



Parent Handbook

4261-A Manchester Ave.

Perry, OH 44081

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Mission Statement and Overview of Program

Our mission is to provide comprehensive, collaborative, and child-centered programming for individuals with autism in a positive and non-restrictive learning environment so that each child can reach their highest potential and achieve excellence in all aspects of life.

3 Mission Areas:

Comprehensive Approach- Footprints Center for Autism recognizes that learning goes beyond academics. We believe in treating the whole child through the use of sensory integration, collaborative therapies and teaching methods, and research based behavioral and neurological interventions that are created to fit each individual child and their family.

Collaborative Approach- Footprints Center for Autism recognizes that learning goes beyond the classroom. We believe in the potency and effectiveness of bridging the gap between home and school, parents/guardians and teachers/therapists. We offer and encourage many collaborative opportunities, such as seminars, observations, family meetings, etc. We believe that the best way to treat the whole child is to provide support in all aspects of his/her world.

Child-Centered Approach- Footprints Center for Autism understands that each child is unique and has his or her own abilities to succeed in everyday life. With this understanding, we design a program that focuses on the strengths of each child and meets their individual needs. This is done by providing opportunities for play and creative exploration along with individualized instruction that is centered around each student.

Our Vision:

Footprints Center for Autism envisions a world where all people with autism have the resources to live up to his or her fullest potential across all settings. There are many gaps in the consistency of intervention between school, home, and the community. Footprints Center for Autism intends to help bridge those gaps by providing individualized therapy for the child and collaborative training opportunities for their families and caretakers.

Program Philosophy

Footprints Center for Autism understands that all children are unique with different strengths and needs. Knowing that children have their own learning styles, we will provide services for children focusing on individual strengths and areas for growth. We strive to provide comprehensive, collaborative, and child-centered programming for individuals with autism in a positive learning environment so that each child can reach their highest potential and achieve excellence in all aspects of life. We will design a program that focuses on the strengths of each child and meets their

individual needs. This is done by providing opportunities for play, creative exploration, and individualized instruction that is centered around each student within small staff to student class sizes. To help children achieve success we will use sensory integration, collaborative therapies, evidence based teaching methods, and research based behavioral interventions that are created to fit each individual child and their family. Knowing that learning goes beyond the classroom, we offer and encourage many collaborative opportunities, such as seminars, observations, family meetings, etc. We believe that the best way to treat the whole child is to provide support in all aspects of his/her world.

Goals

The goals for our day treatment program are as follows:

- Enhance and facilitate development in all domains: cognitive, language, social-emotional, and physical
- Develop knowledge of self, others and the physical and social world
- Develop ability to see adults as respectful, nurturing, supportive, responsible, and helpful resources
- Develop ability to relate body to objects and events in the environment

Staff/Supervision

Footprints Center for Autism day program adheres to the guidelines set by Ohio Department of Education with regards to student/staff ratios, required In-service trainings and professional development, and employee recruitment. We strive to provide the most efficient and appropriate supervision to all of our children in order to maintain a safe environment.

Hours

Footprints Center for Autism is a day treatment program that provides families with the option of a half-day or full day program. Within hours of operation, Footprints Center for Autism offers individualized hours of programming for each child*. Our hours of operation are as follows:

Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

** Outpatient services may be scheduled outside regular hours per your treating therapist.*

***In order to best serve our students, we encourage a healthy work-life balance for all employees, and do not require employees to respond to non-emergency correspondences outside of hours of operation.*

Fees and Tuition

Because autism is a spectrum disorder, the types of services needed vary based on the individual patient. To best meet each need, Footprints Center for Autism plans to work with each family to create the best program for their child. The recommended services will be based on the collaborative input of the family, our professional staff, and the information and requirements found in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Fees and tuition costs will be calculated based on the following fee schedule:

