

Carousel's Mission

Carousel is a privately owned and operated licensed childcare facility that operates within the confines of the minimum standards of the Texas Health & Human Services Department Child Care Licensing Division. We are federally funded by the USDA Child & Adult Care Food Program, sponsored by Food for Kids, Inc., to ensure that every child's nutritional needs are met as San Antonio's only vegan & cruelty free childcare facility!

For 22 years, Carousel's owner and director, Mrs. Julie Ann Hoker, has overseen the care of hundreds of children for families all over San Antonio and surrounding areas. Second generations have now called Carousel their child's second home.

Originally working finance and commercial property management she experienced a life change in 2001, when her first child was born. As a new mom, she chose a small in-home daycare just two streets over from her home on Postwood Drive. When the time came to leave her newborn, she couldn't do it!

When her daughter was three months old and three private nannies later, Mrs. Julie found herself taking her infant daughter to work. Frustrated, not knowing how to support her family while giving her child the love and attention she needed, she quickly abandoned her career and decided to stay home and do it herself. The goal was to give other families the same assurance that she could not find – a safe space to call their child's second home; while providing love, structure, stability, and positive guidance. She wanted to help each child achieve developmental milestones at their own pace while learning to care for themselves and others, thus giving parents peace of mind without the "guilt factor" of having to earn a living.

In March of 2002, Mother's Helping Hand was formed as a Registered Family Home. In 2009, after a brief break from the childcare industry (and foster care) Mrs. Julie welcomed her second child in 2011. Her home daycare reopened, this time under the name of "Carousel". She quickly expanded from a Registered Home to a Licensed Family Home in 2012. In 2016, Mrs. Julie and her children relocated their primary residence to Leon Valley, Texas. 143 Postwood Drive became Carousel Childcare Center, LLC! With the help of childcare licensing, supporting clients, neighbors and her first employees, Carousel was originally licensed for 22 students, with the primary focus on children ages 18 months to 5 years not yet enrolled in school. It was at this time that Carousel's twelve interactive monthly themes were developed and perfected.

Recognizing the need to grow and expand for more families, Mrs. Julie worked hard as a single mom to continue evolving her former home into the center you have come to know. After some remodel, Carousel's license was upgraded in 2018 to care for 35 students and in February of 2022, 40 students!

Although Mrs. Julie is no longer the primary caregiver in any classroom, her love for children keeps her close by and active at Carousel. As the director, she oversees staffing, training, payroll, all personalized tours, children and staff records, food program and childcare licensing forms. Her expectations for all caregivers are high, training them to act in good faith and uphold her mission and vision for Carousel. She has a motto that “children make the world go round” and believes that all children should be loved, recognized, and learn compassion from an early age so they may grow up to be kind, in a world that is not.

Mrs. Julie is passionate about all living things, and it shows! In 2018, Carousel became San Antonio’s only vegan and cruelty free learning center. Her love was sparked by the 2013 documentary, “Blackfish”. She immediately gave up her annual passes to the San Antonio Zoo and Sea World. As she continued discovering the effects of captivity on animals, she came across the documentation of the cruel dairy & meat industry. Astonished by what the USDA allows in our meat and dairy she decided that she would do her part in making the world a healthier place, starting with the children in her care. Carousel provides delicious meals, free from the poisonous adrenaline of bludgeoned, sick and sometimes cancer ridden animals; drip-lined with growth hormones, steroids & antibiotics; including pus, urine, feces and blood all allowed in dairy milk.

At Carousel, we treat children with manners and respect, teaching them to do the same. By means of positive guidance techniques, we are grateful to offer your family a healthy haven at competitive prices. We use Brightwheel, the parent teacher communication app that allows you to communicate freely with your child’s caregivers and our center director. This open communication, coupled with pictures throughout the day brings parents comfort while they work hard to support their families.

