

BEIJA FLOR: OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

# PARENT HANDBOOK



“The way we respond to our children  
is the way they will learn how to  
respond to themselves.”





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# Welcome Message from Our Pedagogical Director



*Dear Families,*

*It's with immense warmth and deep gratitude, I extend a heartfelt welcome to our cherished community encompassing our Early Childhood Program. It is an honor to be entrusted with your beloved children, who grace us with their innocence. In these formative years, we recognize the profound impact early childhood holds, setting the stage for a journey into adulthood. We feel truly blessed that you have chosen us as your extended family, your home away from home. Our commitment to your children is deeply heart-centered, while embracing regenerative approaches. Our children are indeed our inspiration and our greatest joy. Please feel free to reach out at any time. We are here to support you in every step of your child's growth.*

*Warmly,*

*Halimah Harden*

**Halimah Harden**  
**School Founder & Director**







# About Our Program

Beija Flor is an intimate Early Childhood Program specializing in nurturing children ages three to six in a bilingual (English and Spanish) environment. With a small group size, Beija Flor provides individualized care and attention, creating the ideal environment for children to flourish. At the heart of our program are three guiding pillars: honoring the wholeness of the child, nurturing through regenerative and sustainable approaches that respect the natural world, and serving as an extension of the family and our local community.

Our heart-centered approach embraces each child's development, offering gentle and rhythmic responses to their ever-evolving growth and experiences. Through our nurturing environment, children feel deeply seen, held, and encouraged to explore their unique individuality while flourishing as part of a greater whole.

At Beija Flor, there is a natural rhythm to the day – a gentle flow between focused engagement and joyful free play. This cadence mirrors a child's curiosity, creativity, and support for movement and rest, fostering a sense of wonder and wholeness that extends far beyond our heart-centered space. It is with immense gratitude, tenderness, and love that we hold these precious foundational years, honoring the magic and beauty of this ripe stage of life and the privilege of walking alongside each child and family on this journey.





# Rhythm of Our Day

## Daily Rhythm Monday—Thursday

9:00	Free-Play & Fruit
9:30	Spiral & Storytime
9:45	Special Activity
10:15	Handwash & Snacktime
10:45	Permaculture & Play
11:45	Booktime & Handwash
12:00	Lunchtime
12:30	Rest & Calming Activities
1:30	Stretch & Movement
2:00	Handwash & Snacktime
2:15	Gratitude Spiral & Pick-Up

At Beija Flor, we honor the importance of rhythm in early childhood, recognizing that these foundational years are critical for strengthening a child’s overall well-being. Our heart-centered approach embraces a breath-inspired curriculum, weaving a gentle flow between moments of focused engagement and joyful free play. These two elements mirror the natural rhythm of the breath – the focused engagement serving as the inhale, a time for children to come inward through introspection and purposeful activity, and joyful free play as the exhale, a time for outward expression, exploration, and creative release. This harmonious balance nurtures the child’s circadian rhythms, supporting their need for predictability and stability while encouraging their innate curiosity and creativity to flourish.

The rhythm of the day is a living, nurturing force that holds and strengthens the foundation children are building during this pivotal stage of life. By thoughtfully aligning with their natural rhythms, we support the development of healthy habit bodies, which serve as the cornerstone for innate strength and well-being as they grow. This gentle cadence allows children to feel both grounded and free, honoring their need for both inward stillness and outward expression. In this way, Beija Flor’s rhythm of the day provides a sense of security, as well as a foundation for lifelong balance, joy, and harmony.





# Commitment to Our Families

We are committed to transparent and effective communication with our families, which is at the forefront of our approach. We provide:

- Updates on your child's daily experience
- A daily lunch menu detailing what the children have eaten
- A daily bathroom chart

Throughout the year, we offer parents two annual *Child Development Check-Ins*, fostering an environment where we collaboratively discuss and celebrate their child's development. These conversations provide an opportunity for shared understanding and alignment as we nurture each child's growth.

We embrace an open-door policy that encourages parents to reach out and communicate with us at any time. We welcome and deeply value this ongoing dialogue, recognizing that open and collaborative communication enriches the connection between home and Beija Flor, while supporting the overall well-being of the children during these precious foundational years.







