director immediately.
2. Call other parent or persons on the alternate emergency pick up list.
3. If the alternate persons are not available, Child Protective Services should be contacted for guidance.
4. If the parent becomes unmanageable and refuses to stay on campus, the Center Director will then document the vehicle license plate and notify the police immediately (911). A referral to Child Protective Services may also be needed as per the discretion of the Center Director and Program Director.

### Late Pick Up

If a child has not been picked up within 30 minutes of the center closing.

1. Staff must contact all parents and alternate pick up contacts.
2. If staff is not able to get in touch with parents/alternate pick up contacts, they must notify the Administration Office immediately.
3. Police and Child Protective Service should then be called for guidance.
  - Fill out an accident/incident/illness report.
  - The first late pick-up, parent signs late pick-up form,
  - The second late pick-up is referred to Director after
  - The third late pick-up is a referral to the FCEC.

If there is a question regarding the release of a child, the Center Director should be consulted. If Center Director is not available, the Administration Office should be contacted for direction.

## ENCOURAGING SELF AUTONOMY FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

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Children work hard to learn to live in a mysterious world that bombards them with new people, words, ideas, rules, and experiences. Toddlers particularly strive for the self-control that follows a sense of independence and autonomy. They test the people and things in their environments, experience consequences, and eventually learn the benefits of positive social interactions, self-trust, and good judgment.

### Meal Time Encouragement

- Children are to be held or seated whenever eating or drinking.
- Table foods may be introduced to children 12 months and older, unless the parent has obtained a doctor's note stating otherwise.
- Bottle propping and carrying of bottle by young children shall not be permitted.
- Feeding times & consumption shall be documented in writing and available for review by parents.
- Infants shall be held during bottle –feeding. When a child is 6 months old, or when developmentally appropriate, the child will be encouraged to hold his/her own bottle during feedings.
- Caregivers should always sit with and monitor infants and toddlers while they are drinking and/or eating.
- Mobile infants can be transitioned to the child sized chair once a child's feet are flat on the floor, when seated.
- High chairs should be used for their intended purpose. **High chairs should not be used as extended play areas.**
- Let children be as independent as possible during mealtimes. Encourage children to try for themselves but provide help and encouragement when needed so they don't get frustrated.
- Give toddlers responsibility for placing napkins or utensils on the table. Encourage children to begin clearing their own plates when they are old enough to carry them without dropping them.

### Play Time Encouraging

- Care of the environment and each other is encouraged
- Children can help pick up toys
- Children can participate in self-help activities like brushing teeth, washing hands, and throwing away trash.
- Classroom rules are picture-based, easy to understand, and appropriate for toddlers (looking eyes, listening ears, soft voice, kind hands, quiet feet, caring hearts)

## BITING

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Biting often occurs in an infant/toddler classroom. Teachers are trained to react calmly and use simple words when talking with the biters. The children's safety should be first. Teachers should provide first aid as well as comfort and support to any child who is bitten. Children who are biting for any reason should be taught more appropriate ways to deal with the situation.

### What should we do when biting occurs?

1. Remain calm. Avoid a dramatic or negative response.
2. Give immediate attention and comfort to the victim first. Clean the wound with soap and water.
3. Create distance from the child who bit from the child that was bitten.
4. An incident report form should be completed to notify the appropriate family member of the child who was bitten and the biter. The identities of all children should be kept confidential.

### What can we do to prevent biting?

1. Chart the behavior of children who bite to get an idea of times and situations when biting occur.

2. When you can identify situation that result in biting, teach, model, and have the children practice ways to deal with those situations appropriately.
3. Change the environment, routines, activities, etc. if necessary.
4. Help child to communicate and verbalize their feelings.
5. Provide close supervision.
6. Avoid unintentionally reinforcing the biting. Do not engage the child in long one-on-one interactions talking about the biting.
7. Help the child develop empathy by labeling how the other child feels. Ask, "how can we help (the child) feel better?"
8. Redirect children to more acceptable behaviors.
9. Provide positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.

#### What are inappropriate actions to a biting child?

1. Expelling or dis-enrolled child from the program.
2. Inappropriately moving child into older classrooms.
3. Biting the child back.
4. Making the child taste items that are sour or spicy.