Mrs. Julie remarried in 2020 and currently resides in Austin, Texas with her husband, and two youngest sons. Together, her and “Mr. Bear”, as she affectionately calls him, offer you their best and are always available by phone, text, email, Brightwheel or by scheduled visits to Carousel. Mrs. Julie’s firstborn, Mrs. Brook Salazar, is at the center daily. Mrs. Brook is currently continuing her education to become Carousel’s next director, carrying out the legacy her mother began when she was just 3 months old. As a center, Carousel does not observe traditional holidays. This means we accept people of all faiths, backgrounds, and beliefs. We do not discriminate against any persons, choosing to remain neutral. We do not celebrate birthdays or decorate for holidays. Alternatively, all decorations are seasonal, related to our Earth and our twelve-monthly interactive themes allowing all children to comfortably participate in our activities.

We are grateful you chose us to care for your family! Communication is key to a healthy relationship with our center staff & director. If we don’t know your concerns, hear your feedback or questions, we cannot help you or future families. With that said, please read our policies. If our policies are not suited for your family, we understand! Carousel is not for everyone. Our policies are clear, concise, and consistent. If you have an issue that is not addressed, please bring it to our attention so it can be!

We hope you and your child grow in love from your stay with us. When the time comes for your family to move on, we require a two-week (10 operational days) notice of termination.

Respectfully,
Carousel Childcare Center, LLC

Definition of Terms Within our Policies

Infant –6 weeks to 17 months.

Toddler –18 months to 3rd birthday.

Preschool(er) – A child 3 to 5 years old, not yet enrolled in school.

School Age Children – A child 5 to 12 years old, enrolled in school.

Special Needs –defined in this agreement as a child who requires greater care, supervision or more individualized one-on-one attention than a caregiver can provide without robbing the supervision and safety of other children in care;

or fundamentally changing our program to include hiring extra staff for the needs of one student.

Carousel –Carousel Childcare Center LLC, including the owner, director & all caregivers or employees.

“We” and “Our” – These terms refer to Carousel and include the owner, director, caregivers and employees.

Parent(s) – The parties responsible for the child in care (including all authorized pick-up persons). Parents may also be hereinafter referred to as “you”, “your” & “you’re”.

Brightwheel – the parent/teacher communication app Carousel uses to enroll students and communicate with Parents.

Hours of Operation, Closures, Holidays & Parent Vacation

Please note! Carousel is licensed for 40 students. Tuition covers the licensing space your child occupies, not the time they are here; therefore, there are no discounts for late arrivals, early departures, days missed due to incident or illness including pandemic related closures, inclement weather closures, and or extended custodial visitations. **Upon signing the Receipt of Carousel’s Operational Policies, you are entering into a contract. We require a two week (10 operational days) written notice of your intent to cease services with Carousel.**

Carousel is open annually, Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm.

Attendance is required by 8:45am. (Not a minute after!) **If your child is not in attendance by 8:45am, they are considered absent for the day.** The ONLY exception is a physician’s note and is **required for entry.** (Not a picture, not a promise of one later, an actual physical excuse from a licensed practitioner.) PLEASE take traffic & weather conditions into consideration when planning your personal schedule & route to Carousel.

We follow the inclement weather closures & delays of Northside Independent School District in San Antonio, TX.

The local government officials establish Mandatory Pandemic Related Closures.

Carousel closes on the following days*:

New Year's Day

MLK Day

President's Day (Caregiver Inservice Day)

The Friday of NISD's Spring Break

Good Friday

Battle of Flowers

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day (If this falls on Tuesday, we will be closed Monday & Tuesday. If July 4th falls on a Thursday, we will be

closed Thursday & Friday)

Labor Day

Columbus Day (Caregiver Inservice Day)

Veteran's Day

Day before Thanksgiving (Closes at 1pm)

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Day before Christmas Eve (Closes at 1pm)

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

Day before New Year's Eve (Closes at 1pm)

New Year's Eve

*If any of these holidays falls on a Saturday or Sunday, Carousel will observe the closure the preceding Friday or following Monday.