



## **Family Handbook**

2025

# Table of Contents

<b>WELCOME TO Empower Kidz!</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>GENERAL COMPANY INFORMATION</b>	<b>5</b>
Important Information About Our License-Exempt Status	5
What This Means for Your Family	5
LICENSING AGENCY	6
CLARITY OF PURPOSE	6
COMMUNICATION	6
OUR STAFF	7
LOCATION	7
OPERATING HOURS	7
EMPOWER KIDZ DROP-IN CHILD CARE FAQs	7
AGES OF CHILDREN ACCEPTED	9
HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES	9
CAREGIVER/ CHILD RATIOS	9
RELEASE OF INFORMATION	10
OPEN DOOR POLICY	10
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY	10
<b>REGISTRATION</b>	<b>10</b>
REGISTRATION	10
REQUIRED HEALTH RECORDS	11
IMMUNIZATION RECORDS	11
PHYSICIANS HEALTH STATEMENT	11
MEDICATION	12
ALLERGY EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS	12
DROP-OFF / PICK-UP	
Empower Kidz utilizes the Parent Portal as a convenient contact-less check-in/out option for ease during drop-off and pick-up.	
Drop-Off	12
Pick-Up	14
<b>DROP-IN</b>	<b>15</b>
LOT'S OF FUN PEACE OF MIND!	15
PLAY AREAS	15
DAILY SCHEDULE	15
WHAT YOU SHOULD and SHOULD NOT BRING TO THE CENTER	16
TOILET TRAINING	17
DRESS CODE	17
<b>BILLING AND FEES</b>	<b>17</b>
PAYMENT POLICY	17
FEES	18

HOURLY RATES (LESS THAN 4 HOURS):	18
PRE-PAID PACKAGES	19
MONTHLY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP:	19
PAYMENT OPTIONS	20
LATE PICKUP FEES	20
RATE INCREASES	20
RESERVATIONS	20
RESERVATION CANCELLATION/NO-SHOW FEES	20
<b>FOOD AND NUTRITION</b>	<b>22</b>
SNACKS AND MEALS	
NOTE: Only snacks are being offered during this time due to duration of stay limits of 4 hours or less	22
NURSERY MEALS AND BOTTLES	22
BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS	23
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>24</b>
SAFETY AND SECURITY PRACTICES	24
INCIDENT AND ILLNESS REPORT	25
STRUGGLED & DISCIPLINE REPORT	26
BEHAVIORAL PICK-UP CALLS	27
ILLNESS AND INFECTION CONTROL	27
SICK CALLS	27
EMERGENCIES	28
ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING	28
LIABILITY INSURANCE	29
<b>Parent Acknowledgement of Family Handbook</b>	<b>30</b>
I, _____ (Parent/Guardian), acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Empower Kidz Family Handbook and Rate Sheet.	30

## WELCOME TO Empower Kidz!

Dear Families,

Welcome to Empower Kidz!

At Empower Kidz, our mission is clear: to offer top-notch, flexible playcare, setting a new standard in short-term childcare. We're dedicated to providing an engaging environment for children while offering convenience and peace of mind for parents.

Our philosophy revolves around nurturing each child's potential in a supportive and fun atmosphere. We prioritize safety, cleanliness, and innovation, ensuring that every moment spent at our facility is enriching and worry-free.

### Here are some key values we hold dear:

- **Excellence in Service:** We strive to exceed your expectations with exceptional care.
- **Trust and Reliability:** You can count on us for a safe and dependable environment.
- **Safety and Cleanliness:** We maintain the highest standards to keep your child secure.
- **Innovation and Flexibility:** We adapt to meet your family's evolving needs.
- **Community and Collaboration:** We're committed to fostering connections within our community.
- **Educational Enrichment:** We provide a stimulating learning experience for your child.

Our dedicated staff undergoes rigorous training and background checks to ensure your child's safety and wellbeing.

You can find us conveniently located at **2951 Ranch Road 620 Suite 107, Austin, TX 78738**. Our licensed facility adheres to strict standards set by the Texas Department of Health and Human Service Child Care Licensing.

For more detailed information on licensing and regulations, please visit the HHSC website or contact us directly.  
[https://www.dfps.texas.gov/child\\_care/](https://www.dfps.texas.gov/child_care/)

We encourage you to review our Parent Handbook thoroughly, including the licensing regulations, to ensure we maintain the highest standards of care and safety for your children.

We're excited to embark on this journey with you and your family at Empower Kidz!

Warm regards,

**Jeannique Moore**

*Owner, Empower Kidz*

*jmoore@empowerkidzdropin.com*

## GENERAL COMPANY INFORMATION

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### Important Information About Our License-Exempt Status

Empower Kidz Drop-In is currently operating under a temporary license exemption according to the approved standards presented by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, as defined by TAC §745.117. This allows us to legally offer flexible, short-term childcare during our soft opening season.

### What This Means for Your Family

- Empower Kidz Drop-In is not currently licensed by the state of Texas, but is actively in the application process for licensing.
- You may reserve a session for any day of the week, Monday through Saturday.
- You may have multiple check-ins per day for your child utilizing one of our available care programs

### LICENSING AGENCY

Minimum Standards 746.501(22 & 23)

Empower Kidz still meticulously adheres to the safety, learning, and engagement standards set forth by the Texas Department of Health and Human Service Child Care Licensing. Our commitment to upholding these standards ensures a secure and enriching environment for children of all ages, providing both joy for our young guests and peace of mind for their parents.

For more detailed information regarding Texas Child Care Licensing, you can contact the Texas Department of Health and Human Service Child Care Licensing at 14000 Summit Drive Suite 100, Austin, TX 78728, or by phone at 512-834-3426. Visit the HHSC website for more information at : <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/>

A full printed copy of the licensing regulations/standards can be found in our office or accessed online through the following link: Minimum Standards | Texas Health and Human Services.