# Community Commitment

We value deep interconnectedness of child, family, and community—embracing the spirit of Ubuntu—“*I am because we are.*” This philosophy guides us as we help to nurture both the children and greater community that surrounds and supports us. By fostering meaningful connections, we honor the essence of *Pura Vida*—a life of simplicity, joy, and harmony in action.

## Highlights of Our Program & Community Connection:

- **Child Development Check-Ins:** We offer two check-ins to collaboratively share and celebrate each child’s growth.
- **Friday Community Dinners:** Every Friday, families are warmly invited to join us for a community potluck dinner.
- **Postpartum Support:** On the second Saturday of each month, we welcome local mothers and their little ones to our space for connection, tea, and snacks.
- **Community Cleanups:** Throughout the year, we come together to care for our local environment with beach and park cleanups, teaching children the importance of stewardship.
- **Surf & Bake Sale Fundraiser:** Once a year, we host a surf lesson day and bake sale with all donations going to support our local elementary school.
- **Parent Date Night:** Once a month, we care for the children while parents enjoy a well-deserved evening out, recognizing that by supporting parents, we are also caring for the children.

Through these meaningful offerings, we are committed to creating a space where families and the community come together to support one another, celebrate shared moments, and care for the world around us. This is *Pura Vida* in its truest form—living with intention, connection, and joy—inspiring our children to embrace community, care, and gratitude as a natural part of life.



*“I am because we are.”*





# Extended Postpartum Support



On the second Saturday of every month, we open our space to both the mothers of our community and local mothers from Montezuma and the surrounding areas. These gatherings offer a nurturing environment where mothers can come together, bring their little ones to enjoy the space, and be cared for with tea and snacks provided by Beija Flor.

At Beija Flor, we wholeheartedly embrace a regenerative approach that extends beyond our early childhood space to support the well-being of our beloved mothers. We recognize the profound connection between a mother's wellness and that of her child, and the vital role mothers play in the heart of our community.

This offering allows us to honor and celebrate all mothers, creating a space of connection, care, and shared experience. By tending to the well-being of our mothers, we help cultivate a thriving, connected village—because when mothers are nurtured and supported, the entire community blossoms with joy, strength, and love.







# Program Calendar

## 2025: 4-Day Schedule

January 20	First Day* (first week half days)
February 27	Child Development Check-Ins
March 13	Professional Development Day
April 17 - 22	Easter Break
May 1	Labor Day
June 10	Last Day*

## 2025-2026: 5-Day Schedule

September 9	First Day* (first week half days)
September 15	Costa Rica Independence Day
October 17	Child Development Check-Ins
October 22 - 24	Fall Break
November 27 - 28	Thanksgiving
December 16 -	Holidays
January 6	
February 27	Child Development Check-Ins
March 28	Professional Development Day
April 14 - 25	Easter Break
May 1	Labor Day
June 10	Last Day*

## Special Events 2025 Calendar (TBA—2025 to 2026 Program Year)

January 31, 2025	Parents' Night Out
February 7, 2025	New Beginnings Potluck
February 14, 2025	Parents' Night Out
March 7, 2025	Parents' Night Out
April 25, 2025	Parents' Night Out
May 16, 2025	Parents' Night Out
June 6, 2025	Parents' Night Out
June 7, 2025	Closing Potluck Celebration

*\*Seasonal Festivals TBA*



# Health & Safety

At Beija Flor the well-being of your child is our top priority. We recognize that ensuring their health and safety extends beyond individual care to impact our entire community. Our dedicated health and safety policies are crafted with meticulous consideration to create a secure and nurturing environment. By prioritizing your child's wellness, we contribute to fostering a safe and supportive community for every family in our care.

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## **Fevers**

A temperature of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher is considered a fever. If your child is sent home with a fever, they may not return to Beija Flor the next day. Children must wait to return to Beija Flor after 24 hours of breaking the fever without any medication.

## **Conjunctivitis (pink eye)**

If your child has or is sent home with conjunctivitis, they cannot return to Beija Flor the next day. They may return to us 48 hours after they receive the first eye treatment. At this point, we can administer the drops with a signed note giving us permission to put the drops in your child's eye.

## **Administering Medicine**

If you wish for us to give your child medicine (herbal or prescribed), please put the medicine in a sealed ziplock bag. Please also include in the ziplock bag the directions on when to administer the medicine, the dosage, as well as your signature giving us permission.

