



Parent Handbook

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Parent Resource Guide



Mission Statement

Some of the best years in life are the time spent as a child and later in our collegiate years..." As working adults in a fast paced society, we sometimes forget just how precious and fleeting those years are.

IDEA Lab is a comprehensive, community centric program. IDEA Lab dedicates its efforts and resources toward ensuring top-rated caregiving services coupled with a high-quality activity based learning environment tailored for children. IDEA Lab responds to the needs of parents with advanced curriculum, flexible programs, local community involvement and strong business partnerships.

Our open door policy embraces all who desire to provide a better quality of care, preparedness and education for their children. IDEA Lab works to provide first-class caregiving and education by providing a broad range of integrated programs and services and innovative learning approaches.

Philosophy

IDEA Lab is an innovative enrichment environment with a world-class curriculum.

Activities emphasize a world of innovation and stimulation of childhood learning paths including After-School Programming, Summer Camps, Birthday Parties, and Workshops, centered around STEM Curriculum.

Curriculum

Our curriculum includes emergent Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, and is enhanced with enrichment classes. In addition, our learning-inspired curriculum is aimed at total-child development. We realize that every child is different, developing at his or her own pace, each with different interests and distinct likes and dislikes. We respect this individuality and our programs reflect this sensitivity to each child's social/emotional, intellectual and physical needs. We incorporate activities and educational materials that are appropriate for the age and developmental stage of each child.

Our time-tested educational programs incorporate a variety of engaging and enriching activities in all the important developmental areas that will benefit children throughout their school years. This includes social/emotional skills, communication skills and thinking skills. At Idea lab, our educational goal is to have the total-child blossom. We help children learn new skills, build self-confidence and develop social skills.

Communication with Parents

We appreciate the trust that you place in IDEA Lab when you leave your child with us. We want to make that time worry free for you. We want you to be confident that we will contact you if there are any significant events in your child's day. Should a situation arise, we'll call to tell you what happened and how we handled it. At IDEA Lab, you have our assurance that we will always call if anything is amiss, and that if we don't call, everything is running smoothly.

If any policies change within this handbook, you will be made aware via email and receipt of the new handbook.

Enrollment

All Idea Lab Enrollments take place online using the LEXA Registration System. Please contact your Site Director for any questions you might have.

Transportation

Idea Lab Kids will provide transportation for after school services for parents who sign up for this service. Upon registering for the program, parents will have to authorize Idea Lab Kids to pick up their child from school and transport them to our facility.

In the event of an emergency, authorization is also given for transportation to the closest emergency health center, or the one detailed on the student's application for enrollment.

Visitors

An IDEA Lab administrative staff member greets all visitors at the front entrance. Visitors are escorted throughout the building while visiting and/or touring. Please limit your visitations during the week, as we can get very busy during our Summer Camp Program.

Release of Children to Others

We will only release your child to someone, other than yourself, when you have properly authorized us to do so. This may be done at the time of enrollment in your Online Enrollment Application (via LexaClass), where you may list persons who may pick up your child at any time. This may also be done later by written communication with the Campus Coordinator.

In all cases in which you authorize release of your child to a person who has not picked up your child before, and whom we do not know, we will ask the person for photo identification.

Once a person has been approved as an authorized person for pick up, an Idea Lab staff member will bring your child to them.

Sign in and Out Procedures

At IDEA Lab, nothing is more important to us than the safety and security of your children. Please be sure to sign in with your child on the tablet or on the physical sign in and out sheet when you drop off and pick up your child. A staff member or admin can also sign them in with your permission.

Drop off

Please do not walk to the classrooms as students are engaged in activities and will be distracted with others walking into the classrooms. Also, a background check is required for anyone who enters the classroom.

Unauthorized Child pickup

In the event that an unauthorized person attempts to pick-up a child from our campus, the child will be moved to a safe location. We will then contact the custodial parent. Upon management's discretion, the police may also be contacted.

