PARENT HANDBOOK

For

Center for ASD

Helping Special Needs Families

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Welcome

The Center for ASD, also referred to as the Center, is unlike any other facility serving the special needs community in the Johnson County and DFW area. Participants and their families are part of our team, and each of us has an integral part to play. CASD believes in laying a solid foundation for independence, self-advocacy, and happiness. Our vision for success includes an environment with smaller staff to participant ratios to optimize learning and teachable moments. We strive to provide opportunities that teach effective communication, develop coping skills, and build tolerance. This, combined with academics, provides all participants with a healthy balance that CASD believes is a huge factor in the success of our participants. We have a teamwork mentality and you, the family, are a part of that team.

CASD knows that your role is a unique one. You know your participants' needs, skills, medical history, and norms. You have been and continue to be committed to the long-term care and well-being of your participant. This makes you a key player on your participant's team. We want to be partners in their growth. This handbook is meant to assist parents and guardians on your special needs journey, alongside the Center for ASD. This is not a comprehensive or exhaustive set of our rules and guidelines.

Welcome to the Center for ASD!

Our Mission

To deliver lifelong support for the well-being of the special needs community.

Our Vision

A community integrated Center that allows everyone to reach their maximum potential.

Our Values

We Are Safe
We Empower
We Are Community
We Serve with Excellence

Methods of Communication

The Center for ASD believes in proactive and consistent communication with its participants and their families. The methods outlined below are the paths of communication for all who choose to participate in CASD activities. CASD requires the guardians of all participants to download and register for any applicable app to remain engaged.

Contact information

Physical Address

640 NW Tarrant Avenue
Burleson, TX 76028

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 516
Crowley, TX 76036

Phone Number:

(682) 499-6655

Email

Info@CenterForASD.org

All formal communication will be sent through approved organizational email accounts. You can request a list of the most up-to-date emails at any time or find them on the Center for ASD website.

Office Hours

The CASD office is open weekly Monday – Friday from 8:30am – 4:30pm.

The Center for ASD does not follow any school district for scheduled holidays and closures. You may request the calendar of CASD closures for your participant's program(s) by contacting the main office.

Campus Visits

The Center for ASD provides regular tours for visitors who want to learn about our services. If you would like to schedule a tour, email info@centerforasd.org in advance. All visitors, including parents and guardians, are required to check in at the Main Office before entering the Center for ASD for tours or meetings.

Website

https://centerforasd.org.

The website houses program and staff information, event details, community outreach opportunities, registration information, and more.

Brightwheel

This app, available on Android and iOS, is the primary method of communication for participants and their families. Parents/Guardians must have the app set up **prior to the participants' first day**.

Registration information will be provided to the participant's guardian(s) once completed.

The staff of CASD uses Brightwheel daily to send participant updates and family communication. Parents/Guardians can expect to receive one to two pictures (pictures may be enlarged for clearer viewing with a tap) with commentary per participant for every day the participant is at the Center. Parents/Guardians may also send messages to CASD using Brightwheel. Any messages sent will be answered in a timely manner during planning periods. If there is a matter that needs to be addressed urgently, parents and/or guardians should contact the CASD main office.

Remind

CASD uses Remind, an app available for Android and iOS, to send notifications about programs and events. Group access will be granted to parents/guardians once participants have completed the registration process.

Parents/Guardians may view messages under "Classes joined." Announcements and messages will be found within each registered program. Messages within the app look like text messages.

Example of Remind Alert

System Message: "Thrive participants get your RSVPS in!"
Parents/Guardians: Write the response in the text box below and hit send.

Participant Progress

The Center for ASD provides progress updates to parents/guardians of day programs via newsletters. These will include progress on the goals noted on the participants' intake form. If a parent/guardian would like to add or change any goals, they may reach out to the head of their participant's program. If a parent or guardian would like to schedule a meeting about their participant's goals or progress, they may request this by emailing info@centerforasd.org and copying the head of the participant's program.

Tuition

Invoices for private pay are sent to parents/guardians on the 20th of each month, in advance of the upcoming month. Invoices will be sent via email to the email address on file.

For a list of entities that may be contacted for program scholarships, please reach out to the Office Manager.