Services and Associated Fees		
Service Category	Our Price	Service
Therapies	\$150.00/hr	Occupational Therapy Evaluation
		Speech Therapy Evaluation
	\$100.00/hr	Occupational Therapy Treatment Session (Day treatment or outpatient)
		Speech Therapy Treatment Session (Day treatment or outpatient)
Education and Family Training	\$39.00/hr	Special Education
	\$20.00/hr	Family Training
Support Staff	\$16.00/hr	Aide (Program Support Specialist)

Tuition requirements

Tuition payments can be paid monthly or up-front. Monthly invoices will be sent out at the beginning of the month for services rendered the month prior. For families accessing the ODE Autism Scholarship, ODE will be billed directly from FCA at the beginning of the month. Parents will be responsible for endorsing the ODE check once received by Footprints, or giving approval for FCA to sign the checks on their behalf. Private payments for tuition must be made in a timely fashion, and due dates will be provided on all invoices.

Staff Contact Information

Erin Bolyard, Executive Director: ebolyard@footprints-ohio.com

Nicole Best, Clinical Director/COTA/Intervention Specialist: nbest@footprints-ohio.com

Footprints Center for Autism Office Number: (440) 259-3726

Student Non-Discrimination

Footprints Center for Autism does not discriminate in admission of students, programs, or activities on the basis of sex, race, religion, color, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression or identity, or disability.

Confidentiality

Footprints Center for Autism adheres strictly to both the Federal Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a federal law establishing an array of confidentiality rights for students and families. This law is required to be upheld by all employees and volunteers. There are significant sanctions and penalties that can be imposed for violating this law. HIPAA is United States legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information.

Confidentiality of student information protects personal and educational information from disclosure. All educational and medical records, personal information, and data collected by staff at Footprints Center for Autism will be kept under secure conditions with limited access. Confidential information at our center may only be transferred from one person to another when it is professionally appropriate and legally acceptable to do so.

Student information is private and will only be shared with others if written consent is given by the parent or legal guardian. Footprints Center for Autism will not share student information without prior written consent.

Students and families have a right to expect that the staff will follow a strict code of practice on confidentiality and are mindful of standards of professional conduct designed to keep sensitive personal information confidential. Staff members will not disclose confidential information or be drawn into discussions about students, families or staff, with any third person or agency that has no legal or compelling need to discuss such issues. However, on the issue of confidentiality in matters relating to student health and welfare, abiding by the guidelines set forth by FERPA, Footprints Center for Autism reserves the right to share information, without consent, with third parties who have a clear need to know that there are specific concerns about a student, e.g. there is a life-threatening situation that endangers your child's safety, or there is significant danger of a student harming themselves or others.

**It is important to note that when a student turns 18 years old all rights afforded to parents under FERPA transfer to the student.*

Footprints Center for Autism is committed to delivering quality services, including protecting the confidentiality of student information from unauthorized use or disclosure. Footprints Center for Autism employees conduct their activities in such a way as to meet applicable federal, state, and

local rules and regulations, maintain conduct that is professional, and adhere to ethical business practices.

Service Delivery

Footprints Center for Autism (FCA) takes an individualized approach to students' learning. A curriculum plan and service delivery plan are created with the parents and professionals. These procedures are individually designed to fit the needs of each student. The services that can be provided include special education, occupational therapy and speech therapy. Services can be provided in the classroom setting, outpatient setting or in the students home per the students Individual Education Plan and students individual curriculum plan created with the professionals and parents. These services will be implemented and monitored by the professional staff of teachers and therapists at FCA, with support services provided by a highly trained aide staff.

Intervention specialists will provide core academic instruction along with IEP goals that align with the Ohio Department of Education Learning Standards. Instruction will be provided using a curriculum provided by Footprints Center for Autism. Each curriculum will vary based upon the students' learning needs. Intervention specialists will provide assessments at the beginning, end, and throughout the year to determine a child's baseline data as well as see a child's progress throughout the year.