## **Lice**

If your child has or is sent home with nits or lice, they must see a professional to get treatment and/or confirm they are nit and lice free before returning. Professionals include *Lice of America* in San Jose. Lice is highly contagious, we suggest that you occasionally check your child's head, as there can be lice outbreaks from time to time.

## **Throwing up / Diarrhea / Lethargic / Severe Cough**

Depending on the severity of the situation, we may ask that you pick up your child from Beija Flor. They may return when they're feeling better and/or the symptoms have subsided.





# Health & Safety

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## ***Rashes***

If your child has a rash on their body, they may be sent home if we are concerned that it is contagious. If they do get sent home, we require a note from your doctor, letting us know that the rash is not contagious, if it is still there when they return to Beija Flor.

## ***Hand Foot Mouth Disease (HFMD)***

There are different strains of HFMD. Some HFMD is more severe than others. HFMD often causes sores/blisters on the hands, feet, as well as inside and outside of the mouth. If your child has HFMD, they may not return to Beija Flor until all the sores are gone from their body. Often times, pediatricians will tell families that their child may return to play with other children because they no longer have a fever; however, we have a stricter policy than pediatricians. We will not accept children if the HFMD sores are visible, no matter how small the sores are.

## ***Children's Injuries***

If your child sustains a minor injury while at the program, you will receive an Accident Report. You will be contacted immediately if the injury produces any type of swelling, is on the face or head, or needs medical attention. If a serious medical emergency occurs, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, and we will contact you (or a designated emergency contact if you cannot be reached).

## ***Overall Health Policy***

Your pediatrician may say that it is okay for your child to return to Beija Flor. If we do not feel comfortable having your child among other children due to their persisting symptoms, then they may not return to Beija Flor until the symptoms have subsided.

## ***Doctor & Dentist Appointments***

If you are scheduling a doctor appointment, we recommend picking-up your child right before or after lunch time. We understand if this is not possible, and of course, will accommodate you appropriately.





# Emergency Procedure

The safety and well-being of our children is our top priority. In the event of an emergency, our team will follow a clear and practiced protocol to ensure a calm and collective response.

- Our first designated meeting point is the **Community Space and Kitchen**. If we are unable to access this location, we will proceed to the **Beija Flor Office**.

Parents will be contacted immediately once the children are safely situated. We kindly ask families to ensure their contact information is up-to-date to facilitate prompt communication.







# Our Program Policy

We recognize that fostering a harmonious and nurturing environment is a shared responsibility. Our program policy serves as a guiding light, outlining our expectations and principles to ensure a balanced and transparent relationship with our beloved families.

We encourage open communication, active engagement, and a deep sense of commitment from our parents, who play an integral role in their child's journey of growth and learning. These policies are thoughtfully woven into the fabric of our program, promoting a profound sense of trust, respect, and transparency. Through this foundation, we create a holistic and heart-centered experience that supports each child's flourishing during these precious, foundational years.

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## ***Schedule*** (January 13, 2025 to June 10, 2025)

Monday to Thursday: 9am to 2:15pm

Please Note: Beginning September 2025, Beija Flor will move to a five-day weekly schedule.

## ***Arrival Time / Late Fees / Absence***

Our drop-off is from 9:00am to 9:15am. If you know that your child will be late on a specific day, please notify us so that we may plan accordingly. We understand that things happen from time to time; however, children coming in late during our Spiral time (morning group meeting at 9:30am) can be disruptive. In addition, please note that we do not accept children after 10:00am unless it has been planned.

Children will be released only to authorized persons whose names are on the emergency sheet. These names may be revised at anytime by the parent in writing.

## ***Parent Involvement***

Parents agree to volunteer a minimum 4 hours each year. Some suggestions are chaperoning on field trips, leading art projects, or community fundraiser events.





# Our Program Policy

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## ***Absence***

Please let us know if your child is going to be absent. If your child is sick with a contagious illness, please let us know so that other families can be alerted to look for symptoms in their children. Please note that in light of our policies, we maintain full confidentiality of the identity of child who has illness.

## ***Rest Time***

We begin our rest time around 12:30pm. If your child falls asleep, we will not wake them up sooner than 30 minutes from the time that they fell asleep. In addition to not waking up your child, we are unable to keep your child up under any circumstances.

