



AFTER SCHOOL Care
always SERVING CHILDREN

2014 - 2015

Parent Handbook

“The Alliance for Women and Children provides quality programs to empower all women and children by educating and assisting women to be health conscious and self-sufficient, and providing a nurturing and safe environment for school-aged children.”

After School Care Mission Statement

The Alliance After-School Care mission is to reveal the value of each child by providing a safe and positive environment that guides children on their journey to discovering their unique potential while supporting their basic learning needs

Alliance After School Care (ASC) Sites

ASC operates a total of 17 sites in four school districts, serving children in pre-k thru 5th grade. The A.I.S.D. schools that participate in the program are: Austin, Bassetti, Bonham, Bowie, Jackson, Johnston, Lee, Long, Ortiz, Reagan, Taylor, Thomas, Ward and Woodson. Alliance After-School Care also operates at Buffalo Gap Elementary in Jim Ned C.I.S.D., Merkel Elementary in M.I.S.D, and Clyde Intermediate in C.I.S.D.

Children must attend After-School Care at the school where they are enrolled, except for Woodson, our Headstart location, where we also receive children from Locust, and Clyde Elementary where children are bussed to Clyde Intermediate.

Licensing Regulations

ASC centers are licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. ASC staff are committed to strictly adhering to the childcare licensing laws set forth by the Department of Family & Protective Services in the Minimum Standard Rules. The Minimum Standards are a product of contributions from many people and groups and thus reflect what the citizens of Texas consider reasonable and minimum. A copy of minimum standards can be found online, at each school location, or the Alliance for Women & Children office.

ASC reviews each of the bulletins and notices issued by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission regarding unsafe children’s products and sees that there are no unsafe children’s products in use or accessible to children in the child-care center.

Criminal activity is strictly prohibited to any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center which is a gang-free zone, in which criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty under the Texas Penal Code.

Hours of Operation

The hours of operation are from the school release time, including early release days, to 6:00 p.m. ASC follows the school calendar. For example, when school is closed for Thanksgiving, ASC will also be closed. If school is closed/delayed due to inclement weather, ASC will also be closed/delayed. Please listen to local radio and television stations for closure information.

ASC also offers some holiday and in-service camps at our facility at 1350 N. 10th – camp hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Alliance for Women & Children business hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Alliance ASC is not set up to provide part time or daily drop in care.

Registration

Enrollment forms must be completed and received by **12:00 p.m.** (noon) on the day that care is to begin. An enrollment fee per school year, of \$25.00 for the first child and no more than \$50.00 for 2 or more children, along with the monthly fee must be paid prior to the child’s first day of care. If enrolling after the 15th of the month, the first month’s fee will be prorated at one half the monthly fees.

Enrollment fees are non-refundable.

****CCS clients must provide proof of being approved for CCS before receiving CCS benefits through the Alliance. CCS clients are not required to pay an enrollment fee.**

Enrollment Information

Accurate and up to date information is crucial on each child’s enrollment form. Please contact the Alliance for Women & Children offices **immediately** should enrollment form information change such as: home phone number or address, work location and phone number, or designated pick-up person(s). Often times, instances arise where parents or guardians need to be contacted concerning their child and their safety. The primary Parent/Guardian must provide the parent password in order to change or add information on the enrollment form. This can be done online or by calling the Alliance office.

Media/Photo Permission

The Director will often take pictures at the schools, camps and events for Newsletters and posting on Facebook. On occasion, Alliance will film or photograph children for the website or promotional material. Your child's likeness will not be used unless you have given us permission on his/her enrollment form.

Waiting Lists

The office will start a waiting list once ASC has reached maximum capacity at a particular site. As spots become available, we will proceed down the list on a first-come, first-served basis. If your child is withdrawn for any reason from a site with a waiting list, and you wish to re-enroll, your name will be added to the bottom of the waiting list.

Playground

Our outdoor playground is public school property. Therefore, the outdoor play equipment may not meet licensing standards.