Children not picked up at end of day

If a child has been left at the end of the day, attempts will be made to utilize all the parent's telephone numbers on file. If there is no response, we will call all the emergency telephone numbers in the child's file. If there is still no response, we will call the police or Child Protective Services typically after the first 45 minutes.

Parental Notification

Parents will be notified via email or telephone for any emergencies, illnesses, or disciplinary situations.

Student Suspension and Expulsion

In extreme circumstances, a student may be suspended or expelled from the program.

This will take place after the following procedures have been followed:

- Review of Discipline and Guidance Policy with the parents, and child if necessary
- Review of any incident reports relating to the child's behavior
- Creating a plan of action for the child and center to follow to try and avoid Suspension and Expulsion

In the circumstance where Suspension or Expulsion is required, a refund will not be issued for the program they are signed up for. Every effort will be made to avoid these situations.

Emergency Procedures

Each facility is equipped with a fire and smoke monitoring alarm system. Fire extinguishers are strategically placed throughout the building. Emergency drills (such as fire and tornado) are held on a regular basis, so that the children and staff are familiar with emergency procedures. The staff at IDEA Lab has been trained in safety, first aid and emergency evacuation programs. They will orient your child prior to the first time executing a drill, in order to help alleviate any fear or anxiety that may occur. It is our goal to teach your child what to do during an emergency, so that he or she becomes familiar and comfortable with the procedures.

If a dangerous situation arises, it may be in the children's best interest to go into Lockdown procedures. If the campus goes into Lockdown, you will be notified of the details.

Emergency Evacuation

It is possible that an emergency evacuation may occur due to problems within the facility. If it is determined that the safety of the children is in any way jeopardized, you will be contacted to pick up your child. If your child is moved from the facility during an emergency evacuation, you will be contacted immediately.

Children with limited mobility or who otherwise need assistance in an emergency will be escorted by a staff member to the transportation vehicle. Staff will evacuate with the essential documentation including emergency medical and emergency contact information. Site director will obtain the binder from the facility and bring it along in the event of an emergency. Staff will continue to care for each child until each child is released. Staff and site director will communicate with parents and local authorities to keep in contact with them about emergency and evacuation plans until the parent has come to pick up their child. In transport and at the evacuation site, staff will continue to follow minimum standard rules to ensure the children's health and safety needs are met.

Inclement Weather

IDEA Lab will make every effort possible to be open during inclement weather days; however, safety for your child and our staff members will be the prime consideration for closing the campus. If there is any question whether the campus will be open, please call the main IDEA Lab Campus or OnSite phone number. Information concerning cancellation or a delayed opening, will be emailed to all parents by 6:30am. In the event of severe weather during business hours, we will call you if your child needs to be picked up early. We take every precaution necessary to protect the children and the staff of IDEA lab. Campus closings will be based on the determination of threats to the safety of children and the staff.

Health Records and Immunization Records

If your child attends another full time school, then immunization records are not required to be in their files at IDEA Lab. State law requires that every child have a Certificate of Immunization on file at IDEA Lab OR at your child's full time school. This certificate provides a history of vaccinations against several childhood diseases. If your child has received all of the necessary vaccinations, you can obtain an updated, validated certificate from your physician, or local Health Department. It is imperative that you provide a current copy of this certificate or provide us with information that your child's records are on file with another school, prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Tuberculin testing Requirements

At this time IDEA Lab does not require Tuberculosis testing for children.

Confidentiality of Records

The IDEA Lab staff respects the confidential information of the children in our care. All personal records of children and families in IDEA Lab are kept in the strictest of confidence. Information pertaining to admission, progress, health or disenrollment of a child shall be confidential, unless the parent(s) of the child has given written permission for disclosure.

Illness

The welfare and health of your child are of primary importance. When particular symptoms are noted, such as a fever or unusual changes in personality, this information will be brought to your attention immediately. Of course, if your child appears to be seriously ill, or highly infectious, we will call you (or another person whom you have designated for this purpose) to ask that you pick up your child from school. For the safety of the other children, your child must be picked-up within one hour of your notification. Until you arrive, your child will be made as comfortable as possible in a room where he or she is supervised by an adult, yet separated from other children.