The progress of the child's services (OT, Speech, IS) will be communicated to parents through progress reporting, grade cards, communication logs and parent teacher conferences. Progress reports and grade cards will be provided to parents on a quarterly basis to show how the child is making progress towards their annual goals that are stated on their most recent IEP as well as how they are making progress on their objectives. For students who attend FCA on the Autism or Jon Peterson Scholarship, the progress reports will be uploaded to the Ohio Department of Education system and then a copy will be printed for the families.

FCA will provide parents with opportunities to complete a satisfaction survey reflecting on the services provided for their child.

Progress Reporting

Student progress toward annual IEP goals and/or short term objectives, must be reported to parent(s) every 12 weeks (quarterly) or as stated on the child's IEP. This report of progress must be documented in the student's IEP and should include codes to denote progress toward the annual goal and/or objective data to support the progress toward mastery as well as a narrative statement regarding progress or lack of progress. The following codes should be used for noting progress on annual goals.

Not Yet Introduced (NI)
Negligible Progress (NP)
Limited Progress (LP)
Adequate Progress (AP)
Significant Progress (SP)
Mastered/Met (M)

It is the responsibility of the special education teachers and related service providers to prepare the progress report and to provide this report to parents. Special education teachers and related service providers are to document the student's current level of performance based on the evaluation methods identified for each goal and/or objective identified on the student's IEP. Progress reports will also show the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals stated on the child's current IEP and how the child's progress is being measured and the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.

The progress reports are sent home to parents and a hard copy will be filed in the student's educational record, and replaced by subsequent updates.

Attendance

Please be sure to call the FCA office if your child will be absent.

FCA Office Line: 440-259-3726

Please inform staff about an absence/vacation day as soon as possible so the center can plan accordingly. Attendance will be taken daily and reported to the appropriate agencies as required or requested.

If your child will arrive late or need to be dismissed early, please alert the office or your child's cheerleader, the day of (at the latest) to allow proper programming adjustments.

Daily attendance and active participation in each class is a critical part of the learning process. The educational program offered to students at FCA is dependent upon their presence at school every day. Evidence points to the fact that regular school attendance has a positive carryover to other environments. Attendance is primarily the responsibility of students and parents/guardians. It places a priority on school attendance and encourages students to establish good attendance habits in order to improve and benefit from the learning opportunities made available to them. On each morning of an absence the student's parent/guardian must telephone the school or alert the student's cheerleader before the child's scheduled start time. Parents should use the following phone number: 440-259-3726.

During the school day, FCA directors will attempt to contact parents/guardians of students who are absent and unexcused. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, work missed during the absence can be made-up upon return.

Staff will abide by the following attendance policy:

1. Take attendance in class at the beginning of the day.
2. Mark students as absent, sick, no school, vacation, half day, present, early dismissal, or tardy in the electronic attendance form.
3. If there is a student who is not present or is tardy, the staff will walkie the student's cheerleader to see if there has been any communication from the family.
4. If no contact has been made to the child's cheerleader, the staff will walkie a director to contact the family and to check on the attendance status.

In the instance of significant absences, with or without legitimate excuse, Footprints Center for Autism reserves the right to notify the parents (for scholarship students) or the school district (for district sent students) of excessive absences. Students attending FCA through a contract with their district may be held to the attendance policy of the district, and further action may be taken by the district if the district deems necessary.

Vacations

We encourage families to plan vacations for dates when school is not in session.

However if the need does arise, please let us know as soon as possible about any upcoming vacations and student absences.

Records and Vaccinations

You will be contacted if we are missing any registration information including birth certificate, social security card, emergency medical forms, and shot records. Your child must have a physical exam yearly and the following vaccines (state minimum) are recommended (but not required) in order to attend Footprints Center for Autism:

- 4 or more doses of DTP
- 3 or more doses of polio
- 1 MMR
- 1 HIB

Arrival

- The safety and security of every child is a priority. Please follow our center's security policy. All doors at our building remain locked throughout the school day.
- Please pull up in your car and wait for a staff member to come out to get your child.
- Children are to remain in the car with the parent until greeted by a staff member.