## ***Technology***

We want children to engage with their own imagination. Upon enrollment, families are asked to please limit screen-time. If we notice an access of screen-time and that play is affecting the other children in a harmful way, we will determine on how to move forward.

## ***Clothing***

We ask that children wear shoes that encourage them to remove and/or put on their shoes by themselves. Children's clothing should not have violent images on it. In addition, as we are creating a space for independent learning, we recommend clothing free of pop-culture images. This includes costumes and accessories. We do not permit children to wear excessive jewelry or make-up.

## ***Toilet & Diapering***

Children need be potty trained to enter Beija Flor. Please note that they do not need to be fully potty trained to enter the program, as using the toilet is a learning process and we honor each child's pace. Children are invited to use the potty multiple times during the day.







# The Wholeness of A Child

Beija Flor holds a profound understanding of the wholeness of each child, surpassing the conventional aspects of development, and delves into a revolutionary approach where *"how we respond to our child is how they will learn to respond to themselves."* In these foundational years, the importance of responding to a child's feelings with sensitivity and grace cannot be overstated. We acknowledge that feelings are energy, and when children express sadness or anger, they are releasing and moving through energy.

Our heart-centered approach emphasizes *rhythmic responses*, allowing children to experience emotional release without judgment, preventing the accumulation of emotional tension that may lead to a sense of lack or dis-ease later in life. By honoring their emotions with tenderness and acceptance, we empower children to navigate their inner world with confidence and strength. This foundation of acceptance strengthens their ability to meet life with a sense of empowerment, fostering emotional well-being and self-trust that will carry them into adulthood with grace and strength.



# NOURISHING THEIR WHOLENESS

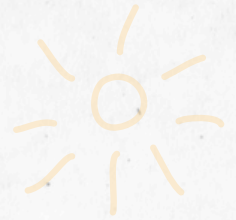
The interconnectedness of the child's wholeness to the broader community is an integral aspect in Beija Flor. We recognize that *"how we respond to our children is how we are responding to our own innocence."* This perspective urges continuous self-inquiry and growth among educators and parents alike, creating an environment where young children can flourish emotionally, spiritually, and socially. Cherishing and valuing the wholeness of each child stands at the core of our early childhood paradigm, as we guide these incredible beings who represent our future.





# Parent Agreement

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Early Childhood Community! We are thrilled to embark on this exciting journey with your family. As we introduce our program to the community, we are pleased to offer a first-year discount with an introductory rate. Please take note of the following important details:

- **Monthly Payment:** \$300 USD, due on the first day of every month. This fee includes a daily nutritious lunch for your child. Parents have until the 10th of every month to complete payment. If payment is not received within this time frame, a \$25 late fee will be applied.
- **Annual Enrollment Fee:** \$200 USD (includes materials fee). This fee contributes to the overall early childhood experience.
- **New Family Fee:** As we are opening our early childhood program mid-year, there will be no new family fee at this time. Beginning in September 2025, a non-refundable new family fee will apply to all families, including those who attended our mid-year program.
- **Notice for Withdrawal:** If a family decides to leave the program, they must provide at least one month's written notice prior to the first day of the month in which they plan to leave. For example: If a family plans to leave on or before May 31st, they must notify us by April 30th. Similarly, if a family plans to leave on May 15th, they must notify us by April 1st. Failure to provide this notice will result in the following month's payment being due in full. This policy ensures a smooth transition for both your family and our program.

## Three-Week Trial Period:

During your child's first three weeks both Beija Flor and the family have the opportunity to evaluate whether the program is the right fit. This period serves as a trial, and should either party decide to terminate the agreement within this timeframe, the \$200 enrollment fee will be fully refunded. After the three-week trial period, the enrollment fee becomes non-refundable. Should a family decide to withdraw from our program, or if we need to release the family from the agreement before the conclusion of the final day of our program, the enrollment fee and payments will be retained by Beija Flor.

We sincerely appreciate your commitment to our Beija Flor community and look forward to fostering a nurturing, positive, and enriching experience for your child during this special first year!

Warmly,

Halimah Harden

Please Sign Before:

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Parent's Name

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Parent's Signature

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Date Signed