#### What should parents/families expect from their child's program?

1. The children's safety should be first. Programs should provide first aid as well as comfort and support to any child who is bitten.
2. Developmentally appropriate environment/activities for their children should be provided.
3. Children who are biting for any reason should be taught more appropriate ways to deal with the situation.
4. An incident report form should be completed.
5. The appropriate family member of the child who was bitten and the biter should be notified, keeping the identities of all children confidential.

### HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS

In collaboration with each parent/guardian with parental consent, all children enrolled at ACTS of Love will receive or obtain a complete current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, emotional, hearing, vision, dental, and nutrition assessment. In addition each child and family will be monitored for wellness throughout the school year. To the greatest extent possible, these screening procedures must be sensitive to the child's cultural background. The use of screening and assessment data may not be used for the purposes of ranking, comparing or evaluating individual children for purposes other than research, training, or technical assistance, and is prohibited for the purposes of providing rewards for individual children or staff. Any child who shows a concern with speech and language development, behavior, or other developmental issues may be referred to the Health and Disabilities Coordinator and/or Emotional Wellness Coordinator.

#### Child Emotional Wellness History

At enrollment parents fill out the Child Emotional Wellness History. The Child Emotional Wellness History provides parents with the opportunity to communicate social, emotional, and behavior history and concerns about their child with ACTS of Love staff. It also provides them with the opportunity to ask to speak with an Emotional Wellness Coordinator or counseling Intern.

#### Developmental Screenings

ACTS of Love staff will complete an Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) for each child. The ASQ contain 30 developmental items organized into five areas: Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor,

Problem Solving, and Personal-Social. An ASQ will be completed at enrollment and when the child turns 9 months, 18 months, and 24 months. The child's parents, the ACTS of Love staff, the Disability Coordinator and/or Comprehensive Support Specialist (CSS) will review the results of the ASQ. If the results of the ASQ indicate a need for further evaluation, a referral will be made to the Disability Coordinator or Comprehensive Service Specialist

#### Behavioral Screenings

ACTS of Love staff and/or the child's parents will complete an Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional-2 (ASQ:SE-2) at the time of enrollment. The child's parents, the ACTS of Love staff, the Disability Coordinator and/or Comprehensive Support Specialist (CSS) will review the results of the ASQ:SE-2. If the results indicate a need for further evaluation, a referral will be made to the Emotional Wellness Coordinator

#### Hearing Screening

All children will receive a hearing screening using an Otoacoustic Emissions Screening (OAE). The screening is performed by a certified technician who is trained to use the OAE tool. Screening results will be shared with the child's parents. All children under 12 months of age will complete a Vision, Hearing, and Language Assessment at Enrollment.

#### Vision Screening

All children, ages 6 months and older will receive a vision screening using the SPOT screening tool. The screening is performed by a certified vision technician who is trained to use the SPOT tool. Screening results will be shared with the child's parents. Children who need further examination by an eye doctor will be given a letter and a copy of the SPOT screening to take to the optometrist or ophthalmologist for their follow up visit. All children under 12 months of age will complete a Vision, Hearing, and Language Assessment at Enrollment.

#### Nutrition Assessment

Parents will complete a Health History Interview for all children at the beginning of the year. The form will include information about the child's special dietary needs, if applicable. This form, along with data received from the child's physical exam (height, weight, hemoglobin) will be assessed to determine special needs. An individualized plan will be developed by the Dietitian on all children with Special Dietary needs and given to the Directors which will be shared with the teachers and kitchen staff.

#### Observations

ACTS of Love staff make daily observations of each child's day-to-day development and achievements. Observations are recorded and tracked in the child's OUNCE profile and are used to complete a Development Profile at the end of each age level (4, 8, 12, 18, and 24 months). The Developmental Profile Report gives teachers relevant information whether the child is developing as Expected (DAE) or Needs Development (ND). These results will be shared with the parent.

### REFERRALS

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#### Internal Referrals

ACTS of Love has established an internal referral procedure to facilitate communication and needs of children and families among program coordinators in the areas of health, disabilities, emotional wellness, family support, enrollment, and education. When a concern or need is identified, an internal referral will be submitted and addressed to the appropriate content area coordinator (Health & Disabilities, Emotional Wellness, Family and Community Engagement, Nutrition, ERSEA, or Education).

