

Behavioral Health Initiative

Guadalupe
Center

4 years

OF REALIZING ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES



Established in 1984, Guadalupe Center provides high -quality, life -changing educational programs to more than 1,950 students annually in Immokalee, Florida. Guadalupe Center is **creating a cycle of prosperity through education** for students and families through three highly successful programs – the NAEYC accredited Early Childhood Education Program, After -school Tutoring & Summer Enrichment Program and college -preparatory Tutor Corps Program.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

550+ students

from six weeks to age 5

42 classrooms over five centers
105+ Teachers

- Only National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited program in Collier County
- Students receive:
 - High-quality instruction
 - Nutritious meals
 - Safe recreation
 - Music and art class
 - Dental, vision, hearing, and behavioral screenings

95%

of our graduates are kindergarten-ready

AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING & SUMMER ENRICHMENT

780 students

in kindergarten, first & second grades across all Immokalee elementary schools

- 300 students served in 6-week Summer Enrichment Program, preventing knowledge loss outside of school
- Improving academic performance including:
 - Literacy
 - Homework help
 - STEM
 - Intensive tutoring
 - Supplemental instruction to students falling behind in class
- Tutor Corps students act as role models to elementary students

100%

achieve academic, social and emotional gains

TUTOR CORPS

275 students

high school and college students served

- Students earn wages and accrue scholarships by tutoring
- Individual guidance
- Mentor program
- College preparation includes:
 - SAT/ACT prep
 - Financial aid
 - Career exploration
 - Summer programs
- Access to university partnerships throughout the country
- Required college check-ins

94%

of students achieve college graduation

Is there a need? YES

“ As early experiences shape the architecture of the developing brain, they also lay the foundations of sound mental health. Disruptions to this developmental process can impair a child’s capacities for learning and relating to others — with lifelong implications. By improving children’s environments of relationships and experiences early in life, society can address many costly problems, including incarceration, homelessness, and the failure to complete high school.

”

- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

- We are seeing an increase in developmental delays and expulsions from early learning centers due to behavioral issues.
- The rise in the access and use of electronics has been linked to the rise in developmental delays
- Covid also contributed to an increase in developmental delays





Our Partner

Jennifer Schaaff, BCBA

Outreach Coordinator

Star Initiative

The ABLÉ Academy

- Supervision for behavioral health specialists
- Training in infant & toddler mental health.
- 15 years of experience in behavioral health services
- Funded through NCEF

Through a grant -funded partnership, ABLÉ provides behavioral health services to early learning programs in Collier County. Jen supports our internal Behavioral Health Specialist on -site multiple days per week in screening students and making plans for intervention. ABLÉ works with our staff, students and families to ensure barriers to learning are addressed.

GuadalupeCenter.org

Bertha Mendez

Senior Behavioral Health Specialist

- Works 1:1 with children
- Provides training for teachers and parents
- Creates small learning groups

Outcomes:

- Reduce challenging behaviors
- Build language skills
- Help children accomplish daily tasks independently
- Create community



“Many students need to overcome behavioral issues that can interrupt their ability to learn. Decreasing or eliminating these barriers means we can increase their potential to learn, thrive and grow academically, and they’ll ultimately experience more success in the classroom.”

-Ms. Bertha

How do we assess a student's behavioral health?



Students in the Early Childhood Education Program receive various assessments throughout the year to determine the effectiveness of curriculum and determine any gaps that need to be addressed in a child's development. These assessments include:

- Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) : Determines a child's development, administered annually around each birthday.
- Teaching Strategies Assessment (TSA) : This lays out each domain and learning objective the teachers assess each child on three times a year to determine if they are meeting program's expectations. This assessment is aligned with the Florida Early Learning Standards.
- Behavior and language assessments, designed by the Behavior Analyst, are conducted during our initial screenings when a child is referred.
 - Interventions and action plans are then created based on these results.

These assessments help identify behavioral health issues allowing us to intervene and provide services immediately.

Our Behavioral Health Specialist is collecting observation notes to monitor children's progress as each one is dealing with different challenges and struggles relating to their social -emotional behavioral health.

Expressive & Receptive Language

Small group settings allow children to focus on...

- Turn taking
- Asking and answering questions
- Learning to engage with peers
- Express their needs to teachers and peers
- Practice eye contact
- Using gestures

**This helps children in learning effective communication
and following directions**



How are we helping?

We work 1:1 with children and in group settings depending on their needs. Often our cases include:

- Delayed Language
- Behavior Concerns
- Trauma
- Disabilities



Language
Development

Parent,
Teacher
Empowerment

Conscious
Discipline

Behavior
Management

Conscious Discipline

The first step in any discipline encounter is to take a deep, calming breath. Three deep breaths shut off the fight or flight response in the body.

- Self-regulation
- Active calming
- Deep breathing
- Fussing and fits
- Self-control
- Emotional intelligence
- Social-emotional learning

Bertha is modeling and teaching the children to utilize the tools she created to help them breath through their nose and out through their mouths. Conscious discipline breathing, also known as mindful breathing or deep breathing, is a practice that involves focusing on your breath to bring your attention to the present moment. It is a simple yet powerful tool that can be used to calm the mind, reduce stress, and enhance self-awareness.



What are the Results?

The Child's Emotional World Unlocked

Through parent and teacher feedback, as well as ongoing assessments we have found...

- Decrease in undesired behaviors
- Increase in reaching developmental milestones
- Improved communication skills

Learning the basic skills of self-regulation, emotional adaptability and relating to others is key to prevention and timely intervention. Behavioral and mental health support is imperative to a child's ability to navigate barriers and succeed later in life. It is essential to not only treat children's mental health problems within the context of an early learning center, but also in their families, homes and communities.





Thank
You.