You may not bring your child to school/camp if he or she appears ill and/ or displays the following symptoms:

- a fever of 100 degrees F or higher within the past 24 hours
- vomiting or has intestinal agitation accompanied by diarrhea (may return once the condition has completely subsided for a minimum of 24 hours without medication)
- evidence of a communicable disease, such as the Flu or Covid 19
- an undiagnosed rash (may return with physician's note that rash is not contagious)
- discharge from eyes, ears or profuse colored nasal discharge (may return when discharge is clear or child has been on antibiotics for 24-48 hours, according to physician's instructions)

- unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying or difficulty breathing (may return when symptoms have subsided with medications)

If your child shows any of the above symptoms while at Idea lab, or any other symptoms enumerated in certain states' regulations, you will be asked to pick up your child immediately.

If the child's parents cannot be reached, the contacts provided by the parents will be contacted.

When a child has been exposed to, or diagnosed, with a communicable illness, you are required to immediately notify Idea lab. IDEA Lab will notify the state Department of Health, when necessary, all staff members and all parents and guardians of children in our care. The child's confidentiality will be maintained.

Accidents and Injury

In the event of an accident or injury, our staff will first tend to your child's needs and then summon the Director. The Director will notify you and, if necessary, call the physician or medical facility, as designated in writing by you. In rare situations, IDEA Lab may take additional emergency action, as deemed necessary, to care for your child. When such an action is deemed advisable, staff will contact 911 emergency services and follow the instructions of the emergency personnel. If IDEA Lab personnel are instructed by the emergency medical personnel to transport your child to the nearest medical facility, such action will be taken. In such emergencies, the school will contact you as soon as the situation allows.

Medicine

NO MEDICATIONS OF ANY KIND WILL BE DISPENSED unless a Medical Dispense Authorization form is filled out. Medicine will be dispensed by a properly trained Idea Lab Kids staff member.

Parents must give the medication and the filled out Medical Dispense Authorization Form to the Afterschool Coordinator.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, staff have been trained to follow these procedures:

- Secure the classroom and make sure there are no hazards that will cause further emergency

- Contact the Administrative Staff for assistance with the child who is experiencing a medical emergency, so that they can resume their plan of action for their day/shift

Administrative staff will then begin to assess the emergency and take necessary action such as:

- Contact medical professional, if necessary
- Provide First Aid if necessary
- Contact parents to keep them informed of their child's situation
- Properly fill out an Incident/Illness Form
- Monitor the situation until the child has either recovered, or has left the facility for the day.

Discipline

Discipline is the on-going process of helping children to develop their controls, so that they can manage their own behavior in socially approved and acceptable ways. Idea Lab's discipline techniques are based on respect for the child. We teach self-discipline, as opposed to motivation by fear or punishment. Our discipline policy ensures that there is a reasonable relationship between the inappropriate act and the consequence. The only acceptable forms of discipline at IDEA Lab are positive guidance and redirection. The goals of these discipline techniques:

- Help the child in his or her growth toward self-discipline, while nurturing a healthy self-concept.
- Help children work through a conflict, by helping develop their self-control and assuming responsibility for their own actions.
- Explain limits and consequences in a clear and comprehensible manner.
- Give preschool and school-aged children a reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts.

Only if absolutely necessary will a child be removed from the situation of conflict and placed in an area where he or she can sit for a few moments to regain composure. The teacher will talk to the child about the inappropriate behavior. The child will return to the group when both the staff, and the child, feel it is appropriate. This will not be for a prolonged period of time, nor is it a punishment.

If a child's behavior is dangerous or habitually disruptive, parent contact will be made. If a child's behavior threatens the safety of others or himself, parents may be asked to pick up the child prior to normal pick up time. If habitually threatening or disruptive behavior occurs, the child may be suspended or asked to leave the program.