### Referrals for Health Services

When there is a concern regarding the health and/or wellness of a child or family, a referral will be made to the Health Coordinator to assist the staff and family to address the concern. When a referral is made, all health records, physical exams and/or education records will be reviewed.

### Referral for Emotional Wellness Consultation

All children enrolled in ACTS of Love and their families will have access to support from the Emotional Wellness Coordinator. Referrals for emotional wellness consultation will be submitted by an internal referral to the Emotional Wellness Coordinator by center directors. When a child needs to be referred for emotional wellness consultation, the center director will notify the Emotional Wellness Coordinator by making an internal referral.

### Referral for Family and Community Engagement (FCEC)

ACTS of Love encourages self-sufficiency in families and should guide families to resources when needs arise that can be met through community collaborations. Family Advocates will provide appropriate follow up and follow through with families once a referral is provided.

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

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### Immunizations

All children enrolled in at ACTS of Love will be required to have appropriate immunizations based upon age and date of last immunization and in accordance with the CDC recommendations for vaccinations. If a child's immunizations are more than a month overdue, he/she will not be allowed to attend care until he/she receives the immunizations. Children who do not receive immunizations due to medical or personal beliefs must have an original state waiver in their file. ACTS of Love participates in annual audits from Williamson County Health District and Texas Childcare Licensing to maintain compliance with the state standards.

### Statement of Health

All children enrolled at ACTS of Love are required to provide a Statement of Health signed by the child's doctor, stating that the child is able to participate in childcare. A Statement of Health must be on file before the child can begin attending school.

### Physical Exam (Well Child Check)

All children enrolled at ACTS of Love are required to receive Well Child Checks from his/her doctor at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 24 months of age. ACTS of Love staff will provide the family with a form for the doctor to complete and sign. A family may also submit a form from the doctor that shows the date, findings, and immunizations the child received during the well child check. The Center Director will monitor children's health records monthly and remind parents to schedule their child's upcoming physical exam, according to the THSteps EPSDT schedule.

### Dental Exam

Starting at 6 months of age, children enrolled at ACTS of Love will obtain a professional dental examination every 6 months according to the THSteps EPSDT schedule. The dental exam form is reviewed and assessed by the director to determine whether any follow-up care is needed. The Health Coordinator is available to clarify medical terminology, and assist with resource identification.

### Hemoglobin/Hematocrit Screening

At the child's 12 month well child check, he/she should receive a hemoglobin/hematocrit lab screening. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the program with the screening results as part of their

enrollment into the program. Children with abnormal screening results will require an updated Nutrition Assessment and/or Referral to the Nutrition Coordinator.

### Elevated Lead Level Screening

Children who turn 12 & 24 months while enrolled should have their lead level tested at their Well Child Exam, according to the THSteps EPSDT schedule. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the program with the test results as part of their enrollment into the program. The Director and Health Coordinator will review the results. Children with abnormal screening results will require a referral to the Health Coordinator. Children with elevated lead levels should be reported to the Texas Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

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ACTS of Love staff will administer medication (including over-the-counter) to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a medical provider. Administration of medication in the facility is a safety hazard, so giving medication will be limited to situations where medicine outside child care hours cannot be made. Parents or legal guardians may administer medication to their own child during the child care day. Annual training is provided to all staff by a Medical Professional and/or approved online course providing a certificate of completion.

Medication (including over-the-counter) will be given by trained staff at the center. All staff will be trained on how to read medication labels and how to measure medicine. The prescribing physician must complete and sign the Medication Administration Packet (Part 1). The Receipt of Medication form (Part 2) will be completed by the parent and center director upon receipt of the medication. Both forms should be complete before medication is given to the child.

### Rules for Handling Medication:

1. For prescription & over-the-counter medications (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl), the medication must be in the original, child resistant container with:
  - the child's first & last name, classroom
  - the name and strength of the medication;
  - the date the prescription was filled;
  - the name & signature of the health care provider who wrote the prescription
  - the medication's expiration date
  - the route the medication should be given, and storage
  - any written instructions with side effects stated
2. No prescription or non-prescription (over the counter) medication should be given to any child without written orders from a prescribing health professional and written permission from the parent/guardian.
3. Non-Prescription sunscreen, diaper cream, and insect repellent do not require instructions from a prescribing health professional but always require written parental consent (see Sunscreen Policy, Insect Repellent Policy, and Diaper Cream Policy)
4. Medication may be given for a recurring problem, emergency situation or chronic condition such as asthma. Recurring and periodic medications forms are updated every twelve months.
5. When a parent brings a medication to the center, the Center Director or designated person to administer the medication will fill out a Receipt of Medication Form (Part 2) with the parent. The form will acknowledge receipt of the medication and a safety checklist. The teacher and parent/caregiver will sign the form. The form will be kept in the Medication Book.

6. Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in sturdy locked container that is inaccessible to children. Medications requiring refrigeration must be stored separately from food.

7. Rescue medications may be stored in classroom in a labeled cabinet (Cabinet labeled with the word "medication"). Medication kept up at least 5 feet high out-of-reach from children unlocked. Copies of Medication Authorization sheet & Medication Log will be included. Common rescue medications include Inhalers & Epi-pen.

8. Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician. At the end of the school year all medication is returned to parent or legal guardian.

9. A Medication Log Form will be used to record:

- Parent or legal guardian consent,
- Name of medication,
- the date,
- amount given,
- the time of administration,
- reaction if any
- signature of the person who administered the dose of medication.
- Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log. An Incident/Accident/Illness form will also be completed and parent notified immediately.

10. Medication errors will be controlled by checking the following 5 items each time medication is given:

- Right child
- Right medicine
- Right dose
- Right time
- Right route of administration

11. When a medication error occurs, the Regional Poison Control Center, Child Care Licensing and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented on an Incident/Accident/Illness Report and kept in the child's folder.

## ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION FROM CARE

It is our goal to provide children with the least possibility of contracting an infectious disease through contact with infected individuals. Children who have symptoms of contagious infections will be excluded from attending care until symptoms have subsided or the child has been determined not to be contagious by a medical professional and a note from the medical professional is brought to the center. The overall health of each child is checked each morning with parent and/or teacher present. Any bruises, rashes, blisters or other unusual symptoms are noted on the morning health check form. If a child becomes ill while in school or does not appear well enough to participate in usual activities, the child will be removed from the classroom and will be required to be picked up. The child's parent or alternate contact will be notified of the child's condition and asked to pick up the child. An incident/accident form must be filled out by the teacher and signed by parent, teacher and Director. If no one can be reached to take care of the child, she/he will be separated from the other children as much as possible. If a child has been absent due to illness for an extended period of time, or has symptoms of a contagious illness for a period of several days, a note from a health care professional may be requested before the child is able to return to care.

### Keep Me Home If

If your child is showing signs of any of the following symptoms, he/she must stay home until he/she is symptom-free for 24 hours.

- Temperature on thermometer reads 100 F or more under the arm and behavior change or other signs and symptoms.
- Live Lice (child may stay until the end of the school day and must be treated before returning)
- Yellow eyes, yellow skin (jaundice).
- Redness, swelling, draining of eyes (pus)
- Sore throat with difficulty swallowing
- Vomiting or diarrhea more than two occurrences in 24 hrs.
- Unusual rashes or spots
- Behavior changes (irritable or crying) confused, unusually tired
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Abnormal breathing/frequent cough or large amount of nose drainage

### Infectious Diseases

ACTS of Love follows the “Diseases Requiring Exclusion from Child-Care Facilities and Schools” provided by the Texas Department of Health. When it is determined that a child has an infectious disease, the child will not attend school as long as the symptoms are present or until readmitted by a medical professional.

ACTS of Love will inform parents of all suspected or diagnosed infectious, contagious, or communicable diseases occurring within the center by posting a “Health Alert Form”

### Head Lice

ACTS of Love will work together with families to prevent and control the spread of lice. If a child is found to have live lice (through a screening done at school or reported by the parent), an incident/accident report will be completed and the parent will be informed at the end of the school day. It is not required for a child to be excluded for head lice until the end of the school day. The parent must treat the child’s hair before returning to the center. Treatment includes use of a pediculicide (an agent used to destroy lice). If a parent cannot afford lice treatment, the family advocate will assist the parent in contacting the health care provider or insurance benefits to obtain treatment.