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation/minimum-standards>

In light of our pending license application status, it is crucial that both our employees and the families we serve understand and adhere to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards. These regulations and standards are an essential part of our Parent Handbook and should be followed as if they were directly included within. Every parent is responsible for thoroughly reading, understanding, and complying with these regulations, ensuring that together we maintain the highest standards of care and safety for your children and our staff.

### CLARITY OF PURPOSE

#### Mission

Our mission at Empower Kidz is to provide high-quality, flexible playcare, pioneering a trusted brand in short-term childcare. We are committed to delivering a stimulating and enriching experience for children, coupled with a convenient and worry-free service for parents. By focusing on innovation and trust, we ensure each moment at our facility is a valuable play experience for children, giving peace of mind to parents and setting a standard in flexible childcare solutions.

## Philosophy

At Empower Kidz, we believe in nurturing every child's potential through a supportive and engaging environment. Our philosophy centers on providing high-quality, flexible childcare that meets the dynamic needs of modern families. We commit to creating a space where children can explore, learn, and grow in safety and joy, while parents enjoy peace of mind. Our approach combines enriched learning with fun and play, fostering a sense of community and belonging. We value trust, innovation, and adaptability, ensuring that we not only meet but exceed the expectations of the families we serve. Our goal is to empower children to be confident, curious, and happy, while supporting parents in balancing their diverse roles

## COMMUNICATION

At Empower Kidz, our ongoing mission is to ensure a joyful experience for both children and parents alike. We highly value feedback from parents and are committed to promptly addressing any concerns that may arise. Please note that Empower Kidz reserves the right to update or modify its policies and procedures as needed, and we will inform parents of any changes through written notices, email communications, or posted notifications.

Parents are encouraged to communicate any special needs or concerns regarding their child directly with our management team. Should you wish to contact the Director of the center, you can reach them at [director@empowerkidzdropin.com](mailto:director@empowerkidzdropin.com).

## OUR STAFF

Minimum Standards 746.501(28)

At Empower Kidz, our team is dedicated to providing unparalleled care to every child we serve. Each of our caregivers undergoes thorough annual training, ensuring their certification in critical areas such as CPR, First Aid, recognition of child abuse, and communicable diseases. Our staff boasts rich backgrounds in early childhood education, with many holding direct experience in early childhood development programs. To guarantee a safe environment, we conduct comprehensive background checks on all employees through the DFPS, as well as local, state, and FBI databases, and all staff members are advised to adhere to recommended state immunization guidelines. Empower Kidz is committed to creating a safe, loving, and friendly atmosphere where each child is encouraged to learn and grow while playing.

## LOCATION

Empower Kidz is located at **2951 Ranch Road 620 Suite 107, Austin, TX 78738**. Our facility can be conveniently found within The Office at Discovery Point II, offering easy access for families in and around Lake Travis. Positioned to serve the local community with excellence, Empower Kidz provides a welcoming and accessible location for all our guests.

## OPERATING HOURS

Minimum Standards 746.501(1)

### Hours:

- Mon - Th: 9am - 8pm
- Fri: 9am - 10pm
- Sat: 9am - 10pm

Empower Kidz is open for business Monday through Saturday, year-round except for certain holidays and/or designated training days.

## EMPOWER KIDZ DROP-IN CHILD CARE FAQs

### Where do I start?

You will need to register your child(ren) for their time at Empower Kidz. The link to register is located here:

[cust.empowerkidzdropin.com](http://cust.empowerkidzdropin.com)

You will receive a confirmation email and once the registration is complete you will be able to drop off immediately and begin making reservations.

### How do I obtain a membership?

You may purchase a membership on our website to receive benefits and special pricing as well as priority booking.

### After I register, how soon can I drop off?

Immediately. Our registration system does send an automated "review" email and our team will approve your reservation once it is received, but you are able to drop off immediately upon completion of the registration forms. All forms must be complete and updated to check in .

**\*If your child is an infant (6 weeks -18 months) reservations are required** to drop off to the infant room. We are only able to accommodate 4 infants at a time. Obtaining a membership will give you the ability to make reservations further in advance to ensure a space for your infant.

### What should I bring and what should I NOT bring?

If your child is in diapers you will need to bring several diapers and wipes along with a change of clothes. If your child is potty training, be sure to bring extra clothes. When packing breakfast/lunch/dinner for your child, please make sure all the contents are NUT FREE. A cup or water bottle. We sell a variety of water cups and food thermoses. We also serve complimentary snacks; as a last resort lunch and dinner can be ordered at an additional cost.

#### Items to Bring Every Visit:

- Your child's Empower Kidz (required) no-slip socks
  - One pair will be provided at registration- if forgotten, additional pairs may be purchased at drop off as we are a shoe free facility
- A change of clothes for each child, stored in a labeled ziplock bag
- All personal items clearly labeled with your child's name
- All necessary diaper changing supplies, including diapers/pull-ups, creams, powders, etc., labeled with child's name
  - Cloth or reusable diapers will not be permitted
- Shoes for each child to go to our outdoor playground
- Parents are encouraged to provide all snacks and meals, as you know your child's health and dietary needs best, ensuring that all contents are NUT FREE.
- Dress accordingly in comfortable washable clothing
  - We may get messy exploring, playing outside, creating, and crafting, so clothing will not remain spotless
- Emergency epi-pen in original RX box
  - Required paperwork must be filled out at registration
- Pre-filled formula or breast milk in bottles labeled with your child's name and the date

### **Items Not to Bring:**

- Backpacks or bags (with the exception of nursery guests who may leave a diaper bag in a secured cabinet)
- Large comfort items
- Personal toys from home - We have plenty for them to play with!
  - School-age children may bring in homework assignments to work on
  - We do have cubbies to store items at the front reception area and hold no responsibility for items lost or misplaced
- Empower Kidz is a **cell-phone free zone** for children and staff
  - No electronic devices are permitted
- Meals or snacks containing nuts
- Non-emergency over-the-counter or prescription medications

### **Do you provide lunch/dinner?**

Empower Kidz can provide meals, if forgotten, at an additional cost, for lunch and dinner for stays exceeding 4 hours. Please be sure the contents of the meals packed for your child are entirely NUT FREE.

