

**RAINBOW CONNECTION
PARENT'S HANDBOOK
522 Hwy. 37S PO Box 659
Mount Vernon, TX 75457
903.537.4663 903.537.7603 (fax)**

Rainbow Connection Teachers and Staff are honored that you have chosen us to meet your childcare needs. Please read over this handbook and keep it in a safe place for further reference. You must complete all applicable enrollment information before your child can attend Rainbow.

STEPS TO ENROLL:

1. Complete child enrollment forms.
2. Provide up-to-date immunizations records.
3. Provide signature of your child's health professional.
4. Pay enrollment fee (\$25) and annual supply fee (\$30)
5. Pay first week's tuition
6. Receive copy of this parent handbook (sign receipt)
7. Complete Food Program application forms.



HISTORY

Rainbow Preschool began in 1987 with Marilyn Joyce and Janie Craig teaching 3 and 4 year olds from 8-11. Little Ark Daycare was added in 1989 with Tracy Tucker as the director. Tonya Woods became director in 1990 and the current Rainbow Hall opened in February of 1992. Debbie Cannaday served as director from August 2002 through October 2006. Cindy Dunn served from December 2006 to June 2009. Belinda was director from June 2009 until December 2012. Pam Williams became director in December 2012.

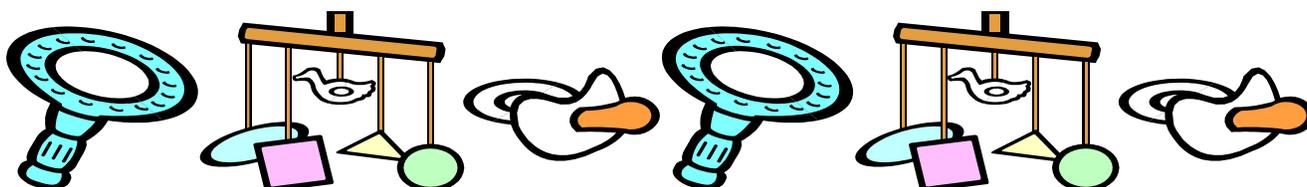
OUR GOAL

Our goal is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with children in age-appropriate ways. Bible truths are taught through experiences and relationships, as well as Bible stories, prayer and weekly chapel service. Teachers prepare weekly lesson plans. All teachers are CPR certified and First-aid trained and complete at least 30 training hours per calendar year.

RAINBOW CONNECTION MISSION STATEMENT:

RAINBOW CONNECTION is a ministry of the **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**. We exist as an extension and out-reach arm of the church. Our mission is to provide for the basic need of childcare and after school care for the children of our community. We choose to do this in a Christian and caring environment. It is our desire to share Christ daily in our programs, curriculum, actions and attitudes.

Our vision is: to provide ministry and service to children birth through elementary school; to minister to up to 82 different students each week; to see the children and families come to growth in Christ; and to see families added to the faithful attendance and service at their own church through the impact our center has had on their lives.



OUR CORE BELIEFS

Trinity - One God Creator and Sustainer of all things. Exists eternally in 3 persons: *Matthew 28:19*

- Father
- Son
- Holy Spirit

Bible - Divinely inspired. Old and New Testaments have authority and are the only written Word of God. Holy Spirit preserves God's Word and by it speaks God's truth to people. *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

Humankind - created in the image of God. Image marred in every part by Adam and Eve's disobedience. We need right relationship with God and can't do so on our own because of sin. *Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7-23*

Jesus Christ - God's eternal Son, born of a virgin, suffered, died and rose from the dead on the 3rd Day. He is now at God the Father's right hand making people right with the Father through faith...
Philippians 2:5-11

Justification - God justifies (makes right) all who trust in Jesus... We then begin to live in holiness (purity) through this faith. *Romans 3:21-26*

Sanctification - God calls us, in a moment of full surrender, to have whole-hearted love for God and others. This does not make us faultless, we must live daily by faith in Christ Jesus, God continues to cleanse us through His grace. *1 John 1:7,9; Ephesians 3:14-21; Matthew 5:17-48*

Assurance - God assures believers that they are children of God. *Romans 8:16*

Return of Christ - the personal return of Christ, bodily resurrection of all believers, final judgment and eternal reward and punishment. *Revelation 22:12-13*



STATEMENT OF SERVICES:

RAINBOW CONNECTION is a year-round program that offers all day care for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Our daily activities and program consists of a flexible schedule that has been created to provide diversity and challenge for children in all age groups. We offer a structured program for children of all ages that includes a year round curriculum. Our activities include school readiness skills, arts and crafts, games, music, outdoor play and story time.

HOURS AND DAYS:

RAINBOW CONNECTION is open from 6:45 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday. We are closed New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day and Christmas Day. If holidays fall on a weekend day the weekday closest to that day will be observed as the holiday. (i.e. Christmas Eve falls on Sunday and Christmas falls on Monday – Rainbow Connection will be closed on Monday and Tuesday) These days will be decided in January of each year and will be posted for your convenience. All holidays will be charged at the regular rate.

SNOW DAYS:

RAINBOW CONNECTION follow the MVIDS schedule for snow days. We will open one hour earlier than the school if the buses run late, and we will close one hour after school closes if it lets out early. Emails will be sent to notify you of these closings. It will also be posted on our Facebook page.