### ACCIDENT/ILLNESS/INCIDENT REPORTING

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If an accident/illness/incident occurs, staff observing the situation will fill out an Incident/Illness/Behavior Report. The report must be signed and dated by staff witnessing the incident and by the center director or the person in charge of the center. Parents will be given a copy of the incident report within 48 hours of the incident and the parent’s signature will be obtained. A copy of the report will be kept in the child’s folder while the child attends and for at least 3 months after the child stops attending.

In the event of significant injury or illness, appropriate medical aid will be obtained and staff will attempt to immediately notify the child’s parent/guardian. In the event that a child needs outside medical attention, the center director will do a self-report to Child Care Licensing within 24 hours. In the event that a child was placed at risk (such as being left alone or unsupervised), the center director will immediately contact the child’s parents and will complete a self-report to Child Care Licensing.

## SANITIZING AND DISINFECTION

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ACTS of Love uses a four step method for cleaning and disinfection diaper changing areas and equipment, toys, and surfaces:

**Step 1** - clean with a soap and water (use friction)

**Step 2** - rinse with clean water

**Step 3** - sanitize (Items that are likely to be mouthed, such as teethingers, or surfaces that a child will eat from, such as high chair trays, MUST be rinsed after the sanitizer has been applied. The sanitizer should be on the surface for at least 3 minutes.)

**Step 4** - Allow to air dry

### When to clean each surface/area:

- Food Preparation Surfaces: Clean and sanitize before and after use
- Eating Utensils and Dishes: Clean and sanitize after use
- Tables & High Chair Trays: Clean, sanitize, rinse before and after use
- Countertops: Clean after each use and sanitize at the end of the day
- Mixed Use Tables: Clean and sanitize before each use
- Refrigerator: Clean monthly
- Changing Tables: Clean and sanitize after each use
- Hand washing Sinks & faucets: Clean and sanitize at the end of the day
- Floors: Clean at the end of the day
- Plastic Mouthed Toys: Clean after each use; Clean, sanitize, and rinse at the end of the day
- Pacifiers: Clean after each use; Clean, sanitize, and rinse at the end of the day
- Door and Cabinet Handles: Clean and sanitize at the end of each day
- Carpets and Rugs: Clean at the end of each day
- Machine washable cloth toys: Clean (launder) weekly
- Dress up clothes: Clean (launder) weekly
- Play activity centers: Clean weekly
- Bed Sheets, Blanket, and Pillow Cases: Clean weekly and/or after becoming soiled
- Cribs and Cots: clean and disinfect weekly, after becoming soiled, after a child leaves the program, and before another infant/toddler uses the crib/cot

## PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY

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An alleged victim of child abuse or neglect may be removed from the ACTS of Love site and placed in protective custody. This action may only be taken by a law enforcement officer and/or Child Protective Services caseworker. State law allows a law enforcement officer to take or cause a child to be taken into protective custody without a court order. This can only happen if there is probable cause to believe a child is in danger and would be injured if they could not be taken into custody without first obtaining a court order pursuant to state law. The CPS caseworker must present appropriate identification to staff. Staff will make a copy of the CPS badge/ID and keep in a confidential folder. CPS or law enforcement will notify child's parents that the child is in protective custody. ACTS of Love staff will not inform parents. If CPS requests documents relating to the child or observations/concerns noted from ACTS of Love staff, the center director should be notified and will coordinate the sharing of information. If CPS visits a child in the classroom, the Center Director should be notified.

## REQUIREMENTS REGARDING GANG-FREE ZONES FOR CHILDCARE CENTERS

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Under the Texas Penal Code any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

## VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES

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ACTS of Love has determined that there are no specific vaccines required for employment based on the level of risk the employee presents to the children. Employees are encouraged to follow the CDC's recommended immunizations for adults. Information on vaccine preventable diseases is provided to staff and parents through monthly newsletters and other educational opportunities to encourage participation in recommended vaccines. All staff who work with children in our care should use protective measures to reduce the risk of exposure of diseases. These protective measures include hand washing, use of non-porous gloves, and disinfecting procedures (refer to Hand washing policy, cleaning and Sanitizing Policy, Diaper Changing Policy, and Preventing and Responding to Blood borne Pathogens Policy).

## ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

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Any animal present at the facility will be in good health, show no evidence of carrying any disease, and will be an appropriate companion for the children in the classroom. Dogs or cats must be current with immunizations and maintained on a flea, tick, and worm control program. For dogs and cats that are in the classroom regularly, immunization and health records will be kept on file. All pets will be cared for as recommended by the local health authority (i.e. health department, veterinarian, Humane Society, etc.) following written procedures for their care and maintenance. A statement of health from a local veterinarian, train to assess the health of animals and the spread of disease through direct or indirect means. Living quarters and equipment for animals will be kept clean of waste. Children are not to participate in cleaning. Litter boxes will not be accessible to children. Litter will be disposed of according to local health recommendations. Children will be supervised at all times when handling animals. Animal food supplies will not be accessible to children. Animals will be prohibited from entering food preparation, storage, and eating areas. Staff will wash hands before & after handling animals and when handling animal wastes. Children will wash hands after handling animals. Parents will be notified in writing of the presence of animals in the child care center and classroom and will notify staff of any known allergies to animals. The following animals will not be permitted in the classrooms: chickens, fish, pistachio birds (parrot family), ferrets, lizards, iguanas, turtles, frogs and toads, snakes and ducks. The classroom may consider an exception for reptiles if: (a) the animal is kept behind a glass wall in a tank or container where a child cannot touch the animal or the inside of the tank, and (b) the health department grants authority.

## NUTRITION

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### MEALTIME

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All children enrolled at ACTS of Love will receive meals provided by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Children will be served three meals each day: Breakfast (8:30am), Lunch (11:30am), and Snack (2:30pm). All meals provided will meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. The Dietician is responsible for menu planning and monitoring meal production records.

### FEEDING INFANTS AND TODDLERS

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#### Infant Feeding Instructions

Every child should have an Infant Feeding Form on file. This form should be updated once a month until the child is 12 months old, and again at 15 months and 18 months. Staff will only serve items and amounts that are listed on the child's feeding form.

### Bottles and Sippy Cups

Bottles and sippy cups may be provided by ACTS of Love and must be labeled with the child's first name and last initial. No food other than formula, milk, breast milk or water will be placed in a bottle/sippy cup for infant/toddler feeding unless indicated by a medical professional, in consultation with the parents. All infants unable to sit up will always be held for bottle feeding. Bottle propping is not allowed. Toddlers are not allowed to carry bottles or sippy cups throughout activities. They must sit to drink from a sippy cup or bottle.

### Formula

Formula will be labeled with the child's first name and last initial, and the date which the formula was opened. All formula may be provided by ACTS of Love. Any milk or formula remaining in a bottle or sippy cup 1 hour after it was served will be discarded.

### Baby Food

Foods from jars will be served into separate bowls to protect the remainder of the food from contamination. Foods stored or prepared in jars will be served from a separate dish and spooned for each child. Any leftovers from the serving dish will be thrown out. All baby food may be provided by ACTS of Love

### Table Food

Children 12 months of age and older will follow the menu provided by Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties. They will be allowed and encouraged to feed themselves. Staff will provide support as long as each child needs the assistance. All table food may be provided by Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties.

### Food Handling

Staff must wash hands before handling food and wear gloves while handling food and assisting children during meal times. All leftover food must be discarded immediately after each meal.

### Choking Hazards:

The following foods should be not be served to infants and toddlers:

- Hot dogs
- Whole grapes
- Hard, raw vegetables, uncooked dry fruits such as raisins
- Hard candy
- Whole nuts, beans, seeds or grain kernels (unless cooked and soft), pretzels, chips, peanuts or popcorn
- Marshmallows
- Peanut Butter (no nut products including Almond milk)
- Chunks of dense meat
- Any citrus (juice or fruit) until their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday
- Honey
- Cow's milk and eggs will not be introduced until their 1<sup>st</sup> birthday unless ordered by medical provider.

## FOOD ALLERGIES/DIETARY ACCOMMODATIONS

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ACTS of Love will accommodate a child's diet related to food allergy, intolerance, medical condition, religious or cultural reason, or other identified feeding/nutrition issues. Food restrictions will be documented on the child's Health History form and Emergency Care Plan (if restrictions are for medical reasons). These two forms must be completed and signed by the child's physician and/or religious leader before the child care begin care. Notice of food allergies and restrictions will be posted in the kitchen and classrooms. All staff, substitutes, and volunteers should be made aware of children with allergies and where there information is posted in the classrooms.