### **Do I have to tell you when I will be back to pick up?**

You do not have to let our staff know when you will be back to pick up. This is the beauty of "drop-in" care.

### **Do you round up to the next hour?**

At Empower Kidz we charge by the minute. After the first hour, we do not round up to the next hour, so you can drop your child(ren) off and not have to watch the clock!

### **What qualifications does your staff have?**

Our entire staff is FBI background checked and fingerprinted. They are also first aid and CPR certified as well as trained to care for children. Our staff training meets the Minimum Standards put in place by the DFPS for full-time daycare in Texas.

### **What are your child/caregiver ratios?**

At Empower Kidz we staff 1:4 in the infant room and between 1:8 and 1:10 on the main floor for ages 18 mos-10 years. This is well under the Texas Child Care Ratio guidelines.

You can view the ratios here: <https://www.daycare.com/texas/>

### **How do I cancel a membership?**

Cancellation requires a 30 days notice to the center. This can be submitted in writing or sent via email to [director@empowerkidzdropin.com](mailto:director@empowerkidzdropin.com)

## **AGES OF CHILDREN ACCEPTED**

At Empower Kidz, we welcome children within the age range of 6 weeks to 10 years old, offering specialized care and age-appropriate educational experiences to ensure their growth and development are nurtured in a supportive environment.

## **HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES**

Empower Kidz is closed on the following statutory holidays:

- New Years Day



- Memorial Day
- Good Friday
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas

## CAREGIVER/ CHILD RATIOS

At Empower Kidz, ensuring the safety and happiness of every child who visits us is our top priority. The number of children we can accommodate at any given time is influenced by several factors, including our facility's size and design, as well as the ratio of caregivers to children as mandated by state regulations. Due to our operation as a drop-in childcare center, predicting our capacity at any moment can be difficult. Therefore, to guarantee that we can provide your child with the attentive and nurturing care they deserve, we kindly request that parents make reservations online in advance.

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION

No records will be released without written consent of the parent or guardians. Except in the event of extreme emergency, when there is evidence of child abuse or neglect, information will be given to authorized individuals at The Department of Human Services (DHS) Licensing Division.

## OPEN DOOR POLICY

Minimum Standards 746.501(b)(1) & Minimum Standards 746.501(21)

We have an open door policy for families. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the child care center and participate in their children's experiences. Parents/guardians are allowed to visit the center without an appointment any time during normal hours of operation but we do ask that it is done in a respectful manner and does not become a distraction for the routine of the day. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the child care center. Parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Please see the director for more details.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Our school does not discriminate against anyone (adult or child, staff or parent) on the basis of sex, age, religion, national origin, race, marital status, physical or mental disability, or veteran status. Our school includes children with special needs and makes accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## REGISTRATION

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### REGISTRATION

First-time visitors must register and enroll prior to play at Empower Kidz. As a licensed facility in Texas, ensuring the safety and well-being of our young guests is our top priority. Therefore, it's mandatory for each child under our care to have a completed Registration Form on file, which includes current health and immunization records or affidavits, emergency transportation details, and contact information. This information undergoes an annual review and update

process, ensuring its accuracy.

Pre-registration can be done online or via the [Parent Portal](#). In-person registration is also available in our lobby at our front-desk.

**Step 1: Familiarize Yourself with the Parent Handbook** – Take a moment to explore our comprehensive Parent Handbook. It serves as a valuable resource, offering insights into our operational procedures, rates, and policies.

**Step 2: Gather Necessary Registration Documents** – As part of the registration process, you will be required to upload your child's medical records. This step is essential for activating your account.

**Step 3: Complete Online Registration** – Once you've assembled all required documents, proceed to fill out the online registration form. Please note that only legal guardians are authorized to submit this form, accessible on our [Parent Portal](#).

**Step 4: Schedule and Attend the Onboarding Call** (*for online registration only*) – Following submission of your registration, please call to schedule an Onboarding Call. During this session, we'll review your account information, address any queries you may have, and activate your account.

**Step 5: Secure Your First Reservation** – Upon completion of the Onboarding Call and activation of your account, you can make your initial reservation.

**PLEASE NOTE:** All families may reserve spots up to 48-hours in advance. Those who have registered for our Empower Kidz membership perks program have the privilege of making advanced reservations at any time, exceeding the 48-hour standard limit. Members receive waitlist priority.

Once you register, your child is eligible for immediate drop-off, pending availability.

All media and topical cream consent is filled out on premise on a separate form.

## REQUIRED HEALTH RECORDS

### IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Empower Kidz chooses to follow the Texas Department of State Health Services requirements for immunization records. During the registration process, parents are required to provide ONE of the following by the date of their FIRST DROP-OFF:

1. A current copy of your **child's immunization record**, including their name and date of birth. If your child is not up to date on immunizations due to medical reasons, a signed letter from their physician explaining the circumstances is necessary, in addition to the immunization record.

OR

2. An official "notarized" **affidavit of exemption** from Immunization for Reasons of Conscience issued by the [Texas Department of State Health Services](#). An original copy of this affidavit is mandatory.

OR

3. For **children aged over 5**, parents can indicate on the registration form that their child's immunization records or exemption affidavit are on file at their school. In this instance, parents need to provide the school's name and contact number. Copies of the records are not required during registration.

## PHYSICIANS HEALTH STATEMENT

At Empower Kidz, we prioritize the health and well-being of each child in attendance. Therefore, it's mandatory for parents to provide ONE of the following during the registration process:

A written **statement of health** from your child's physician, including their name, date of birth, and the date of their most recent well visit examination (within the past year). This statement must be signed by the physician and confirm that the child is free from communicable diseases and fit to participate in a childcare program. If your child's physician requires guidance on the required documentation, you can access and print our "[Statement of Good Health](#)" form from our website for them to complete and sign.