Outline of Organization

Counselor – Provides direct care to children in the program. Supervises children at all times while appropriately engaging, providing a safe environment, and disciplining as necessary in compliance with Alliance and Child Care Licensing standards

On-Site Director - Provides direct care to children in the program. Responsible for on-site activity, adhering to schedule, child safety, and ensuring excellence of site. Responsible to maintain positive communication with parents and guardians regarding child safety and other issues. Responsible for distributing all parent communication materials as directed by Site Coordinator.

Site Coordinator – Provides staff communication, coordination, evaluation, and support to assigned schools.

Assistant Director- Assists the ASC Director in maintaining the vision of the ASC Program. Supports the ASC Director in Planning and Organizing the ASC Program. Builds relationships with school staff and parents.

Director - Responsible for program direction, staff leadership and program and financial management. Direct responsibility or overseeing supervision, scheduling and staff compliance issues for all ASC Programs Staff.

Schedule

Below is the ASC Daily Schedule. Although it may vary slightly by school, your child's day will follow this schedule.

Sign-in: 3:00 – 3:10
Snack: 3:10 – 3:30
Homework Time: -3:30 – 4:00
Enrichment Time: 4:00 – 4:45
Playground/Gym: 4:45 – 5:30
Choice of Indoor Activity 5:30 – 6:00
- Board Games, Drawing, and Reading

Snack

A healthy snack and beverage will be provided every afternoon to all of the children enrolled with ASC. Please note on your child's enrollment form any food allergies that he/she has. If a child chooses not to work on homework, or does not have homework, alternate activities of a similar nature to homework will be allowed, such as reading.

Homework

ASC will provide an opportunity for the children to do their homework for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. While our staff will support the homework process they are not responsible for the completion or correctness of homework.

Enrichment

Alliance offers several enrichment programs throughout the year. We are fortunate to have partnerships with local organizations such as Abilene Public Library, Abilene Martial Arts, For the Love of Nature and the Abilene Zoo to name a few. This gives us the opportunity to provide access to programs that children might not otherwise have access to.

Additional Programs

Alliance After School Care puts on two major programs each year. In October is our Fall Fest. This a fun festival experience at the Alliance Office Building. There are games, costume contests, a haunted hallway, and lots of surprises. In the Spring is our Alliance Best Dance Crew contest. Each school selects a song and choreographs a dance. The Best Dance Crew is selected each night and awarded a trophy that is kept at the winner's school.

Parent Participation

Parents authorized to pick-up their children from ASC are welcome to visit the program during operating hours and are encouraged to participate in any special events/parties that are scheduled. We ask that you notify the on-site director of your presence.

Staff Pick-up

Each day the staff will go to the classroom to pick up **ONLY** the kindergarten children enrolled in the program. All other ASC children are responsible for getting themselves to the ASC site in a timely manner. Children will be signed in once they enter the designated ASC area. Alliance After School Care staff are not responsible for ASC children that are not signed in.

Parent/Guardian Sign In/Sign Out Policy

There is a sign in/sign out sheet at each site. The parent or authorized pick up person **must personally sign each child out on a daily basis**. Each pick up person must know the password in order to pick up the child. If the pick-up person does not know the password, a photo I.D. is required and the enrolling person may be called to verify who is authorized to pick up the child. We do also ask that you be prepared to show your I.D. frequently at the beginning of the year, or if you are new, as our staff begin to familiarize themselves with you. Older siblings are allowed to pick up younger siblings if they are in high school, have a school ID, and are listed on the enrollment form.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

ASC will not discriminate based on race, religion, sex or national origin. If you have a child who is considered a special needs child, we will use our discretion to determine whether or not to allow enrollment. Prior to enrollment, we may ask you to discuss the child's needs in order to determine our ability to appropriately care for the child. Our program is only equipped to handle children who are able to toilet themselves. We will try our very best to accommodate your child in every way. We reserve the right to withdraw a child with special needs if we feel that we cannot provide adequate care for the child. The parents/guardians will be contacted to discuss various options.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwelcomed or unsolicited verbal, physical or sexual conduct. This type of conduct will not be tolerated. The Alliance for Women & Children expects all staff, parents/guardians, family members, and children to show respect at all times and will not tolerate the use of profanity, threats or intimidation. The Alliance for Women & Children is committed to protecting the rights and dignity of each individual it serves and of every ASC employee.