If your participant receives benefits from the state, that could be used to pay for programs, please notify the Office Manager.

Social Media

The Center for ASD utilizes social media platforms to increase awareness and reach surrounding communities who may need support. Parents and guardians are encouraged to share these posts on

their personal pages.

All images shared on social media are shared with permission from parents/guardians via the photo/media release completed during registration. The Center is responsible for abiding by each release. If a parent/guardian believes images have been shared without consent, they may reach out to the Director of Programs for immediate investigation and correction.

Programs

The Center for ASD provides a variety of programs specifically built with our participants' total care in mind. These programs support the various behavioral and educational needs of the participants and the families who support them. CASD chooses to waive accreditation in the state of Texas so it can provide this level of care without having to follow regulations that would inhibit our ability to fully support our participants.

The Center for ASD offers a re-defined education program for children in grades 1-12 and a contemporary approach to day habilitation and vocational programing for adults. CASD also offers after program care, evening programs for all ages, parent nights, and multiple camps throughout the year.

The XCEL program for participants in grades 1-12 runs from the middle of August – the middle of May. The adult day program runs year-round. For a full list and schedule of all current programs please visit our website or email info@centerforasd.org.

Participant Information

The Center for ASD treats data on all participant information as confidential and actively safeguards all information in its possession to ensure its integrity. CASD will collect personal information that is required to meet federal regulations and comply with government reporting and disclosure requirements. All hard copy participant records will be maintained in a locked, secure area with access limited only to the team members who manage participant information.

Onboarding

Prior to a participant being registered and starting their first program, the CASD team will meet with the potential participant and their parents and/or guardians. CASD will arrange an initial meeting and a visit to determine comfort and compatibility. The team is intentional about learning as much as they can to build a plan that works for every family.

The Center for ASD knows and understands the first visit can be overwhelming. After the initial visit, a member of the team will reach out within five business days to gather feedback and discuss next steps. If the decision is made to move forward, the onboarding process will begin. During this process, information and forms will be collected related to the following areas:

- Participant snapshot
- Medical diagnosis information
- Personal/family information
- Income information
- Communication skills
- Behaviors
- Self-help skills
- Medical release
- HIPAA policy notice and acknowledgement
- Information release
- Media consent and release
- Private transport consent
- Administration of medications
- Programs and financial information
- Brightwheel & Remind registration

During onboarding, parents/guardians will receive a checklist along with the opportunity to review this handbook to ensure all protocols are understood and met. All documentation, including registration in Brightwheel and Remind, must be completed at least 3 (three) days before the participant's registered start date.

If you need assistance to complete the onboarding requirements, please reach out to the Family Liaison at the office number or email.

Updating Information

If there is a change in participant or family information, parents/guardians must notify CASD in writing immediately but no more than three business days after the date of these changes. Any delay in reporting these changes may impact the care the participant receives. Some types of information that should be updated with CASD include:

- Contact information, such as phone number, email address, physical address, or mailing address.
- Medication changes, including seasonal, over the counter, and any other medications taken during our outside of program hours.
- Changes related to behaviors, such as changes in likes or dislikes, new sensitivities or triggers, updated communication or engagement challenges, and presentation of a new behavior
- Participant Snapshot information, outside of the scheduled form updates each semester

Participant/Family Expectations

The Center for ASD provides a safe, secure, comfortable, and flexible learning environment for all participants and their families. Participants can achieve measurable success in this environment with your commitment to the expectations outlined within this section. The Center for ASD maintains a balance of empathy and accountability with all participants, their families, staff, and volunteers.

Attendance

Participants thrive when consistency and structure are balanced with flexibility and care. CASD wants every participant to succeed in its programs and in life, and consistent engagement is a factor in building that success. All participants should arrive on time and attend their registered schedule.

Each program has specific days and times that are outlined when participants are enrolled. If your participant is unable to attend as scheduled, please use Brightwheel or call (682) 499- 6555 to notify the Center of any absences or tardies as soon as possible.

Inconsistent attendance may lead to the dismissal from the program to open a spot for someone else. Reimbursement may not be issued for continuous absences. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent regular attendance, please contact the Director of Programs to set up a time to discuss this.