OR

For **children aged over 5**, parents can indicate on the registration form that the child's statement of health is on file at their school. In this case, parents need to provide the name and contact number of the school. Copies of the statement are not required during registration.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that both Immunization records and Health Statements remain current in our records. ***Failure to do so may result in the child being unenrolled until the updated records are provided.***

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

Empower Kidz **does not administer medications**, except in emergency or medically necessary situations only. Approved exceptions are limited to

- EpiPens (or equivalent epinephrine auto-injectors)
- Emergency rescue inhalers
- Prescribed diaper creams.

Any emergency or medically necessary medication must be discussed directly with and handed to a designated staff member at the front desk upon arrival. Medications may not be sent in a child's bag or given directly to classroom staff.

### All approved medications must:

- Be prescribed to the child
- Be provided in the *original pharmacy container*
- Clearly display the child's full name and proper dosage or application instructions

If a child requires more than one approved emergency medication, all items must be placed together in a sealed ziplock bag clearly labeled with the child's name.

**No other medications will be accepted, stored, or administered under any circumstances**, including but not limited to oral medications, over-the-counter products, vitamins, supplements, homeopathic remedies, or "as-needed" medications. If a child requires routine or non-emergency medication, we recommend adjusting care times or making alternate arrangements for that day. **No exceptions may be made by staff or management.**

All approved emergency medications brought into the center will be returned directly to the parent or guardian at pickup..

For safety and liability reasons, **children may not be in possession of any medication at any time**, whether prescription or otherwise. Empower Kidz assumes no responsibility for medications brought into the facility outside of the

approved parameters outlined above.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in denial of care for the day.

## ALLERGY EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Children with significant food allergies or medical conditions necessitating emergency attention must have an [Emergency Action Plan](#) signed by a physician on record with Empower Kidz before admission. In cases where the plan mandates the administration of prescription medication, such as an EpiPen, parents are required to register the medication with the front desk staff upon check-in and check-out for each visit. The medication should bear its original pharmacy label, clearly indicating the child's name and the accurate dosage/application. Entrance to the facility will be denied if emergency medication is not in possession.

## DROP-OFF / PICK-UP

Empower Kidz utilizes the [Parent Portal](#) as a convenient contact-less check-in/out option for ease during drop-off and pick-up.

### Drop-Off

Legal Guardians must present their photo ID to front desk staff. In the event of any technical issues with the computer system, parents must present a photo ID and sign in on a provided sheet.

Upon arrival at Empower Kidz, families will receive a warm welcome from our staff members. Parents or designated drop-off individuals are required to sign in their child(ren) using our [Parent Portal](#) system.

Children should remove their shoes and place them in the cubbies located in the front lobby. Empower Kidz will provide socks for all children.

Once the check-in process is completed, a caregiver will meet you and your child at the secured entrance and accompany your child into the center. We encourage parents or drop-off individuals to spend a few moments with their child in the lobby area before departing. However, for the safety of all children under our care, access beyond the secured entry door is restricted during drop-off times.

### Infant Specific Drop- Off

To help us provide the best and safest environment for infants under 19 months, please review the following information before your infant's visit.

**Please label all items clearly with your child's first and last name. Here's what you'll need to bring:**

- Bottles (pre-measured and ready to feed; include enough for the duration of care)
- Breast milk or formula (labeled with name, date, how many ounces, and time prepared)
- Snacks/Purée (if age-appropriate; label all containers)
- Feeding instructions (timing, allergies, preferences)
- Diapers (at least 1 for every 2 hours of care)

- Wipes
- Diaper cream (if needed; must have a signed authorization form)
- Change of clothes (at least 2 full sets)
- Sleep sack or swaddle (no loose blankets allowed)
- Pacifier (if used, extras recommended)
- Burp cloths
- Bibs
- Teething items (if applicable, sanitized and labeled)
- Any necessary medications (if applicable, must have Medication Authorization Form)

**Labeling Guidelines:** To ensure nothing gets mixed up or misplaced, please follow these labeling guidelines:

**Bottles:** Child's full name + date + time prepared+how many ounces

**Diaper bag:** Child's full name

**Food containers:** Child's full name

**Pacifiers:** Child's full name

**Clothing items:** Child's full name

**Sleep items:** Child's full name

**Tip: Waterproof name labels or permanent markers work best!**

## Infant Frequently Asked Questions

### What if I forget something?

We keep limited backup supplies (diapers, wipes) for emergencies only.

### Can I bring breast milk or frozen milk?

Yes. Please ensure it is labeled with your child's name, date, and time it was expressed. Bring in a cooler bag with ice packs if transporting frozen milk.

### Can my infant sleep with a blanket or stuffed animal?

No. In accordance with safe sleep guidelines, infants sleep in a crib with a firm mattress and a fitted sheet only. Sleep sacks or wearable blankets are permitted.

### How will I know how my infant did during care?

We provide a daily report at pickup, including:

- Diaper changes
- Feedings
- Nap times
- Mood/activities
- Text updates during the day (ask at check-in if available).

### What if my infant has a fever or seems unwell?

We follow strict illness policies. If your infant shows signs of illness, we may not be able to accept them for care that day. See our full Illness Policy in the Family Handbook for details.

### **Pick-Up**

Please follow the check-out procedure for your child at the reception counter kiosk. Ensure you have a photo ID available for verification purposes during pick-up. Kindly wait for one of our staff members to confirm your successful check-out and process any necessary payments.

To prioritize the safety of your child and the group, a staff member will accompany your child to the lobby during pick-up. We kindly request that parents or authorized pick-up individuals refrain from encouraging children to approach the exit before our staff can properly escort them through our security measures.

## DROP-IN

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### LOT'S OF FUN PEACE OF MIND!

**Lot's of Fun:** Dive into excitement at Empower Kidz, where every age group has its own space to play and have a blast! With pizza parties, crafts, movies, and more, there's never a dull moment here.