Absence Policy

If your child is going to be absent from ASC please call the Alliance offices at 677-5321 or submit the absence notice online **BEFORE 12:00 noon**. This ensures the staff will know of your child's absence. If you have not notified the Alliance office of your child's absence, the ASC staff at the site will follow the following steps to ensure that your child is safe:

1. Check with the school secretary to see if the child was absent or was picked up early
2. Call parent/guardian, and then call the emergency pick up list

Locust Headstart and Clyde Elementary

These are currently the only two schools that bus children to an ASC site. Locust students are bussed to Woodson and Clyde Elementary students are bussed to Clyde Intermediate. Students are bussed on AISD and CISD busses. Parents at Locust are expected to send a change of clothes in case of accidents which will be kept at the Woodson site. Your child(ren) must be potty trained in order to attend ASC.

Staffing

Each site will have at least one person trained in CPR/First Aid at all times. All ASC staff must have 8 hours of pre-service training and receive a minimum of 15 additional hours of training related to childcare each year. On-Site Directors have a minimum of 30 hours of training and 6 months of experience before they are put into that position. This is a requirement set forth

by the Department of Family & Protective Services. Staff ratios are set by Licensing at 1 staff per 26 students, however, Alliance ASC maintains an average of 1 staff per 15 students. In small schools, all children K-5th grade are kept together for the majority of the afternoon. In larger schools, children are generally split K-2nd and 3rd – 5th depending on the numbers in each grade level. The safety of the children as well as Licensing regulations are always considered when combining groups of children.

Payment/Billing

Payments are due on or before the first day of every month. Fees can be paid by direct draft from bank account, cash, check, money order, or online through PayPal.

Payment will be drafted from checking or savings on the 4th business day of the month.

If you are not enrolled in the draft program the primary parent/guardian listed on the enrollment form is responsible for paying fees on or before the first day of the month. Payments can be mailed into the Alliance for Women & Children at 1350 N. 10th 79601 or can be dropped off any time at this address as well. Office hours are 8:30 – 5:00 Monday – Friday – however – there is a drop slot in the front door if this is not convenient. **A 10% late fee will be added on the 5th of the month.** If payment is not received by the 1st of the following month, and no actions have been taken to relieve the balance, care will be suspended for two days.

The ASC monthly fee can be prorated by half if your child is enrolled after the 15th of the month.

ASC encourages Direct Drafting from your checking account. **Post-dated checks are not an acceptable form of payment.** Online payment is available by going to AllianceForWomenAndChildren.org. At this time ,we also do **not** accept payments by credit card at the Alliance Office.

*CCS clients must pay co-pay amounts in advance of services rendered.

The Alliance reserves the right to report CCS Clients to CCS for non-payment as well as CCS Clients who are not scanning their CCS cards. CCS clients who fail to scan their CCS cards consistently may be withdrawn from the Alliance After-School Care Program.

The Alliance for Women & Children reserves the right to change the after-school rates as needed. Parents will be notified in writing of the new rates.

Withdrawal Policy

To withdraw your child from the program, you must call the main office or complete paperwork at the Alliance for Women & Children. Verbal or written withdrawal at the site will not be accepted. A parent may withdraw his/her child(ren) at any time. Withdrawal by the Alliance for Women & Children may also occur due to repeated behavior problems with a child, harassment towards our staff by the parent, or non-payment. If your child is withdrawn on or before the 15th of the month, ASC will reimburse you a portion of your monthly payment. There will be no reimbursement for withdrawals made after the 15th of the month. If your child is withdrawn three times for non-payment, your child may be **permanently** withdrawn from the program for the remainder of the school year.

Direct Draft

If you are having your monthly fee drafted from your bank account, you must call Alliance for Women and Children in order to stop a bank draft. This must be done at least **10 business days before the draft is scheduled.** The Alliance is not responsible for any late fees or overdraft amounts that occur from the result of a draft. Payment will be drafted from checking or savings on the 4th business day of the month.