If a participant is unenrolled from the program, CASD reserves the right to provide an update to the staff and other participants. Participants' confidentiality will be respected, and minimal information will be given to provide closure.

Daily Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

Prior to your first day, the Director of Programs will inform you of when and where to drop off and pick up your participant. Please be aware that some programs have varied times and locations where you are to pick up and drop off your participant.

For the safety of our participants, please follow these procedures when dropping off and picking up your participant(s) at the Center for ASD.

Drop Off

CASD will be open for participants at 8:50 a.m.

When you arrive, please remain in your vehicle. The doors are monitored by staff who will meet your participant and bring them into the building.

If you need to come inside the building, please park in a parking space. Do not pull up to the curb if you are exiting your vehicle.

Pick-Up

Dismissal procedures begin at 2:00 p.m. No participant will be released without a parent or designated guardian present.

When you arrive, please remain in your vehicle. The doors are monitored by staff, and your participant will be assisted to your vehicle.

If you need to come inside the building, please park in a parking space. Do not pull up to the curb if you are exiting your vehicle.

Early or Late Pick-Up

All participants should be picked up on time.

If you need to pick up your participant prior to 2:00 p.m., please notify the head of your participant's program through Brightwheel in advance.

If you are going to be late picking up your participant, please call the Center to let a staff member know. Any day programs participants remaining at the Center after 2:15 p.m. will be charged a $20.00 late pick-up fee and will be considered participants in the After Programs Care (APC) Program for that day.

Participants who have not been picked up by 3:30 p.m. will be charged a fee of $1.00 per minute until the participant is picked up.

Late pick-up and APC Program fees are billed separately on the Monday following the week in which services were provided.

Parent/guardians interested in regular participation in the APC Program should contact their Program Director for enrollment information.

Dress & Grooming

All participants should be appropriately dressed when at the Center for ASD. Please follow the guidelines below for dress code and grooming expectations:

- Shirt fully cover shoulders, chest, and mid-section.
- Shorts or skirts should be of appropriate length.
- No vulgar language or images.
- Be clean and wear clean clothes.
- Wear deodorant daily.

All participants should have an additional set of clean clothes available for wear at the Center. If there is an accident or spill, we will allow participants to change clothes to help them feel comfortable and confident. Soiled clothes will be sent home for laundering, and a fresh set should be sent with the participant the next day.

Lunch/Snacks

Participants should bring lunch and a snack each day. If there are any instructions for their food, such as refrigerating, microwaving, cutting, or unwrapping, please let the head of your participant's program know.

Group Celebrations with Food

If you would like to plan a group celebration, requests must be submitted to the Director of Programs in writing at least one month in advance. The Director of Programs will alert the hosting parent/guardian of any dietary needs and will support staff and participants in scheduling.

No Day Switching

The Center for ASD programs operate within specific days and times to maintain consistency and structure. Adding or changing days limits our ability to maintain proper staff-to-participant ratios and safety standards. Therefore, we cannot accommodate schedule changes or drop-in days for events, trips, or celebrations.

Our programs rotate field trips and special events so all participants can enjoy a variety of experiences on their scheduled days. Participants may attend any celebrations that occur on their regularly scheduled days.

Behaviors

The Center for ASD staff and volunteers strive to meet the needs of each participant. Sometimes participants have an emotional day and need extra support. However, all participants, staff, and volunteers are entitled to a safe environment. The following behaviors will not be permitted:

- Hitting
- Spitting
- Kicking
- Biting
- Theft
- Property Damage
- Vulgar, offensive, or discriminatory language
- High frequency or high intensity behavior that poses a threat to self or others

Behaviors are assessed individually, and staff will attempt to redirect and provide support before progressing to other consequences. If rule-breaking or behaviors outlined above occur, the CASD will typically follow the following guidelines:

- First offense: Parent/guardian notification via Brightwheel and/or phone call
- Second offense: Scheduled parent/guardian conference with CASD staff. This meeting will include action items and expected timelines to implement required changes or support. Failure to complete the action items within the documented time frame may result in dismissal from the program.
- Third offense: Program suspension or expulsion.