STATE LICENSING

We understand the importance of keeping strict compliance with the state licensing regulations in order to ensure a quality environment for your children. Rainbow Connection complies with the applicable state licensing regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facility, playground, health and safety guidelines, and child/staff ratios. Our latest monitoring visit is always available on our information bulletin board. Our licensing office is located at 1460 19th Street NW, Paris, TX 75460. (903.737.0338).

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Enrollment in our program is open to all families of our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one shall be excluded from any of our programs because of race, color, religion, disability, sex or national origin. Only the child(ren)'s parent or legal guardian may enroll a child(ren) All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend RAINBOW CONNECTION. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell, and work numbers and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must be submitted to the center upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. RAINBOW CONNECTION must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child(ren)'s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this Parent's Handbook.

ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWL:

Parents wishing to enroll their children in the center are encouraged to set up an appointment with the center office to come and tour the center and meet the director and their children's Lead Teacher. (Tours are scheduled at the parent's convenience, however, due to rest time and other challenges in our schedule we encourage tours to be scheduled between 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Monday through Friday). The purpose of the informal tour is to answer any questions you might have concerning our policies and procedures and make you aware of the flexible schedule of your child(ren)'s average day. At this time we will give you a copy of the parent's handbook and any forms necessary to enroll your child(ren) in the center. All children shall be considered continuously enrolled from the time of enrollment until they are formally withdrawn by notifying the director or assistant director. A two-week notice is expected for withdrawing.



DROP-OFF:

Parents must accompany their child(ren) into the RAINBOW CONNECTION area every morning to sign the child(ren) in to the appropriate room. Children will not be permitted in the building prior to opening hours (6:45 AM). New families will be given a code to use enter the building. Children must be signed in by 10 AM to be included in the day's activities. Entry will not be allowed after 10 unless prior arrangements have been made.

PICK-UP:

All children must be picked up and signed out by an adult and/or person approved by the parent and the center. . Anyone, including all parents, who are to be allowed to pick the child up, **must** be listed on the Pick-up Permission form. In an emergency, parents may call the center and give verbal approval of an alternate individual. However, this is strongly discouraged. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto Rainbow Connection property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem. Everyone picking up a child needs to show a picture ID. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the **office** and make changes on this form whenever necessary. This form is re-done annually.

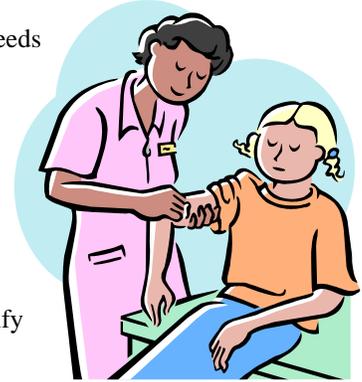
Please do not tell the teacher to add someone to the pickup list – it must be done in the office.

PICK-UP PERMISSION FORM:

All persons authorized to pick a child up from the center must be listed on the PICK-UP PERMISSION FORM. To avoid confusion, it is the responsibility of the parent signing the child into our center to properly fill out all forms. In a custody situation the parent signing the child into our center takes full responsibility to ensure that this is in accordance with their specific court agreement, which must be attached to the enrollment forms if any limitation of rights is suggested by the PICK-UP PERMISSION FORM. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto our property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONSENT FORM:

This form will give us your consent to call an ambulance or your child's doctor if he/she needs emergency care. Please list your child's doctor and the hospital you would prefer. Also, please list phone numbers, addresses, and additional emergency numbers of contacts. It is strongly suggested that all emergency contacts all be listed on your Pick-up Permission form. If your child has any allergies or is on any medications, please include this information on the form as well. Immunization cards need to be presented on or before the first day the child attends the center. A photo copy of these will be kept on file. When your child receives additional immunizations, you are required to bring your immunization card back in for us to take a current photo copy of it so that we can up-date your file. Whenever any information on this card changes – it is your responsibility to notify us and up-date or re-do this form.



EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills are held monthly to acquaint the children with evacuation procedures. Fire drills are held each month and disaster drills are held every three months. In the event of an evacuation, we first evacuate first to our playground; secondly, to the Family Life Center, directly behind our church facility. In the event of a neighborhood evacuation, we will re-locate the children to the First Baptist Church Recreation Center on Kaufman Street, Mount Vernon, Texas, by bus and/or personal vehicles. 903.748.7420 would be the emergency number to use.

INFORMATION CHANGE

Parents are to notify the center of any change in home or work phone numbers and addresses. This is for your safety so that we may reach you in an emergency. . **The center requires that someone listed on the Pick-Up Permission form of each child be available within thirty (30) minutes notice to come and pick up a sick child or a child that RAINBOW CONNECTION has determined needs to go home.** It is required that all changes of phone numbers, places of employment, residence changes or changes in pick-up information be turned into the office immediately. Please give the Director written notice of the change as soon as possible.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS:

All children enrolled must have their immunization records up-to-date or provide an exemption affidavit. The child's immunization record must be provided by the parent and all information must be current. The parent shall also provide proof of this with a form signed by a health care provider. This form will state that the child has received all current, age-appropriate immunizations. Parent's wishing to take a religious exemption must contact the office to find out the proper procedure for providing an affidavit of such a religious opposition. If Rainbow Connection is penalized or fined for non-compliance of immunization cards due to a parent's neglect, that fine will be passed on to the client responsible including an additional \$50 administration fee.