Financial Situations

Financial assistance and payment plans are available to those who qualify. For more information, please call (325)677-5321 or come by the Alliance main office at 1350 N. 10th St.. The Alliance for Women and Children is committed to providing a positive, nurturing after-school experience at a reasonable price.

Late Pick-up Fees & Procedure

If a child remains at the ASC site after 6:00 p.m., there will be a late fee of \$1.00 for every minute thereafter. This fee will be added to your bill and you must pay at the Alliance for Women & Children office. Every parent who has a child enrolled in ASC is subject to a late fee even if they are on financial aid, CCS, or scholarship.

We are NOT licensed to keep children after 6:00 p.m. Late pick-ups could result in ASC losing their license with the state. If

you have three late pick-ups, your child(ren) may be withdrawn from the program. If a child is not picked up by 6:30 p.m., local law enforcement will be contacted.

Returned Checks

A returned check for insufficient funds will be regarded as a non-payment. A returned check fee of \$25.00 will be added to your account.

Personal Belongings and Alliance or School Property

The Alliance for Women & Children is not responsible for lost or stolen items from the site. It is recommended that toys, games, and any other personal belongings are to be left in the children's back packs. Electronics are not allowed. Parents may be held responsible for destruction of Alliance or school property outside of normal wear and tear.

Reporting Abuse and Neglect

It is our legal obligation to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Family & Protective Services or a law enforcement agency.

Communication with School and State Officials

The Alliance for Women & Children reserves the right to share information on all matters concerning ASC and the children enrolled with school district, and state officials as needed in accordance with state guidelines.

Parental Communication

Parents/guardians will be notified in writing, of any ASC policy changes. Throughout the year we will invite you to provide feedback through surveys. We encourage parents/guardians to read any newsletters, information postcards, and all other printed material that is distributed by Alliance.

Remind101 allows parents/guardians to receive text alerts and reminders from the ASC Director.

To sign up via SMS (texting): Text: "asc-alert" to (325) 603-3198

To sign up via email: Send an email to asc-alert@mail.remind101.com

Authorization to Dispense Medication

If your child will be receiving medication at ASC, an "Authorization to Dispense Medication" form must be filled out by the parent before the child will be given the medication. This form may be picked up at any ASC location or at the Alliance for Women & Children office. If the child requires medication during care, medicine must be in the ORIGINAL container with instructions on the front. We are unable to handle medications that require refrigeration. ASC refuses to serve the first dose of medication to a child.

Communicable Diseases

If a child displays health risks or conditions, the parents/guardians will be notified and told that the child needs to be picked up. These conditions include, but are not limited to, chickenpox, head lice, Hepatitis A, measles (Rubella), mumps, and ringworm of the scalp, rubella, scabies, streptococcal (sore throat), scarlet fever and others. The child will not be allowed to return to ASC until the condition has been treated and/or the child is no longer contagious.

Illness and Exclusion Criteria

In accordance with licensing guidelines, the Alliance may not admit an ill child for care if one or more of the following exists:

- 1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities, including outdoor play;
- 2) The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of other children in care;
- 3) A health care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate the child is no longer contagious;
- 4) The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates:
 - (A) Oral temperature above 101 degrees and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - (B) Rectal temperature above 102 degrees and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - (C) Armpit temperature above 100 degrees and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of

illness; or

(D) Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.

The Alliance must follow the communicable disease exclusions required for schools. These conditions include, but are not limited to, chickenpox, head lice, Hepatitis A, measles, mumps, ringworm, rubella, scabies, streptococcal (sore throat), scarlet fever and others. More information is available through the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) in 25 TAC §97.7 (relating to Diseases Requiring Exclusion from Schools).

Immunization Records

A copy of your child's immunization record is NOT required because the record is on site at your child's school.

Accident Reports

The staff will notify parents or guardians of any accident/injury to the child and will contact licensing if the injury requires the attention of a health-care professional. Accident reports will be filled out when a child requires medical attention, first aid, if he/she injures their head, or if they fall off of playground equipment. We ask that accident reports be signed by the parent upon check-out of your child for the day. The Department of Family & Protective Services may contact you for further information regarding your child and the accident.