Depending on the severity of the situation, CASD retains the right to bypass the guidelines above and move immediately to dismissal. The Center for ASD makes every effort to support your participant throughout these situations. However, The Center must take precautions to ensure safety for all participants and staff.

Health And Wellness

The Center for ASD takes the health and safety of each participant seriously. This section outlines the

measures each team member takes daily to keep all participants safe.

Physical And Emotional Safety

Parents and/or guardians will be contacted immediately if any of the situations below occur. Where needed, CASD also reserves the right to contact local authorities for assistance. This list includes but is not limited to:

- Extreme behavioral issues
- An injury that results in a bruise, bump, or bloodshed
- Injury to your participant
- Injury caused by your participant
- Property destruction
- Elopement
- Seizures or other severe medical issues
- Any sexual situations involving them, including comments, advances, or behavior

If there is any other situation that is deemed as an incident or significant event, the head of your participants program will notify you. If you have any questions, please contact the Director of Programs.

Sick Policy

The Center for ASD is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for all participants, families, volunteers, and staff. Because many individuals we serve may have underlying medical conditions, sensory differences, or difficulty recognizing or communicating symptoms, preventing the spread of illness is a shared responsibility.

Families are expected to keep participants at home whenever they are too ill to safely and comfortably participate in daily activities or when their illness could reasonably place others at risk.

The Center follows applicable Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) licensing requirements and considers current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) when making decisions regarding illness, exclusion, and return to programming. The Center also reserves the right to implement more protective health measures when necessary to safeguard participants, staff, volunteers, and families.

Participants should attend programming only when they are healthy enough to safely and comfortably participate in the full program day, including indoor and outdoor activities, community outings, meals, personal care routines, and transportation, when applicable.

A participant should remain home when:

- The participant is unable to comfortably participate in scheduled activities.
- The participant requires more care or supervision than staff can safely provide without affecting the health, safety, or supervision of others.
- The participant has symptoms of a potentially contagious illness.
- The participant has symptoms of a possible severe illness.

- A healthcare professional has diagnosed the participant with a communicable disease, and the participant has not met the applicable return-to-program requirements.
- The participant has been instructed to remain at home by a healthcare provider, public health authority, or the Center for ASD.

The Center reserves the right to exclude a participant whenever staff reasonably determine that the participant's condition may present a health or safety concern, even when a specific diagnosis has not been made.

Symptoms that require a participant to stay home or be picked up from program include, but are not limited to:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
- Vomiting that exceeds two episodes in 24 hours or that has symptoms of a more severe illness.
- Uncontrollable or abnormal diarrhea.
- Respiratory symptoms such as coughing, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, difficulty breathing, wheezing, chills, or any other symptoms commonly associated with COVID-19, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), or another respiratory illness. This does not include normal instances of seasonal allergies.
- Unexplained rash or skin condition.
- Infection, drainage, or redness of one or both eyes.
- Unexplained open sores in the mouth or on the body.

Parents/guardians must notify the Center immediately when their participant is diagnosed with a communicable, or contagious, disease. Communicable diseases may include, but are not limited to:

- COVID-19
- Influenza
- Respiratory syncytial virus
- Strep throat
- Whooping cough or pertussis
- Hand, foot, and mouth disease
- Chickenpox
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Hepatitis
- Meningitis
- Tuberculosis
- Norovirus
- Ringworm

- Scabies
- Impetigo
- Head lice
- Other illnesses identified by a healthcare provider or public health authority as contagious.

Returning participants must be able to safely and comfortably participate in their complete program schedule without requiring care or supervision that staff cannot safely provide. Unless a different illness-specific requirement applies, a participant may return to programming when:

- The participant has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Vomiting has been resolved for at least 24 hours, and the participant can hold down food and liquids.
- Diarrhea has improved and can be safely managed.
- Respiratory symptoms have been improving overall for at least 24 hours.
- The participant has sufficient energy to participate.
- The participant can safely manage personal care, hygiene, coughing, and secretions with the level of assistance normally provided by the Center.
- The participant does not require one-to-one medical supervision or care beyond what the Center has agreed and is equipped to provide.
- The participant has met all applicable treatment, medical clearance, licensing, and public health requirements.