**Peace of Mind:** Life can be hectic, and finding reliable childcare can be a challenge. Whether you have appointments, need to run errands, or just want some time for yourself, Empower Kidz is here for you. Our licensed facility provides a safe, clean, and trustworthy environment for your children, giving you peace of mind while you take care of your responsibilities.

### PLAY AREAS

#### **TINY TOTS: 6 weeks - 18 months old**

Our cozy nursery is tailored for infants aged 6 weeks to 18 months, providing a tranquil yet playful haven away from the commotion of older children. Reservations are required to ensure personalized care for our youngest guests.

#### **TERRIFIC TODDLERS: 19 months - 3 years old**

Step into our lively toddler haven, designed for children aged 18 to 36 months. Here, little ones can explore, play, and learn in a secure and nurturing environment, free from the distractions of older peers.

#### **SUPER SCHOOLERS: 4-10 years old**

Let your school-aged child unleash their creativity in our Clubhouse Area, where they can engage in imaginative play around our central clubhouse structure. With a plethora of stimulating toys, this space inspires endless exploration and imaginative adventures.

#### **SCHOOL-AGED MEDIA ROOM: 4 - 10 years**

Dive into our Game Room, custom-crafted for school-aged kids. With a ball pit, rock wall, and an exciting array of games, toys, and crafts, it's the ultimate destination for endless fun and discovery.

At Empower Kidz, we prioritize your child's comfort and needs. If it's determined that our current classrooms cannot adequately meet your child's requirements, we'll work with you to find alternative arrangements to ensure their happiness and well-being.

### DAILY SCHEDULE

*Each age group (with the exception of the infant/nursery group) will follow the same general schedule. Infant schedules are based on arrival time and the specific needs of the child as directed by the parents. All times are approximate.*

#### **Monday - Thursday (9:00 am - 8:00 pm)**

Time	Activity
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Welcome & Free Play
9:30 am - 10:15 am	Morning Outdoor Play
10:15 am - 10:45 am	Snack & Story Time

10:45 am - 11:30 am	Guided Exploration Time (ie. Arts, crafts, STEM activities, etc)
11:30 am - 12:15 pm	Free Play
12:15 pm - 1:00 pm	Snack or Lunch (Optional depending on length of stay)
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	Rest /Quiet Activities (ie, fidgets, pipe cleaners, coloring, books, just a little R&R)
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Free Play
3:30 pm - 4:15 pm	Afternoon Outdoor Play
4:15 pm - 6:00 pm	Guided Exploration Time (ie. Arts, crafts, STEM activities, etc)
6:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Snack or Dinner (Optional depending on length of stay)
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Free Play / Wind down activities

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**Friday - Saturday ADD-ON (8:00 pm - 10:00 pm)**

Time	Activity
8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Pajama Play / Movie / Cozy Quiet Time
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Story, Puzzle & Wind Down Activities

**\*No Reservations taken after 8pm on Friday and Saturday**

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## WHAT YOU SHOULD and SHOULD NOT BRING TO THE CENTER

### Items to Bring Every Visit:

- Your child's Empower Kidz no-slip socks - We are a SHOE FREE facility past the main lobby area.
  - One pair will be provided at registration-if forgotten, additional pairs may be purchased at drop-off for \$2
- A change of clothes for each child, stored in a labeled ziplock bag
- All personal items clearly labeled with your child's name
- All necessary diaper changing supplies, including diapers/pull-ups, creams, powders, etc.
  - Cloth or reusable diapers will not be permitted
- Sleep sacks for infants (ages 6 weeks - 18 months).
- Shoes for each walking child.
- Parents are required to provide all snacks and meals, as you know your child's health and dietary needs best, ensuring that all contents are NUT FREE.
- Water Bottle (Labeled with child's name)



- Dress accordingly in comfortable, washable clothing
- Emergency epi-pen in original prescription bottle/box
  - Required paperwork must be filled out at registration
- Pre-filled formula or breast milk bottles labeled with your child's name and the date

### Items Not to Bring:

- Backpacks or bags (with the exception of nursery guests who may leave a diaper bag in a secured cabinet)
- Large comfort items
- Personal toys from home (except for school-age children, who may bring in homework assignments to work on)
  - Personal items are to be stored at the front reception area
- Empower Kidz is a **cell-phone free zone** for children and staff.
  - Cell phones and personal electronic devices will not be permitted beyond the check-in point.
  - These items must remain with your child's personal belongings in their cubby in the reception area.  
(Our front desk staff can assist with communication if needed)
- Meals or snacks containing nuts, gum, or candy
- Non-emergency over-the-counter or prescription medications (*Please see additional guidelines below*)

## TOILET TRAINING

At Empower Kidz, we understand the importance of supporting children during their potty-training journey. We are dedicated to assisting your child during this phase and are committed to providing a positive experience.

Once your child has successfully transitioned to underwear and has moved into the preschool area, they are encouraged to seek assistance from a teacher if needed. Otherwise, they will be granted privacy while using the restroom, empowering them to develop independence in this aspect of their daily routine.

## DRESS CODE

To ensure your child's enjoyment at our center, we suggest dressing them in comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement. As our activities often involve creativity and sometimes messiness, please anticipate that clothing may become soiled despite our staff's efforts to maintain cleanliness.

For safety reasons, small hair accessories, necklaces, or any other choking hazards are not permitted in the infant or toddler areas (for children under 3 years). This precaution is taken to safeguard all children in these areas. Additionally, please note that Empower Kidz staff cannot be held responsible for any lost or damaged items of this nature.

Upon registration, Empower Kidz socks are provided to all children and are mandatory for their safety while at the center. If needed, additional socks can be purchased.

## BILLING AND FEES

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### PAYMENT POLICY

At Empower Kidz, we understand that plans can change, and your time is valuable. That's why after the first hour of care, we offer pay-by-the-minute options! Only pay for the exact time you need, with no need to commit to full additional

hours. Enjoy flexibility and peace of mind while your child enjoys their time with us!