***STUDENTS ARE NEVER TO WALK ACROSS THE LOT WITHOUT AN ADULT!**

Dismissal

- Please arrive on time at your scheduled dismissal time. If a delay is expected, please contact staff prior to dismissal time so accommodations can be made.
- Upon dismissal, please pull your car up to the same place as drop off and wait for your child to be brought out to you.
- You will then be required to buckle your child into their car seat/seatbelt.

***PLEASE SEND A NOTE IF THERE ARE ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CHILD'S TRANSPORTATION HOME FROM SCHOOL. Please inform any Caregiver to have photo identification in hand when coming to the door. Release Forms are provided in the annual paperwork for each child.**

Weather

- In case of inclement weather, check the radio stations, television, website (footprintscenterforautism.com), and Facebook page for announcements regarding Footprints Center for Autism delay or cancellations.
- If Perry School district is closed or delayed due to inclement weather or any unforeseen circumstance, FCA would also close for that day.
- If conditions in your area seem hazardous, please use your best judgment as to whether or not you bring your child to school. Curriculum content can be made up, so please prioritize your child's safety!

Communication

Daily notes will be sent home in your child's folder and will inform you of the day's activities and will be used as a communication binder to be filled out by the staff and parents. For older students, weekly emails will be sent home in lieu of daily binders.

If you need to speak with a staff member during the day, you can call the center or leave a message on voicemail. Messages are checked as often as possible. You can also reach your child's teacher or cheerleader via email.

Parent Conferences

- There are four parent conferences during the school year, each lasting approximately 20-30 minutes. These take place quarterly just after progress reports are released.
- Additional conferences or IEP team meetings can be arranged as needed.
- Phone or in person appointments can also be made to discuss any concerns regarding your child.

Appropriate Dress

- All children will engage in outdoor PLAY as the weather permits. Please dress your child accordingly. If you are in doubt, please send a jacket in your child's backpack.
- SHOES!!!! Appropriate shoes are very important to your child's motor development.
- Footwear should fit, and not be too big. (Appropriate fit means excess room at the toe should not be more than your thumb's width.)
- Shoes worn to school should have soles that provide good traction.
- Zippers, buttons, snaps, etc....should be the type that your child can manipulate independently as much as possible. Independence fosters self-confidence!
- Backpacks should come to school each day. Backpacks must be large enough to hold a binder and marked clearly with your child's name. No backpacks with wheels.

****Please label all articles of clothing with your child's name.**

Parents be forewarned: WE LOVE TO HAVE FUN AND IT IS OFTEN MESSY!

Student Termination/Discipline Policy

DISCIPLINE:

Footprints Center for Autism recognizes that children with autism and other disabilities have needs that require individualized support, however, there are certain behaviors that are best addressed with higher levels of intervention. To address these behaviors and extenuating circumstances FCA has put in place the following levels for providing intervention.

1. When a challenging behavior is presented, FCA will notify parents of the behavior and discuss the intervention plan.
2. If the interventions are not proven effective and the challenging behavior continues or increases, the team will meet to review the current intervention plan and provide modifications.
3. If the modified intervention plan continues to be unsuccessful, the team will meet and discuss the need for a formal behavioral intervention plan.

TERMINATION:

If the levels of intervention have not met the needs of the child and the behavior persists or worsens, the team will meet to discuss alternative placements and/or resources that the family can utilize to support the student.

If a child's parent/guardian would like to terminate a child's contract and programming at Footprints Center for Autism, the parent must notify the Directors of FCA with that request in writing. In the request, please include the date of the child's last day of programming as well as any other details that are pertinent to making the child's transition to a new program/school as seamless and easy for them and the child. If a child is continuing programming at another autism scholarship

provider, the appropriate paperwork will be provided to the family. On the last day of programming at FCA, the directors will put the end of service date in the child's profile on the scholarship website. If a family is moving a child into a public school program, it is recommended that the family notify the school district as soon as possible and follow the appropriate protocol for enrollment for the specific school district the child will be attending.