Medical Emergencies

If a child is seriously injured while in ASC care, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately after the Emergency Medical Services has been contacted in accordance with minimum standards licensing policies.

Discipline Policy

ASC will adhere to all the minimum standard rules for discipline set by the Department of Family & Protective Services. Discipline will be approached in a positive manner. Children are expected to follow the rules set forth by the ASC staff.

STEPS TAKEN IF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OCCURS:

- 1. Quiet Time:** A place will be designated as a "quiet time" area for children who are removed from center activities. Staff will talk with children placed in "quiet time" to review their behavior. Timeouts may be 1 minute per age of the child, with a 10 minute maximum.
- 2. Behavior Reports:** For severe offenses or repeated misbehavior, staff will complete "behavior reports". Once a child has received his/her third behavior report, he/she may be suspended. These reports will be signed by staff, children, and parents. These forms are then sent back to the ASC directors for review. At this time, depending on the severity of behavior, the ASC directors will determine if a meeting with the parents is appropriate and if an individual behavior management plan is needed.

Behavior reports are appropriate for the following: Repeated infractions, Violence (threat/physical), Sexual behavior (implied/actual), Bullying (verbal/physical), Running away from the group.

- 3. Suspension:** Suspension will occur if a child physically injures another child. Punching, kicking, choking, and inappropriate touching will result in immediate suspension. The severity of the action will determine the length of suspension. Suspension may last from 1 to 3 days. If a toy gun or knife is brought to Alliance After-School Care, it will result in a mandatory three-day suspension. Disrespecting a staff member or another student may also necessitate a suspension. Each case will be reviewed before any action is taken.

*****Suspensions**

If your child is suspended from school and/or attends RAC (Reassignment Center) or SAC (Student Achievement Center), they may not attend ASC without the permission of the school principal. If the principal gives permission for the child to continue attending ASC, the parent/guardian must provide the transportation back to the school campus. If the principal denies the child access to the school grounds, the parent/guardian must make other childcare arrangements for the time the child is attending RAC or SAC. There will be no money refunded to the parent during a child's suspension.

4. Dismissal: A child will be dismissed from the program immediately for bringing a real gun or knife to ASC. Children may also be dismissed for actions by the parents/guardians such as harassing, threatening, endangering or intimidating the staff, ASC directors and any other ASC personnel or persons involved with the ASC program. Dismissal from ASC is also a possibility after every effort has been made to help the child function in the program. Parents will be formally notified by the directors if this action must be taken.

**Severe or consistent behavior incidents may also necessitate withdrawal from the program. The ASC directors reserve the right to review all behaviors to determine if a suspension or withdrawal is necessary.

Parent Concerns/Complaints

Please address concerns with the ASC Staff involved with the concern – if the concern cannot be resolved or requires additional attention, please discuss the matter first with the On-Site Director at your site, second, the appropriate Site Coordinator, and then lastly, the Youth Program's Director at the Alliance for Women & Children 325-677-5321.

You are also welcome to e-mail Trish Blazauskas, the Youth Program's Director, at trish@afwconline.org to discuss any concerns or to schedule a time to meet.

Parents are welcome to visit their child's site at any time and review the most recent licensing inspection reports.

Additional Resources

- Child Care Licensing (DFPS) 691-8232
- Child Abuse Hotline (DFPS) 1-800-252-5400
- DFPS Website dfps.state.tx.us.gov

Other Alliance for Women & Children Programs...

A-Teens

1350 N. 10th 677-5321
a-teens@afwconline.org

Middle School Girl Program – helping with transition from elementary to middle school as well as many other adolescent issues.

Summer Camps for girls entering 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grades with workshops on babysitting, technology camps as well as other fun and service oriented options.

Playground Rental

The playground behind the Alliance building at 1350 N.10th may be rented out by the public. It accommodates 30-40 children and is designed for children 12 and under. Call the office at 677-5321 for additional information.

The Alliance for Women & Children is a non-profit organization serving Abilene since 1920, with the specific purpose of providing programs and services that empower the lives of women and their families.

**For more information about Alliance After-School Care
and other Alliance for Women & Children programs go to:**

www.allianceforwomenandchildren.org/asc



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