We implement precise billing via the [Parent Portal](#) childcare software for parents to conveniently pay using the Parent App or directly at the front desk. Payment is expected at the time of pick-up for all accounts except prepaid membership accounts, which operate under different “perks” arrangements.

We accept major credit cards including Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and American Express. Please note that we **do not** accept personal checks or cash payments. A convenience fee will be applied for all credit card transactions.

**FEES**

Empower Kidz offers a variety of fee structures and membership options to cater to the diverse needs of our valued members and visitors. Our program is designed to provide flexibility and convenience, ensuring that every family can access our services according to their preferences.

**HOURLY RATES:**

These are standard rates for everyone (members or non-members) so that there is always the freedom of knowing you don’t have to become a member to use the space.

- Great for those traveling from out of town who are in town for an event but aren’t able to or don’t want to bring children to the event

Standard Hourly Rates
<p><b>BASIC:</b> \$16.00 (19 months - 10 years old)</p> <p><b>Sibling Discount:</b> <i>(Applies to Basic Only)</i> Members: 15% off Non-member: 10% off</p> <p><b>NURSERY:</b> \$18.00 (6 weeks - 18 months old)</p>

**Reservation Policy**

- Reservations required 24 hours in advance for Nursery
- For all other age groups, reservations are highly encouraged, but not required
- All families may reserve up to 48 hours in advance
- **Members** may reserve with no time restriction
- **Members** receive waitlist priority
- No-show or same-day cancellation: subject to a fee if not canceled at least 24 hours in advance

**MEMBER-EXCLUSIVE RATES**

Below, we outline the key fee structures and membership perks available:

## Empower Kidz Membership Program

- \$50/month per family
- Billed monthly until canceled (30-day notice required)

### Membership Perks:

- Unlimited advanced booking access
- Waitlist priority
- 15% sibling discount on standard drop-in rates
- Access to Prepaid Packages for greater savings

## PRE-PAID PACKAGES

The more hours you prepay, the greater the discount. Save 10-20% by prepaying for your child's visits.

### Terms:

- Membership required to qualify
- Credit applied at time of purchase
- Credits expire after one year (*based on purchase date*)
- Can be used for any child in the family
- Non-refundable
- Cannot be combined with sibling discounts

## PRE-PAID DOLLARS

TIER	Purchase Value	Package Value	Savings
Tier 1	\$450	\$500	10%
Tier 2	\$680	\$800	15%
Tier 3	\$800	\$1000	20%

## MONTHLY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP:

- Empower Kidz offers a Family Membership Benefit for \$50 a month for those looking to benefit even further from our program.
- Families gain access to exclusive membership perks, including:
  - Prepaid package options for savings towards hourly care.
  - Eligibility for Daily rates for more regular care beyond hourly care.
  - Advanced reservations at any time, exceeding the 48-hour standard limit.
  - Priority scheduling when there is a waitlist for care.

At Empower Kidz, we aim to provide a range of options to accommodate the unique requirements of each family and make your experience with us convenient and enjoyable.

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

Payment will only be taken by credit card only. We accept all major credit cards.  
(3.5% credit card processing fee applied to all transactions)

Payment for regular drop-off care will be made with the front desk upon check out and confirmation of hours under care for your child.

Pre-paid packages or passes may be purchased online or via our Empower Kidz app for eligible members or can be purchased at the front desk.

**Credit Card Storage on File:** One preferred credit card can be digitally stored on file per child/family for more efficient check outs. Your card cannot be inputted manually on our end, but can be easily and safely inputted by parents utilizing our Empower Kidz App. Once saved your card will be visible on your file (showing the last 4 digits only) upon each check out.

## LATE PICKUP FEES

### Additional Pickup Fees:

- **Late discipline pick up:** \$25 per child flat fee
  - Assessed one hour after a discipline pick-up call has been made
- **Late sick child pick-up:** \$25 per child flat fee
  - Assessed one hour after a sick child pick-up call has been made
- **After hours child pick-up:** \$25 per child flat fee
  - Assessed 15 minutes after center closing
    - Monday - Thursday: After 8pm
    - Friday - Saturday: After 10pm

## RATE INCREASES

Rates and membership fees can change at any time.

## RESERVATIONS

Reservations are exclusively handled through our [Parent Portal](#).

All families may reserve spots up to 48-hours in advance. Members have no limit to advanced reservations.

Although not required, we encourage membership to experience additional perks and flexibility while enjoying Empower Kidz. Those who have registered for our Empower Kidz membership perks program have the privilege of making advanced reservations at any time, exceeding the 48-hour standard limit. Members have priority on the waitlist.

To ensure fairness to fellow Empower Kidz guests and our staff, we kindly request accuracy in your reservation times. Please note that cancellations made on the same day as the reservation and no-shows will incur fees.

## RESERVATION CANCELLATION/NO-SHOW FEES

Reservations can be canceled via the Empower Kidz app or by calling the front desk.

A **\$25 cancellation fee** will be charged per child for cancellations made on the same day as the reservation or

for no-shows, regardless of the reason.

- **SAME-DAY CANCELLATION:** Families must cancel or modify their reservation at least 2 hours prior to their scheduled arrival time. This fee helps us staff appropriately and maintain safe classroom ratios.

Any reservation canceled within 2 hours of the scheduled start time will be considered a *same-day cancellation* and will incur a **\$25 Same-Day Cancellation Fee**.

- **NOTE:** If you're running behind schedule but still want to keep your reservation, please reach out to us at 512-758-6860 or email [info@empowerkidzdropin.com](mailto:info@empowerkidzdropin.com). We'll be happy to adjust your reservation time without any penalties.
- **NO-SHOW:** A reservation will be considered a *no-show* if a parent/guardian does not call, text, or update their reservation in the Empower Kidz App **beyond 15 minutes of their scheduled arrival time**. All no-shows will automatically incur the **No-Show Fee** as listed in our current fee schedule.

## FOOD AND NUTRITION

### SNACKS AND MEALS

Parents are responsible for providing all snacks and meals, as you know your child's health and dietary needs best.