Testing for tuberculosis is not required.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Hearing and vision Screening is required for all students at their fourth birthday. Children receiving their four-year-old shots should also receive this screening from their pediatricians. We have qualified personnel who may conduct these screenings here at Rainbow for \$10 per service. Documented results are required to be kept on record at our facility.

MEDICATION:

All medication to be given to children must be in the original bottle with the instructions clearly printed on it as provided by the doctor's prescription or by the pharmaceutical company. All must be in an up-to-date bottle and not be out-dated. **All prescription medication must have that child's name on the script.** All non-prescription medicine must have a permanent sticker with the child's name and the date the medication was left at the center. A "Permission to give Medication" form needs to be filled out prior to the administration of any medication. **All medicines must be personally handed to the director/asst. director in charge at the time of arrival.** RAINBOW CONNECTION reserves the right not to give medicines if the dosage is questionable or not according to the label. **No medicine is given before 11 AM.**

ALLERGIES:

We must be aware of any food or other known allergies that affect your child. This allows us to alert all of our staff to be on guard of their allergy. We also need to be aware of any Non-Food allergies that can affect your child. You will also need to fill out a "Authorization to give Medication" if your child requires an Epi-pen or other emergency treatment.

ILLNESS AND CONTINUED HEALTH:

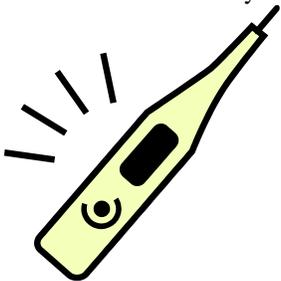
These guidelines are for the welfare of all of our children. In order to provide a safe and healthy we rely on our parents to monitor their children with these guidelines in mind. Outdoor play is essential to your child's development. We feel that if your child is too sick to play outdoors then they are too sick for group care. A child that is ill or has a temperature of 100 degrees or above should be kept at home. All children shall have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior. A child that is too ill to remain in the center shall be supervised and cared for until the child can be cared for elsewhere. The child will be sent home if he/she is running a temperature of over 100.4 degrees, if he/she is vomiting or has diarrhea, or if it is suspected that he/she has a contagious disease. In the event you are called to come pick up an ill child, you must pick your child up within 30 minutes. If a child needs to be sent home and their parents are unreachable, we will call the emergency contacts listed on the Pick-up Permission form. If no one is available by contact after 30 minutes, the overtime rate will apply. The center reserves the right to request the child to see a physician or have a physician's note prior to returning

CRITICAL ILLNESS/INJURY

The following procedure will be followed if this occurs:

1. First aid rendered by the staff as necessary.
2. Contact parent or guardian.
3. Contact emergency contact on enrollment form.
4. Contact child's physician.
5. Contact Child Care Licensing Representative.

In case of extreme emergency, East Texas Medical Center of Mount Vernon EMS is required to come first. When the child has been stabilized, they may then be taken to the medical facility stated on the enrollment form.



RE-ADMISSION CRITERIA

- Head lice-after treatment has begun and all nits removed.
- Impetigo-after treatment with antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Ringworm-after treatment-sores must be kept covered.
- Roto-virus-after child has had one formed stool, vomiting has subsided and child is fever free.
- Pink Eye/conjunctivitis – after child has had eye drops 24 hours
- RSV-after wheezing and coughing have subsided.
- Chickenpox-after all blisters have scabbed over.
- Strep Throat-after medication for 24 hours.
- Thrush-after medication for 24 hours.

Any child discovered having head lice will not be allowed to stay at Rainbow. The child may return after medical treatment; if the child is free of lice. The child should receive a follow-up treatment on the 7th day to prevent re-infestation.

ACCIDENT REPORTS:

Safety is a top priority of RAINBOW CONNECTION. Yet, there are times when a child will have an accident/ incident between your child and another child. If the accident/incident requires “more than a hug and a kiss,” our teachers will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. A copy of this accident report, signed by the teacher in charge at the time of the accident, will be provided to you. We ask that you sign the copy provided to you and return it to the Director's office to confirm that you were notified of your child's injury. This system is aimed at ensuring communication at all levels and can be a very good way to be certain little things are not forgotten in a hasty departure. If your child happens to be injured by another child, we ask you to please respect the child's privacy by not asking us to reveal the name of the child. It not only puts our staff in an awkward situation but could cause a confrontation between our families. We will handle any and all behavior problems in a professional and appropriate way.

CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

RAINBOW CONNECTION complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable regulations pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. We desire to make special accommodations for children who require such accommodations, provided it is within our power and authority to do so. Accommodation can be a specific treatment prescribed by a professional or a parent, or a modification of equipment, or removal of physical barriers. The accommodation shall be recorded in the child's file. Whenever we deem it appropriate to the needs of the child to have a child with special needs in our center, the entire staff must follow the reasonable accommodations we have made for that child. Any questions about the accommodations of the child should be referred to the leadership staff.

DISCIPLINE:

At RAINBOW CONNECTION the staff are trained in using positive reinforcement as a means of discipline that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Our goal is to find solutions and to provide the very best environment for your child. We use the Conscious Discipline approach as well as a time out approach. The time out may not be more minutes than the child is in years.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is best accomplished with the cooperation of teachers, parents and children. Children learn toileting skills through consistent positive encouragement from adults and home and at the center. Toilet Training usually begins around 2 years of age. Each child will begin at a different time and progress at a different rate. The staff will provide documentation of your child's progress each day. The director and staff are available as a resource to answer any questions about your child's toilet training progress at RAINBOW CONNECTION. Several complete changes of clothes should be kept on-center during this process.