**Footprints Center for Autism reserves the right to recommend that the parent/caregiver seek alternative placement for their child that is better suited to meet the child's needs.*

Illness

- If your child becomes ill (i.e., fever, diarrhea, vomiting, etc.) while at school:
 - He/she will be isolated from other children in the center's office.
 - One of the center's personnel will contact you.
 - In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached, Footprints Center for Autism (FCA) will contact the emergency contact listed in the child's record.
- Please refrain from sending your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms/illnesses:
 - Fever
 - Unusual episodes of diarrhea
 - Discolored/excessive drainage from nose
 - Uncontrollable cough/productive cough
 - Unexplainable rash
 - Vomiting
 - Pink eye
 - Hand Foot and Mouth Disease
 - Croup
 - Scarlet Fever
 - Covid-19**
 - Any communicable diseases (i.e. chicken pox, lice, strep throat, influenza, impetigo, measles, mumps, whooping cough, rubella, tuberculosis, diphtheria, smallpox, etc.)
 - Any other illness that may be contagious
- If a child displays any of the above symptoms or symptoms of a communicable disease (i.e. influenza, measles, etc.), we will call you to come and pick them up immediately.

****A child should not return to school until they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours, or per physician's instructions, such as "fever free for 24 hours WITHOUT use of medication such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen". For all illnesses that are contagious, a note from a physician will need to be provided in order for the child to return to school.***

*****The CDC's new guidance for Covid-19 is now aligned with the CDC's respiratory virus guidance, which recommends staying home and away from others until, for 24 hours, BOTH your symptoms are getting better AND you are fever-free without medication for 24 hours. Then, take additional precautions as necessary, including maintaining good hygiene (washing hands, cleaning surfaces, etc), getting fresh air, getting treatment if needed, staying home, wearing a mask, social distancing, and testing. Due to the contagious nature of Covid-19, if your child returns to school and presents symptoms that they are still unwell and/or that the virus may be passed along to others (i.e. runny nose, productive cough, etc.), we reserve the right to send the child home sick.***

Safety/Emergency

- All staff at Footprints Center for Autism (FCA) are certified in first aid and CPR.
- The following emergency situations will be handled as described below:
 - FIRE: In the event of a fire, the fire alarm will go off and students will be escorted out of the building following the center's fire escape plan, which is posted in every classroom at FCA. Students will be escorted to a central meeting location designated by FCA's directors. Once in the designated location, staff will take attendance to ensure all students are present and wait for further instructions from the local fire department upon their arrival. Please see emergency communications for contact information from FCA in the event of an emergency during school hours.
 - TORNADO: In the event of a tornado, the tornado alarm will sound and students will be escorted to a safe spot designated by FCA's directors, following the center's tornado drill plan, which is posted in every classroom at FCA. Once in the safe spot, students will be placed in the tornado safety position on the floor and as far away from doors and windows as possible. Please see emergency communications for contact information from FCA in the event of an emergency during school hours.
 - LOCK DOWN: In the event of a lock down due to an emergency on campus that poses a threat to students and staff, students will be moved to a safe spot in accordance with the lock down procedure set forth by FCA and Perry Public Schools. The primary focus of the staff will be to keep all of the children calm and safe. Therefore, please do not try to contact a staff member or the treatment center during this time. When it is safe to do so, staff will contact you. Information may be available on our social media pages or our website www.footprintscenterforautism.com. When staff give the "all clear" by trained professionals, children will be escorted out of the safe spot and parents will be called to set up a plan for pickup of students.
 - STUDENT EMERGENCY: In the case of a life-threatening emergency where a child needs immediate medical attention, 911 will be called to assist in the aide and safety of the child. Then parents will be notified and informed of the next steps. If the child requires medical attention that is not a medical emergency, parents will be contacted. If parents cannot be reached at that time, 911 will be called at the discretion of the staff. A formal incident report will be written for parents to review and sign for the center to keep on file. A copy will be available for parents upon request.