Children should bring their own healthy meals stored in labeled containers to maintain freshness and safety. Please include a cooler pack if necessary, as refrigerator space is not offered.

#### Nut-Free Policy

- It's important to note that Empower Kidz is a NUT-FREE facility, and all meals brought from home must be free of any nut products, including nut-based milk products.
- In the event that a home-prepared meal contains nuts, it will be replaced with a nut-free meal for an additional cost at check-out.

#### Forgotten Meal / Snacks Policy

- If any child is present during scheduled meal times and a home-prepared meal is not provided, Empower Kidz offers a **last-resort option:** you may choose a pre-packaged meal from the program for an additional cost that will be added to your child's stay for the day.  
(See *meal ordering guidelines at front desk*)
- If a parent forgets to bring a snack for the scheduled snack times, Empower Kidz offers snacks at no extra charge.

Our center ensures that all meals meet or exceed the guidelines outlined by Family and Protective Services Regulations, covering the four major food groups: dairy, meat, fruits/vegetables, and grains.

Parents of children with documented food allergies, religious dietary restrictions, or any other circumstances that prevent them from consuming all menu items are strongly advised to provide all meals and snacks from home for their child. Additionally, parents must inform the front desk staff of any food limitations EVERY TIME they check in.

## NURSERY MEALS AND BOTTLES

Parents of children under 18 months are required to provide our staff with all necessary milk, formula, breast milk, or food for their child's stay. Detailed written feeding instructions must also be provided as per state regulations. All feeding items, including milk, formula, breast milk, and food, should be clearly labeled with the child's name and contents. Refrigerator space will be available for children staying in the nursery, and an adequate supply of clean and sanitized pre-filled bottles must be provided for all feedings.

Unused portions of breast milk, formula, or food will not be reused if not consumed within one hour after feeding initiation. Used bottles will be returned rinsed but not cleaned or sanitized. Any food items left at the facility, whether opened or not, will be disposed of at the end of the day.

## BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

As an inclusive breastfeeding community, Empower Kidz is pleased to offer a safe and comfortable space for breastfeeding in the infant classroom or any other unoccupied room.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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### SAFETY AND SECURITY PRACTICES

At Empower Kidz, the safety and well-being of the children under our supervision are our utmost priority. We are committed to maintaining a secure environment through careful planning and preventive measures. Our safety policy includes:

- **Continuous Supervision:** No child will ever be left alone or unsupervised. We ensure a minimum of two staff members are present at all times, with additional staff on standby to adhere to state-mandated ratios.
- **Staff Training:** All caregivers undergo comprehensive training in CPR, First Aid, Communicable Diseases, and Child Abuse Recognition.
- **Tuberculosis (TB) Screening and Communicable Illness Awareness**
  - While Empower Kidz does not require employees to undergo tuberculosis (TB) screening as a condition of employment, we strongly encourage all staff to seek appropriate medical care and health evaluations as needed. Employees are expected to monitor their own health and refrain from reporting to work if they are experiencing symptoms of a communicable illness. This helps ensure the safety and well-being of the children in our care, fellow staff members, and families we serve.
- **Background Checks:** Our staff members have passed through FBI, State, Local, and DFPS fingerprint and background checks.
- **Secure Facility Access:** The entrance to our facility is always secured, only permitting entry for drop-off, pick-up, approved tours, or pre-arranged appointments with supervised access.
- **Safety Regulations:** Climbing on furniture or equipment is prohibited, except for designated toys for gross motor play. Fire drills are conducted monthly, and children are always supervised during emergency drills or outdoor activities.

- **Food Safety:** Food prepared for children under 2 years old is appropriately cut into small, manageable pieces. Safety straps are utilized on all equipment requiring them.
- **Secure Exits:** Emergency exterior doors are locked from the outside and equipped with alarms. Initial entry into the facility is only permitted through the main front door.
- **Safe Sleep Practices:** We adhere to nationally recognized safe sleep guidelines for infants under 12 months. Infants who cannot roll over independently are placed on their backs in cribs with firm mattresses and fitted sheets. Swaddling and the use of soft items in cribs are prohibited.
  - All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Empower Kidz Drop In will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS)
  - Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional
  - Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight-fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non full-size cribs
  - For infants who are younger than 12 months old, cribs play yards should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib or play yard include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys and animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices
  - Also, infants must not have their heads, faces or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing
  - Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation
  - Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult
  - If an infant needs extra warmth, use a sleep sack as an alternative to blankets
  - Place only one infant in a crib to sleep
  - Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk
  - If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional
  - Our child care program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers)
  - Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound
  - If an infant can 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
  - Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally
  - Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional

For further information on safe sleep practices for your home, please visit

## GANG FREE ZONE COMMITMENT

Under Texas Penal Code any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.

## INCIDENT AND ILLNESS REPORT

If your child experiences a minor injury while under our care, they will receive immediate attention. Either through our [Parent Portal](#) or upon pick-up, parents will receive an Incident report detailing the location, type, and cause of the injury. Additionally, the report will document any first aid measures that were administered.

For incidents involving more severe accidents or illnesses, our team completes Incident and Illness Reports. One copy of the report will be provided to the parent via the [Parent Portal](#) app, while another will be filed at the center for reference. Additionally, all children have emergency transportation forms on file. In the event that a child requires emergency medical assistance, all relevant records will accompany the child to ensure they receive appropriate care.

Immediate notification will be given to a parent, guardian, or designated emergency contact person in the event of a medical emergency. Parents will first be contacted to determine if they want to pick up and transport the child or if they would prefer our team. If a family member is not available, a staff member will accompany the child to the emergency facility in the emergency vehicle. The staff member will remain with them until a parent or guardian arrives to take over care.

## STRUGGLED & DISCIPLINE REPORT

At our facility, building and maintaining trust and respect among caregivers, children, and their peers is a fundamental aspect of our program. Ensuring children feel safe at all times is essential for them to have a positive experience. Our caregivers actively foster this trust and promote positivity by establishing clear and consistent rules. They also lead by example, modeling appropriate behavior, facilitating peer interactions, and assisting children in enhancing their communication and social skills.