Staff members are required to sign a copy of the [Idea Lab Discipline and Guidance Policy](#).

Hitting and Biting Policy

Repeated incidents of hitting or biting will not be tolerated. Our objective is to ensure that each campus maintains the highest level of safety within our environment, and that our staff responds appropriately to aggressive behaviors.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is located in the Lobby. We recommend that you check this box periodically for items that may belong to your child. We encourage you to label all of your child's personal belongings.

Emergency Contact

In case of any emergency please contact The IDEA Lab at

Adam Gockley
Program Director
(512) 710-5694

Meals and Snacks

Idea Lab will offer no meals during the Summer Camp Program.

Camp programming offers a small mid-morning snack around 10am. If a snack is not provided from parents, the Idea Lab will offer a snack.

If your child has dietary restrictions, please review our snack menu and provide alternatives, if needed. We are happy to store a small supply of appropriate snacks for your child.

Snack Menu

- Cheez Its
- Goldfish
- Yogurt
- Pretzels
- Animal Crackers
- Applesauce
- Cheese Sticks
- Fresh Fruit
- Juice or Milk

Field Trips

Currently, Idea Lab does not offer field trips.

Staff Certification and Background Checks

Staff will be required to be first aid/CPR certified to work with your children. In addition, all staff is Background Checked and FBI Fingerprinted prior to working shifts on their own.

Water Activities

Children in the Idea Lab Kids program will not participate in any Water activities such as Swimming or Splash Pad play.

Parent Participation in Operations Activities

When invited, parents and guardians can participate with their child in the activities at the operation. Parents must not be left alone with any child within the facility, and supervised at all times by Idea Lab Staff.

Procedures for Discussion Idea Lab Operational Procedures

At any time, parents can request to speak with the Center Director regarding the policies and procedures of the child-care center. This can be done via phone call, email, or in person.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Policy

Idea Lab Kids is primarily an indoor facility. If insect repellent or sunscreen is preferred, it is to be provided by the parent or guardian of the child. Idea Lab Staff will assist with applying when needed.

Idea Lab Kids Breastfeeding Policy

Idea Lab Kids will provide a comfortable place with an adult sized seat in the center, or in a classroom, that will allow a mother to breastfeed her child.

Mothers have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care, however, Idea Lab does not provide care for this age group.

Child Care Licensing Reports

Parents/Guardians have the right to review the most recent Licensing inspection report. It will be posted in the lobby of our facility.

If you would like to review the Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards, you can do so by visiting the following link:

<https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-port-al/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

If you would like to connect with our local Licensing Office, access the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline, or access the DFPS website, our lobby will have a posting of how to do this.

Vision and Hearing Screening Requirements

Idea Lab does not require any Vision and Hearing Screening for participation with our program.

Child Abuse

We follow the state guidelines for any concerns of child abuse or neglect. There are 3 types of child abuse: physical, sexual, and emotional. There are 2 kinds of child neglect: physical and emotional.

Anyone suspecting child abuse is required by law to report it immediately to Children's Protective Services. Report the abuse/neglect to the campus director immediately.
1-800-252-5400

Call our Abuse Hotline toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nationwide.
www.txabusehotline.org

Make your report through our secure web site and you will receive a response within 24 hours.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

The objective of this plan is to reduce the possibility of harm to the children, facility and visitors to the Center in the event of an emergency. Care must be taken to ensure that all occupants are aware of the following basic procedures.

Emergency Preparedness

Monthly fire drills are mandatory

Upon hearing a siren and seeing flashing lights by the exit doors, staff must IMMEDIATELY ask children to stop what they are doing and line up at the primary exit route door, see map.

Remember to take your roll sheet, check the classroom and bathrooms for children in your care. COUNT the children as they leave the room, and have them line up. Check your roll sheet and make sure you have the correct number of children. Always know which children are in enrichment activities. The enrichment teacher is responsible for their safety. Once outside COUNT AGAIN and wait for the office staff to instruct you to reenter the building.