- **UTILITY LOSS/FAILURE:** Utility failure is the loss of interruption of electrical power, natural gas, water or sewage services to the school. The most common utility failure results from power outages throughout the year. In certain situations, students may need to be relocated until the power is restored. Parents will be notified immediately if students will need to be dismissed earlier than normal dismissal time. If utility loss occurs outside of center hours, school will be canceled until utility loss can be restored.

Emergency Communications:

If an emergency occurs during school hours:

- Do not drive to the school unless it is safe to do so and/or you have been instructed by the directors of Footprints Center for Autism (FCA) to pick up your child.
- It may be difficult to get through to FCA via telephone because of damage to phone lines or cell phone tower outages. Staff will contact parents as soon as possible.
- When tuning in to news media for emergency information, please look for alerts that apply to Perry City School District/Campus. In times of emergency, information about the status of schools is communicated through a variety of media. FCA requests that parents do not call the school office in times of emergency as it is important to keep phone lines free for emergency communications. Staff will contact parents as soon as possible.
- Circumstances may prevent parents from picking up their children or may require that children be picked up at a location other than FCA. The safety of children and staff is our first priority. Our second priority is the reunification of parents with their children. Staff will contact parents as soon as possible with the information regarding the alternate pick up location.
- Parents should check the following sources for information and status reports:
 - Local media: Alerts that apply to Perry City School District/Campus will also apply to FCA.
 - The school website: www.footprintscenterforautism.com
 - In times of emergency, general information will be shared with the community through major radio and television stations.

The staff of the Footprints Center for Autism will strive to preserve and protect life, reduce emotional trauma, minimize personal injury, and cooperate with the local emergency preparedness agencies.

Lunch and Snack Time

Please send in a lunch for your child if they will be attending for the whole day or send in a small snack if your child will be attending a half day. Parents and students are responsible for bringing in all utensils needed for their food.

During lunch and/or snack, the class will work on feeding, language and social skills, as well as table manners!

****Any allergies should be provided in writing to the staff as soon as possible.***

Birthdays

If you would like to send in a special snack to celebrate your child's birthday, please check with the teacher in advance to find out how many treats are needed and if any allergies are present.

Suggested items: cookies, brownies, ice cream cups, rice crispy treats, Little Debbie or Cupcakes.

Toys

Please keep your child's backpack empty of extra toys, papers, etc.... All children need to load their backpacks independently, and this is difficult if their bags are full of unnecessary items. We have a variety of wonderful, stimulating toys at school. ***Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home.*** If your child has difficulty with transitions from home to school; a favorite toy may help with those transitions-this can be discussed with the teacher.

****There may be times when show-and-tell may occur and only during these times can children bring in toys from home. A written note will be sent home notifying families of the date of these activities.***

Donations

We graciously accept donations of any toys/clothing/supplies that would benefit our students at the center. Due to limited storage space, we kindly ask that you talk to a staff member before bringing any donations to ensure those will be needed at that time.

Throughout the school year, your child's teacher will be sending home notes for donations of various items for the sensory table like: dried pasta, beans, and birdseed. We also collect "junk" for projects such as plastic peanut butter jars, egg cartons, film canisters, metal frozen juice lids, paper towel tubes.

These requests will come in the monthly newsletters or daily notes and are not required but encouraged!

Field Trips

We will be planning some field trips throughout the school year and summer session! All students attending a field trip are required to have an adult with them at all times during the field trip.

If you have questions, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

All children must have a signed permission slip and payment to attend field trips.