## BREASTFEEDING

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ACTS of Love promotes breastfeeding as the preferred, natural and healthy way to nourish babies. We promote breastfeeding, including providing facilities to properly store and handle breast milk and make accommodations, as necessary, for mothers who wish to breastfeed during program hours, including staff.

### Storing Breastmilk

Breast milk may be stored in a bag or bottle and must be labeled with the child's first and last name, dated which it was expressed, and frozen/refrigerated.

### Thawing breast milk

Frozen breast milk will be thawed under running water or in the refrigerator. Frozen milk is held under cool running water and gradually add warmer water until milk is thawed and heated to room temperature. Only warm enough milk to be eaten at each feeding. Human milk will not be heated directly on a stove. It may be placed in a pan of warm (not boiling) water.

Human milk should not be heated in a microwave oven as valuable components will be destroyed if heated greater than 130 degrees F. Previously frozen milk that was thawed can be safely refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Never refreeze thawed milk. Refrigerated milk will be warmed under warm running water for several minutes. Freshly expressed breast milk can be refrigerated safely for up to 3 days. Frozen breast milk may be held frozen for 2 weeks in the freezer.

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

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### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

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ACTS of Love recognizes and values parent's participation in their child's education and offers many ways for the family members to be involved. Each family is encouraged to participate in home visits, center visits, family events, and volunteer opportunities.

### Home Visits

ACTS of Love staff will schedule a home visit with your family at the start of each school year. This is an opportunity for your child's teacher to get an idea of the child's home life so that we can provide the best care for the child while he/she is at school. Throughout the year, we may request home visit notes from your Parents As Teachers Educator. This will help keep our staff up to date on any changes the child may be experiencing at home.

### Parent Meetings (Center Visits)

ACTS of Love teachers will meet with each child's parent(s) once a month for a Center Visit. These visits are usually scheduled at pick-up or drop-off and last about 15 minutes. Center visits provide valuable time for teachers and parents to discuss the child's development, achievements, needs, interests and education goals. During center visits, teachers share each child's progress, encourage parent engagement, and emphasize the parent role as the most important influence on their child's development and the importance of parent/teacher partnerships through frequent communication.

### Visiting and Volunteer Opportunities

ACTS of Love parents are invited to visit and volunteer in the classroom whenever they would like. As volunteers, parents may be asked to play with children, read books, help with set up or cleanup of activities, or assist the teacher with indoor and outdoor classroom activities. Parents of ACTS of Love children are allowed to visit the center and their child's classroom at any time during hours of operation.

### Summer Play Dates

During the summer, ACTS of Love will host various play dates for all families enrolled at ACTS of Love. You and your family are welcome to join us. These events are NOT field trips. They are voluntary and take place outside of regular ACTS of Love hours. During Summer Play Dates, parents will be responsible for transporting and supervising his/her child at all times.

### PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

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Parents will be notified of their child's daily activities on the Infant Daily Sheet. All other classroom and center announcements will be posted at the welcome table and/or in the ACTS of Love Class Tag App. In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified by phone, in accordance with the Emergency Action Plan. If the center should close unexpectedly due to physical or environmental hazards, parents will be notified by phone as soon as possible.

### CHILDCARE LICENSING

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ACTS of Love is a licensed childcare center and receives annual unannounced inspections from Child Care Licensing Representatives. A copy of the most recent inspection report is posted and available to view at all times. As a licensed center, ACTS of Love is required to maintain compliance with the minimum standards put forth by Childcare Licensing. A copy of the minimum standards is kept in the office and is available for all ACTS of Love staff and parents to view at any time. Parents and staff may also access the minimum standards online by visiting the DFPS website.

**Parents may contact the local Childcare Licensing office by phone (512-834-3426) or online at <https://hhs.texas.gov/>**

**Parents may contact the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline by phone (1-800-252-5400) or online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx>**

### COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

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It is our goal to provide a program that safely, loving, and effectively serves teen-parent families in our community. If at any time an ACTS of Love parent or any other member of the community has a complaint about the program, that individual is welcome to voice his/her concerns. The individual should first contact the Director. If the problem concern/complaint is not resolved, the individual should

then contact the ACTS of Love Board of Directors. Your opinion matters and your feedback will help us grow!