**TOYS:**

RAINBOW CONNECTION has a wide variety of toys, games and other resources to offer children during center time. Personal toys are not needed in the center, as they can cause disputes and can be broken or lost. The exception to this is show-and-tell or sleep-toys which should be labeled with the child's name. RAINBOW CONNECTION is not responsible for stolen, lost or broken toys or clothing.

Do not bring toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction.

CLOTHING:

We encourage the children to dress for play and comfort as the seasons change. Because our program is based on play and exploration your child WILL get dirty!! Children will have opportunities for outdoor play twice a day weather permitting. Children will go outside if the temperature is above 45 degrees or below 100 degrees with the wind chill and heat index taken in to consideration. It is required that you bring one set of extra clothes for your child in case of a spill or accident. We have some extra clothes available, but we may not have the item your child needs in his/her size. If your child comes home in center clothes, please wash the clothes and return them within one week. **It is strongly suggested that all clothing**

brought or worn to the center have the child's name on it. Ideal footwear is tennis shoes. Flip-flops and boots are unsafe on the playground equipment. Children who wear flip flops will not be allowed to climb on the play equipment.

DIAPERS:

Please provide diapers, wipes and diaper ointment (if needed) for your non-potty-trained children. All items must be labeled with the child's first and last name. You can bring a package of diapers/Velcro pullups to leave at the center. You will be notified when your child is running low on diapers. If you run out of diapers we will provide them to you automatically for a fee of \$1 per diaper. If you have any questions please check with the office.



SUPPLIES:

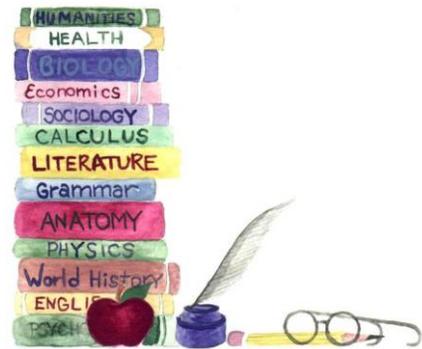
Each child will be provided with all the instructional supplies necessary here at RAINBOW CONNECTION. An annual materials fee of \$30/year will be added each September. Children who enter the center after January will pay an initial supply fee of \$20 upon registering. Children enrolling after May will pay \$10 for supplies through August. Additional personal items which are needed include:

- 1) A small blanket for rest time
- 2) A two inch thick nap mat for those in toddler class and above. If mat gets any kind of tear, licensing requires that the mat be replaced within five days of notification.
- 3) If your child prefers a stuffed animal/doll for resting, please be sure to provide one daily or leave one in the child's cubby at school. No pillows may be used
- 4) Diapers and/or pullups for those not potty trained – only VELCRO pullups may be sent

CURRICULUM:

Children learn by doing. They learn through play, experimentation, exploration, and testing. Learning should be a joyful, natural experience. We have chosen a curriculum based on the developmental needs of the children and to foster individual growth through opportunities for exploration. 90% of brain growth occurs from zero to 5 years old. Each class's lesson plans and your child's class flexible schedule are posted on the parent's board in your child's room. We incorporate current trends in Early Childhood and School Age Education and then structure this curriculum to meet the needs of the majority of the children in the group. Our curriculum, although it will vary depending on age, is guided by the following underlying principals:

- o Children learn through dynamic investigation
- o Children instigate their own learning
- o Learning comes from open-ended experiences
- o Adults are facilitators of children's learning



INFANT CURRICULUM:

We will keep your child on his/her daily schedule as much as possible. During the day, we will do activities with your child to help them develop their social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical skills. These activities may include, playing with toys, art, pretending, enjoying stories and books, discovering sand and water, music, and exploring outdoors.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM:

The preschool curriculum will cover the following areas:

Movement and Coordination

- o Physical attention and relaxation
- o Gross motor skills
- o Eye-hand and eye-foot coordination
- o Group games
- o Creative movement

Autonomy and Social Skills

- o Sense of self and personal responsibility
- o Working in group setting

Work Habits

- o Memory Skills
- o Following directions

- Task persistence and completion
- Language
- Oral language
 - Nursery rhymes, poems, finger plays/songs
 - Emerging literacy skills

- Mathematics
- Patterns and classifications
 - Geometry
 - Measurement
 - Numbers and numbers sense
 - Basic Addition and subtraction
 - Money

- Orientation in time and space
- Vocabulary
 - Measure of time
 - Passage of time (past, present, future)

- Actual and represented space
- Simple maps
- Basic geographical concepts

- Science
- Human, animal, and plant characteristics
 - Physical elements (water, air, and light)
 - Tools

- Music
- Attend to different sounds
 - Imitate and produce sounds
 - Listen and sing
 - Listen and move

- Visual arts
- Attend to visual detail
 - Creating art
 - Looking at and talking about art

DAILY SCHEDULE:

Although your child's schedule varies somewhat day to day, a typical flow of a day's activities is below.

Centers: Activities specific to the weekly theme are presented along with basic activities such as puzzles, table manipulatives, dramatic play, blocks, etc.

Circle Time: Group times are child-centered participative sessions. The planned group activities include reading, music, movement, finger plays, discussion, dramatization, games, and experience stories.