In situations where a child's behavior poses a risk to themselves or others, or disrupts the environment, caregivers may opt to employ state-approved methods of guidance and discipline. If disciplinary measures are utilized, a report will be completed by the caregiver. Parents will receive a copy of this report at pick-up, and a duplicate will be retained at our facility.

Our approach to discipline at Empower Kidz is always tailored to each child, consistent with their level of understanding, and focused on teaching acceptable behavior and self-control. Caregivers are only permitted to use positive methods of discipline that promote self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. When suitable for the child's age and development, caregivers may implement brief supervised separations or time-outs as disciplinary measures, with time-outs not exceeding one minute per year of the child's age.

Discipline must be:

- individualized and consistent for each child;
- appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and



- directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior;
- reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

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

- corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- grabbing or pulling a child;
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- placing a child in a restrictive device for time out;
- withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out that is consistent with 746.2803(4)(D); and
- requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

We maintain a strict policy against any form of harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of children under our care. Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior, a meeting with parents may be necessary before allowing the child to continue attending our center. If a child's behavior consistently disrupts the routine at Empower Kidz or poses a safety risk to others, restrictions may be placed on their future visits to ensure the well-being of all children and caregivers.

## **BEHAVIORAL PICK-UP CALLS**

If a child consistently causes significant disruptions, such as prolonged inconsolable crying lasting more than 30 minutes, or poses a safety risk to other children or staff, they may be temporarily separated from the group. In such cases, a parent/guardian or emergency contact will be contacted for immediate pickup. Late fees will be applied starting one hour after the initial pick-up call is made. For further details on late fees, please refer to page 11 or the fee summary page provided at the end of this document.

## **ILLNESS AND INFECTION CONTROL**

At Empower Kidz, our staff strictly adhere to guidelines for managing communicable diseases, which include protocols for thorough handwashing and disinfection of toys and surfaces. During intake, caregivers conduct a visual health check to identify any pre existing injuries or health concerns. If a child is recovering from a severe illness or injury, a release letter from their physician's office confirming their ability to participate in all activities offered at Empower Kidz is required.

In the event that a child displays symptoms of a communicable disease, they will be promptly isolated from other

children, and a parent or guardian will be notified. Symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellow skin or eyes
- Redness, burning, itching, or pain in the eyes
- Evidence of lice or other parasitic infestations
- Rashes (unless accompanied by a written explanation and release from a doctor)
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Children exhibiting any of these symptoms will not be allowed to visit the center until **24 hours** after the symptoms have subsided without the use of medication.

## SICK CALLS

In the event that a child displays signs of illness or infection, the staff at Empower Kidz will promptly contact a parent/guardian or emergency contact for immediate pick-up. The child will be kept separate from other children until they are collected. Late fees will be applied starting one hour after the initial pick-up call is made. For detailed information on late fees, please consult page 18 or the fee summary page provided at the conclusion of this document.

## EMERGENCIES

### ***In situations where violence is threatened:***

Children will be relocated to the rear of the center, specifically inside the Multipurpose Room (MPR) or at the least in the play spaces where the threat can be kept from accessing children or staff by the locked reception door. The secure door will be kept locked, and both law enforcement and parents will be contacted immediately.

### ***During a fire emergency:***

Monthly fire drills will be conducted and thoroughly reviewed by staff to ensure proper procedure adherence. In the event of a fire, caregivers will promptly evacuate the children to safety, ***specifically to the playground***. In the event that the playground is inaccessible, we will gather in one of the other nearby grassy/ mulched/ tree shaded spots out of the driveway and parking spots. The alternate meeting place will be the ***main lobby of the building*** in the event that we cannot make it to the playground side of the building. Each child will be accounted for and checked off the attendance roster to confirm safe evacuation, and parents will be promptly notified.

### ***In the event of severe weather:***

Children will be moved to the bathrooms- away from windows. The facility will remain operational, and children will be cared for until it is deemed safe for parents to arrive for pick-up. In cases of flooding, parents will be promptly informed, and children will be evacuated from the facility.

### ***For evacuation procedures:***

If evacuation of the building is necessary, staff will lead the children to the playground area as indicated in the posted

evacuation plan, both in the front and rear of the building. If relocation to a sheltered facility becomes necessary, the chiropractic office next door will be utilized as outlined in the evacuation plan. If the entire building is to be evacuated and the playground is unsuitable or unsafe, we will move to higher ground and meet at The Grove Restaurant at the top of the hill.

***In the event of a power failure:***

If our center experiences a power outage that cannot be promptly resolved, parents will be contacted to retrieve their children, and the facility will be closed.

All staff members are fully trained to handle the aforementioned emergency situations. In the event of telephone line failures at our center, staff members may use personal cell phones to contact parents, guardians, or other necessary parties in the event of an emergency.

## **ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING**

Minimum Standards 746.501(23)

In accordance with both Texas state and federal laws, it is mandatory to report any suspected cases of neglect, sexual, or physical abuse. All managers and caregivers at Empower Kidz undergo annual training sessions that comply with state regulations on preventing and addressing abuse and neglect. We strongly encourage parents and guardians to advocate for their children and others in the community by enhancing their awareness of abuse and neglect issues and educating themselves through the numerous free resources available at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us). For immediate assistance or to report suspected cases, individuals can contact the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

## **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

This facility maintains at least the minimum required liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$100,000 for each occurrence of negligence that covers injury to a child while the child is on your premises or in care.



## Parent Acknowledgement of Family Handbook

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian), acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Empower Kidz Family Handbook and Rate Sheet.

☐ I would like to become a **member** at **Empower Kidz** and **unlock exclusive benefits!**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Employee Acknowledgement of Family Handbook**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Employee), acknowledge that I have received a copy  
of the Empower Kidz Family Handbook and Rate Sheet.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_