Special Guests/Volunteers

Footprints Center for Autism is visited by special Guests and Volunteers throughout the school year such as the local Fire Department or students looking for community service hours. If you know any "Special Guests/Volunteers" who could visit our center, please let us know!

Potty Training and Bathroom Assistance

If your child requires assistance in using the restroom, Footprints Center for Autism will provide your child with the supports required to use the restroom. These supports will be discussed with the parents prior to creating the student's individualized plan. Potty training can be worked on with a child in coordination with the family to ensure successful potty training that can be bridged from the center to home. Families can consult any of the directors if they would like assistance with this topic or would like to begin potty training their child. ****If a child is not potty trained, this does not prohibit them from attending FCA.***

Plan for Staff Training and Professional Development

At Footprints Center for Autism (FCA), we are committed to providing learning opportunities and continuing education for all employees. These opportunities will provide staff the chance to develop important work skills, improve employee performance, and retain information learned.

Once hired at FCA, the employee will attend an orientation for all new hires to review the employee handbook, confidentiality (HIPAA and FERPA), and FCA policies and procedures. During orientation, new staff will be required to participate in safety training which will provide information on protocols in place for potential situations such as fire drill, tornado drill, lockdown, and CPR/First Aid.

Every quarter, employees will attend a paid inservice day which will be facilitated by the executive and clinical directors of FCA. During these inservice days, staff will attend training courses designed by FCA directors. The topic of training courses will vary from quarter to quarter but will focus on professional development according to the needs of the students attending FCA and by questionnaires filled out by staff and parents. It may also be determined by the directors of FCA that evidence based research practices may also be the focus of inservice day training.

In addition to quarterly inservice days, professionals employed at FCA will be encouraged to complete continuing education courses that relate to autism and treating individuals diagnosed with autism. This can be done by attending professional training courses, reading professional journals, conferences, workshops, or personal research. On the job training and consultation will be provided daily. Staff members will meet biweekly at staff meetings to address monthly goals (professional) for themselves, the students, and for the center.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Footprints Center for Autism has a zero-tolerance policy of any harassment made toward our staff by parents/guardians of our students. Harassing behavior can take many forms which may include:

- Verbal threats or insults toward the staff or the program
- Online harassment which may include spreading false rumors on social media
- Physical intimidation
- Sexual harassment
- Physical violence
- Doxxing – publicly revealing private or identifying information on the internet.

If any of the above occurs, our employees have been instructed to inform their direct supervisor or one of the directors immediately. The member of management will inform Human Resources and an investigation into the allegation will be conducted.

Any documentation of the harassment will be collected. This can include taking screenshots of online or texted messages which should include the timestamp and URL if possible. It could also include a listing of phone calls or texts received. This may also include investigative conversations. If you are requested to be interviewed, you are expected to comply.

If the harassment occurs over social media, our employees will be instructed to use the platform's mechanism for reporting the harassment or hate speech after management has been informed of the issue. They will also be instructed to block the offending parent/guardian.

After the investigation has concluded, management will determine the most appropriate course of action. This could include contacting local law enforcement, or any threats being reported to the FBI (their jurisdiction covers most online communication). It could also include your child being disenrolled from Footprints.

To lessen the likelihood of these events we suggest the following:

- Our employees are encouraged to set up communication boundaries with any parents/guardians with whom they come into regular contact. They should not feel a need to accept friend requests via any social media platform. They are not required to share their cell phone number with you if they do not want to.
- Parents should reserve any uncomfortable or difficult questions or comments for one of the directors.
- Our employees are encouraged to keep a professional and emotional distance from parents/guardians.
- All are encouraged to use the Golden Rule and treat others how they wish to be treated.
- Remember that miscommunication happens and can be the root of many conflicts. Clarify before going on the defensive.
- Neither staff nor parents/guardians should allow themselves to be pressured into saying something they will later regret just because it is expedient to do so in the moment.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to either Erin or Nicole for clarification.