Outdoor time: The playground is an extension of the classroom. Children can participate in an activity of their own choosing. Inclement weather, special events, or celebrations will occasionally affect the scheduling of outdoor time.

Snacks and Meal Time: Staff sits with children while they are eating, encouraging and participating in quiet conversation.

Rest Time: Children are given the opportunity to nap or rest each day.

Specific activities vary based on age, all are posted weekly in each room.

CLASS DIVISIONS AND CLASS SIZE:

We endeavor to have a challenging and appropriate atmosphere for children of all ages. Homeroom class divisions are based upon three issues. These are: the individual developmental needs of each child, state set student to teacher ratios, and the overall enrollment management plan of the center. Children not yet in school are generally divided into classes by age since this usually keeps them with children in their own developmental level and keeps our age-based student to teacher ratios easy to calculate. In most cases it is our target to have children together with the children with whom they will be attending Kindergarten.

STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS:

Student to teacher ratios are based upon guidelines set by STATE law. The following chart shows the maximum ratios that we observe.

Age of children	Number of Students	Per teacher	Group Max
Infants	4	1	10
Lil Tots 8 mo-15 months	5	1	12
Toddlers 15 mo-30 months	9	1	14
2-Year-Olds	11	1	14
3-Year-Olds	15	1	18
4-5's (PK)	13	1	13
School-Age Children	18	1	18

In addition to the teacher to child ratios each group also has a group maximum. We meet or beat these ratios and minimums at all times.

TRANSITION PLAN

Rainbow Connection will create an individualized TRANSITION PLAN to help children are about to transition from one class to the next. This is to help the children become familiar with the new program, teachers and children. It also allows the new teachers to get to know the individual needs of each child prior to the transition of an entire class group or several children together. The plan allows flexibility in order for us to best meet the needs of each child. Each child's individual need is different therefore the TRANSITION PLAN may vary quite a bit from child to child. Your child's teacher or the director will provide more details about transitioning when your child will move to another classroom.



SUMMER CAMP

A summer camp program is offered during the summer months for school-age children. The camp is built around themes and weekly field trips. Activities include various art projects, music, water fun, sports, stories, cooking, theatre and field trips. A separate summer program fee is generally charged to help cover transportation costs and a summer camp T-shirt.

OUR STAFF:

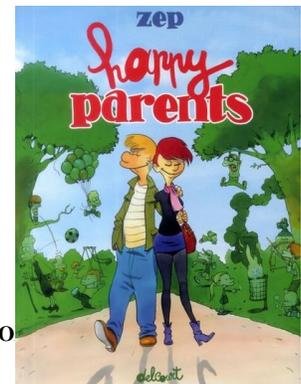
At RAINBOW CONNECTION we strive to provide nurturing, quality care in a highly interactive learning environment. Our friendly qualified staff are an integral part of providing this environment. Our current staff has had

- o A detailed interview and screening process.
- o Approval by the state of STATE through a background analysis that cross references state and federal criminal records as well as child abuse reporting records to insure that each employee has a background that is clear.
- o State CPR and first aid requirements fulfilled
- o 30 hours of yearly training

We believe firmly in training and continued education for all our employees and staff. Each has qualified themselves to work with your children by attending specific training classes and often college level courses to learn about early education and the needs of children. We emphasize training and encourage all of our employees to exceed the state minimum number of clock hours of training required to be qualified to continue to work in an early education setting.

STAFF AND CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS:

RAINBOW CONNECTION considers it inappropriate for parents and clients to solicit our staff to babysit for them in their homes. We are not legally or financially liable for our employees or any of their actions when they are off the clock or no longer employed by RAINBOW CONNECTION. All employees have signed a statement saying that they will not engage in "care for hire" for any current client family of RAINBOW CONNECTION while employed by RAINBOW CONNECTION or six (6) months after their last day of



employment. An employee who violates this policy has violated their employment agreement and is subject to possible termination.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

The success of our program is based on establishing a partnership between our parents and our staff. Open and frequent communication will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We will endeavor to keep you informed concerning your child's day and overall development through several written means.

- Monthly parent newsletters to keep you informed as to the overall program.
- Daily written communication in the form of "Daily Report" forms, "Incident/boo-boo" forms, and classroom memos will be placed in the child's "cubby"
- Parent/Teacher meetings twice each year
- Parents always have the option of requesting specific parent/teacher interaction to aid in the child's development.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

We will endeavor to be communicative during drop-off and pick-up times. However, this is not a good time for extended conversations since the staff members/teachers have responsibilities for all of the children in the group. Furthermore the person caring for your child at the pick-up time may not be the individual who has spent the majority of the day with your child. This is due to the fact that many children spend 10 hours a day at the center and most of our employees only work 6-8 hours. Since children learn best in the morning, we schedule the teachers who are responsible for the majority of the classroom development for the earlier hours and the majority of the day. We suggest that you go to your child's "lead" or "primary" teacher to obtain detailed information on your child's general growth and development. You can call to see how your child's day is going or to speak to your child's teacher for more detailed conversation. The best time to call and speak to your child's teacher is during naptime. There is always a member of management available for you to talk to in person or on the phone. You may also e-mail us through our web center <rainbow@fumcmv.org>



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

We encourage all parents and or guardians to be involved in the activities. We believe that parental participation is key to any successful child care program. Children should be raised by parents. At RAINBOW CONNECTION, we strive to fill the gap created during early separation and educational opportunities and when parents are not available. We welcome parental visits. We have an open door policy that allows parents access to the center during operating hours. We have enclosed a sample list of some of the opportunities for involvement in our center. Parents are in no way limited to the involvement listed below. Any parent wishing to be involved in another area is strongly encouraged to contact the RAINBOW CONNECTION office with their suggestion.