Practice for Emergency Evacuation and Relocation Plans

Each campus will hold a practice fire drill once a month. The children must be able to safely exit the building within three minutes. Children must be counted upon exit and upon arrival at the safe designated area.

Center will practice a severe weather drill at least once every three months. All drills, including the date of the drill, time of the drill, and length of time for the evacuation or relocation to take place will be documented by the Director and Emergency Officer. Emergency evacuation and relocation diagram

Show the following:

- A floor plan of the campus;
- Two exit paths from each room
- The designated location outside of the childcare center where all caregivers and children meet to ensure everyone has exited the childcare center safely; and The designated location inside the childcare center where all caregivers and children take shelter from threatening weather.

DIRECTOR DUTIES DURING EVACUATION

The Center Director is designated to call the appropriate fire / emergency department in case of fire, explosion, toxic fumes, or any other medical or other emergency. The Center Director makes the determination to evacuate the childcare center and make the call from another location in the event of toxic fumes or other chemical release inside the Campus. The Center Director is responsible for securing children's emergency numbers, emergency medical authorizations, and attendance sheets during the emergency. The Center Director must ensure all children in attendance at the time of the emergency are accounted for at the designated safe area.

The Center Director checks hallways and rechecks all rooms behind each class evacuation. Once the room is thoroughly checked, the door is closed.

INDOOR EVACUATION

All indoor evacuations utilize the Gym.

Take attendance and immediately proceed to the Indoor evacuation location as directed by the Center Director or designee. The director will grab the emergency bag with emergency supplies during an evacuation as well as the list of class rolls. Once at the indoor Evacuation location, the Director, in consultation with the Emergency personnel will determine when it is safe to return to the homerooms.

OUTDOOR EVACUATION

Upon direction/instruction of the Child Care Director or designee, immediately evacuate the building upon hearing the building alarm or being notified by Security Personnel. Proceed to the safe haven/assembly area located at the west side of the building. Take attendance and immediately proceed to the Safe Haven as directed by the Center Director or designee. Each classroom takes the emergency bag with emergency supplies during an evacuation as well as the list of class rolls.

Once at the Safe Haven, the Director, in consultation with the Emergency personnel will determine if parents should be notified and/or asked to pick up children. The decision to have parents pick up their children will be made based on expected time out of the Center or the nature of the emergency. In case of emergencies that do not warrant evacuation onto the street (natural disasters [tornadoes, for example], chemical spills, bombings, etc.), proceed to the outside designated area.

In each classroom an evacuations diagram will be posted indicating the following:

- a. Primary and secondary routes
- b. Locations of the assembly areas
- c. Fire Alarm Manual Pull stations
- d. Fire extinguishers
- e. Fire detection and suppression devices
 1. Smoke detectors
 2. Heat detectors
 3. Sprinkler heads
 4. Sprinkler control valve

The Director will assign a staff member/Safety Coordinator to inspect the Center each morning to ensure the following:

- a. All exit doors are unlocked and accessible to Center occupants
- b. All exit lights are working properly
- c. All corridors and doors leading to exits are clear
- d. Fire alarm devices and sprinkler heads are not obstructed
- e. All signs are in place and up to date

In case of emergency or drill, all personnel should leave the building in an orderly manner. Walk, Don't Run. The faculty should search their rooms in the Center, closing all doors before leaving.

Additionally the Director or other assigned personnel will search all areas within the Center and ensure that all occupants have been safely evacuated. The Faculty is instructed to refuse assistance from anyone not previously identified as a support person. This does not include Fire, Police or emergency personnel.

Physically challenged children will be provided with assistance to help them exit the building.

At the assembly area, the faculty shall immediately take a head count of each classroom group to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Head Teachers shall report the final head count to the Director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Command Center.

Parents will not be allowed to remove a child from the custody of the center during the evacuation. Once all children are accounted for parents may be allowed to sign out their children