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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### EMERGENCY PLANS

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In order to ensure the safety of the children and staff, a plan should be made and reviewed on a regular basis. Fire Drills are practiced once a month and Sever Weather/Lock Down Drills are practiced four times each year. The Emergency Action Plan is posted in each classroom and in the office.

- **In the event of a fire**, all staff, children, volunteers, and visitors will follow the emergency evacuation route and meet at the large tree across the parking lot
- **In the event of a tornado or severe weather**, all staff, children, volunteers, and visitors will follow the emergency evacuation route and take shelter in the women's restroom located in the interior hallway.
- **In the event of a lock down**, all staff, children, volunteers, and visitors will follow the emergency evacuation route and take shelter in the restroom located in the in the mobile infant classroom.
- **In the event that the center should be evacuated immediately**, all staff, children, volunteers, and visitors will relocate to our temporary shelter located at: Norton Moses Lodge, 201 Sonny Dr., Leander, Texas 78641, 512) 710-5336
- **For all other potential emergency situations, please review the Emergency Action Plan.** A copy of the Emergency Action Plan is located in the office and in each classroom.

### FIRS AID KITS

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First Aid Kits are available in each classroom, on the playground, and in the event of an evacuation. First Aid kits are checked monthly to ensure they are properly stocked with adequate supplies.

### MEDICAL EMERGENCY

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In case of a medical emergency, at least one staff member in each classroom has been trained in CPR and First Aid. The center staff has the responsibility of giving immediate medical attention, notifying the child's parents and getting the child to the hospital, if needed.

#### Major Medical Emergency

1. Administer CPR or first aid to stop bleeding, restore breathing and prevent shock.
2. Call 911, if life threatening
3. Notify the person in charge
4. The Center Director will notify parents immediately in a manner as not to cause panic and find out which hospital and physician should be used, if needed. If the child is being transported by EMS, inform the parents to meet you at the hospital. Otherwise, advise the parent of the accident and request that they pick the child up and take to the doctor. If you are unable to reach the parent, information about the preferred hospital or physician is located on the Emergency Information Card in the child's folder. Medical Emergency Authorization must accompany each child to the emergency room from center.
5. Notify the Administrative Office.
6. Stay with the child until parents assume responsibility whether at the center or at the hospital.
7. Do not administer medication except directed by 911 or the physician.

8. If the child does not have insurance, inform the parents, hospital or physician that school accidents are covered by Head Start. The Health Coordinator should be contacted to make any billing arrangements.
9. Fill out an Incident/Illness/Behavior form and submit to the Administrative Office as soon as possible or by the end of the day with parent/caregiver & Director's signature.
10. The Center Director will notify Child Care Licensing.
11. Always ensure the safety and supervision of the other children in the group.

#### Minor Medical Emergency

1. Administer First Aid
2. Notify the center Director about the accident. Center Director will notify the parents no later than the time of pickup. Parents should make the decision whether the child should see a medical professional.
3. Fill out an Incident/Illness/Behavior form and submit to the Administration Office as soon as possible or by the end of the day with parent/caregiver & Director's signatures.
4. The Center Director will notify Day Care Licensing.

#### ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Any changes to ACTS of Love Policies will be made known, in writing, to all staff and parents. Acts of Love is a licensed childcare center in the State of Texas. All activities at ACTS of Love must be in compliance with the State of Texas Childcare Licensing Minimum Standards for a Licensed Childcare Facility.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

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Katie Evans, Director .....	281-733-5447
ACTS of Love .....	512- 528-9948
ACTS Church Leander.....	512-528-9899
Leander Police Department .....	512-528-2800
Leander Fire Department.....	512-528-2848
Childcare Licensing.....	512-834-3426
Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline.....	1-800-252-5400
Poison Control .....	1-800-222-1222
Electric Company, Pedernales Electric .....	512-219-2602
Gas Company, ATOMS Energy .....	1-866-322-8667
Water Company, City of Leander .....	512-259-1142
Waste Disposal, City of Leander .....	512-259-1709
Department of Social Services .....	512-438-4800
Lutheran Trust, Insurance Agent.....	800-200-7257 x 4245

## ACTS OF LOVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER

### 2019-2020 POLICIES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, have fully read and understood the policies enforced by ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center. I agree to abide by all policies to ensure the proper functioning of the center itself and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and families attending ACTS of Love.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date