1. Parent Meetings (Usually 2-3 times per year)
2. Fall Open House
3. 2 individual conferences/year
4. Programs and Special activities
5. Special parent's involvement activities such as THANKSGIVING FEAST
6. Party Day Volunteer
7. Come and eat lunch with your child
8. Classroom Volunteer
9. Send special treats for snack or meals (please notify the teacher a day or two in advance)
10. Help with center Fund Raiser
11. Participation in a parent's group
12. Reverse Field trips (When we bring a "field trip" type activity to our property)

We also expect parental involvement in discipline and behavior intervention as outlined in these policies.

POLICY FOR PARENTS WHO CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL EVENTS:

In the event that a parent feels like they would like to be more involved in the center but cannot due to their work schedule, or due to other conflicts, we will help them find a project or area which they can do on their own time. A member of the leadership staff will meet with the parent to find their area of interest. We will offer suggestions to them based on their interests and time.

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special days for children. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at RAINBOW CONNECTION, please make early arrangements with your child's teacher. Hard or chewy candy and balloons are not permitted because they pose a choking risk. A healthy snack served during the 2 PM snack time is appreciated.

**VISITING THE CENTER:**

You are welcome to visit your child at the center at any time. We do ask that you check in with the office before going to your child's room. It is the responsibility of each employee to make sure any visitor for a child or employee has checked in with the office. If you are coming to eat lunch with your child, please let us know in advance. Persons not listed on the "Pick-Up Permission" form will not be allowed to visit your child. In a custody situation, please note that the same procedure will be followed as listed in the Pick-Up section. Parents are encouraged to pre-arrange opportunities to share lunch with their child or visit the class.

CLASSIFICATIONS:

Due to strict licensing guidelines and safety issues we require that all individuals on our property be categorized as one of the following:

- 1) A scheduled employee during the regular course of their work day
- 2) A Child who is in our care (all paperwork has been filled-out)
- 3) Parents or others during the course of regular drop-off or pick-up
- 4) Delivery personnel – From a regular or expected company delivering items to the center (should be in eye sight of an employee at all times and arriving at an expected time)
- 5) Volunteers – Anyone who is helping with a class party or in any other capacity
- 6) An Intruder – Action will be taken by the staff to notify the proper authorities

VOLUNTEERS:

Any adult wishing volunteer at our center must go through our screening process. (Does not include the parent volunteers for parties/special events.) Anyone visiting or volunteering for more than the scheduled events must go through a screening process. Our screening process includes, but is not limited to, 1) a signed statement indicating whether or not they have had a conviction of any law in any state, or any record of founded child or dependent abuse in any state; 2) a signed statement indicating whether or not they have a communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety or well-being of the children; 3) undergoing a fingerprinting and background check 4) a signed statement regarding child abuse 5) going through New Teacher Orientation. Any "visitor" who spends extended periods of time in the center will be considered a volunteer and be required to go through the screening and training listed above.

INTRUDERS:

The safety of the children is our first concern. Although we have an open door policy and welcome parents to visit their children we also have a commitment to the parents of the other children in the program. Since we cannot attest to the background of anyone that has not gone through our screening process we also cannot allow parents to spend extended periods of time in our facility without requiring them to fulfill certain screening and training requirements. These are set by state law and our policies. Any individual who does not submit to our safety policies concerning "Visitors" and "Volunteers" must be considered an intruder and steps will be taken according to the "Intruder" portion of our "Safety and Evacuation" policies.

MEALS AND SNACKS:

Our meal and snack service consists of a breakfast, a hot lunch, and a PM snack. All food served will be nutritious and healthy. Each child will be encouraged to eat what is prepared and to try new items as introduced. Please alert our staff of any food allergies or food restrictions as we want to accommodate and respect individual preferences. Beginning Jan. 1, no outside food may be brought in for breakfast, lunch, or snacks. Food brought in for a party or lunch must be commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen that has had a health inspection. Food may be bought to the Rainbow kitchen for preparation by a staff member.

Rainbow does participate in a food program. All children must have a current form on file or pay and additional \$25/week of food services. These forms must be updated yearly. Parents will be notified when the forms need to be updated.

FOOD FOR INFANTS AND CRAWLERS:

Parents must provide formula for children in the Infant and Lil Tot/Toddler rooms. All bottles are required to have a sticker with the child's name. Please be certain to inform staff in the classroom the type of formula your child is using, and any other facts regarding diet. Do not bring open baby food jars - Licensing requirements restrict us from serving prepared baby food from previously opened jars. Any unused baby food will be sent home or thrown away each evening. Breast milk must be handled in a manner consistent with universal precautions. Please clearly identify all breast milk.

BREASTFEEDING

Rainbow Connection welcomes mothers who choose to breastfeed. We have a private room available if you want to breastfeed at the facility or we can store frozen/fresh breast milk in our kitchen and make it available for the infant room as needed.