A participant who returns but is unable to safely or comfortably participate may be sent home.

Emergency Medical Care

The Center will call 911 or seek emergency medical assistance when a participant displays symptoms that may indicate a medical emergency. These symptoms may include, but are not limited to:

- Difficulty breathing
- Blue or gray lips, face, or skin
- A severe allergic reaction
- Chest pain
- Seizure activity that requires emergency intervention
- Loss of consciousness
- Significant confusion or reduced responsiveness
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Signs of severe dehydration
- A sudden or significant decline in the participant’s condition

When emergency medical care is necessary, the Center will contact the participant's parent or guardian as soon as reasonably possible.

Emergency Management

Fire, tornado, and earthquake procedures are posted in all areas. Staff will discuss procedures with all participants on the first day of their program and periodically practice drills throughout the year. Everyone plays an important role when emergencies occur. It is imperative that all situations be taken as seriously as possible for the safety of all participants, staff, volunteers, and guests in the building.

Inclement Weather

The Center for ASD has a plan to ensure participant and staff safety in all weather-related emergencies. In case of a situation occurring during program hours, a message will be sent via Brightwheel and posted on social media accounts.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are allowed on a case-by-case basis, as these devices can become distracting or contribute to behavior. Parents and guardians should contact CASD staff for approval before allowing their participant to bring a cell phone, tablet, or any electronic device to the Center. If any incidents occur because of a participant's electronic device, parents/guardians will be notified and may be asked for the electronic device not to return. The Center for ASD is not responsible for any devices that are lost, stolen, or damaged while on-site, off-site, or during any Center for ASD program, activity, or event.

Playground Rules

Participants must follow these rules on the playground to ensure safety for everyone using the equipment and space:

- Playground Rules:
    - Stay within the fenced boundaries of the playground area unless otherwise instructed by a staff member.
    - Stay on the playground throughout the recess period. No one may enter the building without supervision.
    - No fighting and rough playing.
    - No throwing rocks, wood chips, or objects.
    - Always wear shoes on the playground.
    - Bring all recess equipment and return it to the ball locker. Ensure that no equipment is left on the playground.
    - Participants will be limited to 10 minutes on the playground in the following conditions:
        - Temperatures above 90 degrees
        - Temperatures below 40 degrees
        - Air quality rating of orange or higher
- Slide Rules:

    - Walk up the ladder one step at a time.
    - Wait for the previous individual to get off the slide before going down the slide.
    - Slide down facing forward in a sitting position.
    - Get off immediately upon reaching the bottom.
    - Do not sit on the top rails of the slide, jump off the slide, or walk up the slide.
- Jungle Gym Rules:
    - Climb up the bars using both hands.
    - Do not sit on the top bars, jump off the bars, play tag on the bars, or hang upside down on the bars.

Non-Fraternization

The Center for ASD does not allow inappropriate social interactions between participants, and it does not encourage staff/participant/volunteer relationships. Public displays of affection, including kissing, inappropriate touching, hand holding, sitting on laps, etc., are not allowed at the Center for ASD or any CASD-sponsored events. If observed, parents and/or guardians will be notified.

Weapons

The Center for ASD prohibits all participants, their families, staff, and volunteers from carrying any objects that may be identified as a weapon on its property. This includes, but is not limited to, pocket knives. CASD property is defined as all facilities, vehicles, grounds, and vehicles where CASD employees work and/or where individuals who are receiving CASD services may be present. Violation of this policy may be grounds for immediate, permanent dismissal from any or all CASD programs.

Volunteer Program

CASD highly values its volunteers. Our volunteers give their time and talent to help influence the lives of all participants. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the main office for information on how to apply for a volunteer position. All volunteers go through a thorough application and screening process, as well as a background check, or reference check for those under 18, to ensure the integrity of the CASD programs and for the safety of all CASD participants.

Closing

Thank you for choosing the Center for ASD for your loved one. The Center staff, our volunteers, and community partners value all our participants and their families. We sincerely hope that your participant enjoys and values their experience. If you ever have questions or concerns, CASD staff are happy to help.

We look forward to having you and to serving your family!