BRINGING FOOD FROM HOME:

Breakfast and lunch should not be brought from home without prior approval. The center will provide these meals for the children. To ensure that the children are eating safe food, the following guidelines will be met. 1) Food may only be brought from home if a specific need warrants it and arrangements have been made in advance with the management. 2) This food is considered a supplement to what we serve and should meet nutritional guidelines. 3) Perishable food brought from home should be contained so as to avoid contamination. 4) Prepackaged snacks/commercially prepared food may be brought from home for birthdays and parties that do not meet nutritional guidelines. (Please notify the child's teacher prior to bringing special treats.)

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

We play outside year round so children should wear weather-appropriate clothes. Please label all clothing. Children who are not allowed outside for any reason due to health or illnesses are probably not well enough to come to school. Due to staff scheduling and state requirements, we may not have adequate personnel to care properly for your child while their class is outside. Summer activities include water play. All preschool children will likely play in the water sprinklers one day per week during the summer months.



All water activities are supervised by school staff. Water play may be cancelled if it rains. Swimsuits, flip-flops and sunscreen are appropriate on water play days. Be sure to send a towel and extra clothes on those days.

PORTRAITS AND PICTURES:

We offer school pictures three times a year, in the spring, fall, and Christmas. You will receive proofs before purchasing. In addition we may take pictures of the children playing or for use on their cubbies or for use with a project or we may need pictures of children for promotional use. We also include articles in the church bulletin and monthly newsletter. There is a "Photo Release form with your paperwork giving us permission to take your child's picture or include them in short video footage.

WEEKLY TUITION FEES/LATE FEES/NO SHOW ON BUS

It is our philosophy that clients are paying for the spot their child will take in our center. This is not based upon attendance but rather on a set weekly or monthly fee that is due regardless of the attendance habits of the child who has the spot. Tuition fees are due on Monday before the child stays for the week. CCS payments for the month are due on the 10th of the month. There is a \$30 penalty for late payment. Fees not paid by the end of the month may result in the child not being allowed to return. There will be a \$25 fee on a returned check. Please make checks payable to Rainbow Connection. Payments may be made to the director or placed in the blue box on the director's door.

Please notify the office if your child will not be riding the bus from the elementary no later than 2 PM. Rainbow should be notified by 2 PM if a child leaves early from the elementary or sick. A \$10 fee will be charged for children who do not show up to ride the bus without notifying Rainbow before 2 PM.

A \$10 fee will be charged for children picked up between 6:01 and 6:10 PM. A \$25 fee will be charged from 6:11-6:30. If parents have not called or picked up child by 6:30, the sheriff's office will be contacted.

VACATION/SICK LEAVE

Families who are enrolled in the full time child care program year round and pay tuition fees on time will accrue one week (five days) of vacation/sick leave at the end of each year's anniversary. The parent must request this and clear it with the office in advance. This does not apply to CCS/CPS participants.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS

We operate a bus to and from the public school. If a child is not at the proper meeting place within ten minutes of dismissal of school, the bus driver will let the school know and leave with the other children. A \$10 fee will be charged the parent. Prior notification by 2 PM is required if a child is not riding the bus after school.

The bus is also used for field trips throughout the year. Our drivers have a CDL and all children will wear seat belts. Children under the age of 8 or shorter than 4'9" must be secured in booster seats.



RECIPTS AND STATEMENTS:

Receipts are available upon request. Annual statements for tax and accounting purposes are available upon request for all accounts with a zero balance.

STATE DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE

The Director will notify Child Protective Services or the local law enforcement officials by telephone when it appears that a child is being seriously neglected or abused away from the school.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES/LICENSING

Parents are encouraged to be involved with our program. You may review our state's licensing standards upon request. You may reach our local state licensing office in Paris at 903.737.0338. Please report any suspected child abuse at the DFPS abuse hot line at 1-800-252-5400. Our most recent licensing inspection report may be viewed on the bulletin board by the office. Parents will be notified of any changes in policy and will sign a form indicating they received notice of the change in policy.

VACATIONS, ABSENCES AND LEAVING THE CENTER:

Vacations and illnesses will be charged at the regular weekly rate. We request that all absences be reported to the RAINBOW CONNECTION office prior to or the day of the absence. We require a two week written notice prior to your child leaving the center or a change in your child's contract. Fees for two weeks will be added if a two week written notice is not given prior to your child leaving the center. Failure to notify the center will cause all fees to continue until written notification is given. When notification is finally given, two additional weeks will be added. The center reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of a child according to our "Discipline Policy." The center also reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of any child whose parent and or guardian has become a problem at the center or who has developed and un-cooperative, aggressive, dissatisfied, or angry demeanor towards the center, its policies or its staff.

QUIET TIME:

It is our philosophy that children under 5 years of age need adequate quiet time and or rest, as a part of their daily routine. Since all the children are constantly engaged in stimulating activity, we require that everyone rest on mats after lunch. Realizing each child's rest needs are different, we try to offer alternative ways of resting by providing soft music, stories, etc. for those who choose not to sleep. Infants' individual schedules will determine when they nap. According to "American Baby" the following chart is a guideline as to the sleep needs of children under 15 years of age:

Age	Suggested Hours of Sleep	Number of Naps Suggested
One Month	15.50 hours	3
Three Months	15.00 hours	3
Six Months	14.25 hours	2
Nine Months	14.00 hours	2
One Year	13.75 hours	2
Eighteen Months	13.50 hours	1
Two Years	13.00 hours	1
Three Years	12.00 hours	1
Four Years	11.50 hours	0-1
Five to Nine Years	10-11 hours	0
Ten to Fifteen Years	9-10 hours	0

We believe that children need a balance of activities that include large motor and active play as well as structured quiet time. Our program includes a quiet time for all children Kindergarten and younger. All children from 1 year of age through pre-K will receive a quiet time each day for a specified length of time. This will be established by their flexible schedule posted in that respective classroom.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY:

The State of STATE requires that RAINBOW CONNECTION and all members of child care institutions be on the lookout for, and report to the State and appropriate authorities any and all suspected cases of abuse to a child.

At RAINBOW CONNECTION our center and staff are mandatory reporters of Child Abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to the Child Protective Services for investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. It is advised that clients make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or other visible injury to minimize suspicion of possible child abuse or endangerment.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY:

Parents are responsible for their child's transportation to the center and for arranging their own car pools. RAINBOW CONNECTION will provide transportation for school aged children to and from school at the locations that this service is offered. RAINBOW CONNECTION will provide transportation for field trips as the opportunities arise. Parents will be notified about field trips in advance and written permission will be obtained. The center complies with all State laws that pertain to motor vehicles as well as transporting children who are enrolled in a licensed child care center

GANG FREE ZONE

We have been designated a gang free zone. This means that 1000 feet around our location must be free of any gang-related activity. This designation will serve to deter certain types of criminal activity where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties under the law.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

RAINBOW CONNECTION complies with the minimum insurance coverage as suggested by our independent agent. For more information concerning policies and liability see management.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Our goal is to work with all parents to establish a good working relationship between the parent and Rainbow Connection. Should you have any concern about the care of your child, please feel free to discuss it with the director or assistant director. We will try to resolve any issue in the best interest of the child as soon as possible. If you are still concerned after meeting with the director, you may put your complaint in writing and it will be given to the president of the Rainbow board. At that time, the board president may request a meeting with the parent and the director to try and resolve the issue. If still not resolved, the parent can request a hearing with the Rainbow board.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In case of fire or upon notification that requires us to evacuate, our students will be taken to the Family Life Center, located directly behind the First United Methodist Church, 522 Hwy 37 S, Mount Vernon. We will remain at the FLC until we are notified it is safe to return. In the event that we are unable to return, we will call and request that you pick up your child at the FLC.

In case of chemical spill or other hazard that would require us to leave the immediate area, we will transport the children to the Recreational Outreach Center of the First Baptist Church of Mount Vernon, located at 319 S Kaufman. Their phone number is 903-537-2322. If we are on lock down, you will not be allowed into the building until we are notified it is safe for the children. If possible, we will bring all the students to the Family Life Center and we will only use the front entrance of the FLC for parent pick up.

We are informing you ahead of our emergency process so that you can plan accordingly without making a call. It is important that parents do not call the office and tie up the phone as we will need to leave the phone clear for emergency personnel instructions. Our plan is to contact the parents as soon as we have clear instructions and information to tell you. We do not anticipate these events will occur. However, in the event something should occur, we want to be prepared to provide the quickest and safest plan to evacuate your children. The emergency cell phone number is 903-748-7420 (the director's number). PLEASE follow the instructions stated above and do not call this number unless you are notifying us that someone other than the people listed on your child's paperwork will be picking up your child during that specific emergency situation. We will need to leave the phone line open for instructions from medical and professional personnel.

RECOGNITION AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

To maintain an ongoing safe environment for all children, Rainbow has made available additional information involving responsibilities and procedures for reporting child maltreatment. This includes physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. With this purpose, we will now provide annual training on this subject to all employees and any interested families; and make many resources available which can offer valuable assistance for reporting abuse and the recognition and prevention of such neglect and abuse. This community resource listing is not exhaustive; but can be a useful tool for keeping our children safe. These resources are both preventative and educational in nature; whether it be warning signs of a victim or to increase employee and parent awareness of prevention techniques. If you or someone you know is a victim of abuse or neglect, please contact the director for more information/help.

Websites

www.childabusetexas.org

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (dfps.state.tx.us)

Prevention and Early Intervention (dfps.state.tx.us)

What does child abuse really look like? (dfps.state.tx.us "it's up to you")

What is neglect? (dfps.state.tx.us "it's up to you")

Emergencies and Hotlines

Immediate emergencies dial 911

Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 1-800-252-5400

Texas Runaway Hotline 1-888-580-HELP

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE

Baby Moses Hotline 1-877-904-SAVE

Texas Poison Center Network 1-800-222-1222

Texas Dept. of State Health Services Substance Abuse Hotline 1-877-9-NO-DRUG

Prevention of Child Maltreatment:

Texas Council on Family Violence 1-512-794-1133

Child Help USA 1-800-4-A-CHILD

Kids in Cars 1-636-390-8268

National Safety Council 1-630-285-1121

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children 1-800-THE-LOST

Prevent Child Abuse Texas 1-512-250-8438

DFPS HOTLINE 800.252.5400

Many other resources are listed as RESOURCE LINKS at dfps.state.tx.us including Disabilities, Parenting, Special Education and Legal Issues.

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES:

RAINBOW CONNECTION reserves the right to edit or adapt the policies in this handbook as the needs arise. The center will make all changes and additions available at the time these changes are made. Clients and customers will be notified of these changes through the normal written communication system of the center at the time they are made effective.

