UTSA TO BEGIN STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF NEW POLICY PROHIBITING CHILDREN IN STUDENT COMPUTING FACILITIES

(San Antonio)--University of Texas at San Antonio officials are announcing that effective with the fall 2000 semester, the University will begin a no-exceptions enforcement of a new policy prohibiting children under twelve (12) years of age in any student computing facility unless they are participating in UTSA-sponsored programs under authorized adult supervision.

Because UTSA’s Student Computing Facilities (SCF) are considered laboratories, the facilities must be in compliance with provisions of UTSA’s Handbook of Operating Procedures Policy 9.13, which pertains to unsupervised children on University property. Under the policy, children under twelve (12) are not permitted in lab areas, unless they are participating in a formal University-sponsored program with appropriate adult supervision. The same restrictions also apply to any pre-college age children under eighteen (18) years of age.

"A safe and academically oriented environment must be maintained in UTSA's Student Computing Facilities," says Jeff Noyes, associate vice president for information technology. "We realize that some students have grown accustomed to bringing their children with them to the facilities. That's why the University has given them some time to make other arrangements for their children by the beginning of fall term, when enforcement of this recently implemented policy will be in full effect for ALL campus laboratory facilities, not just the Student Computing Facilities," Noyes adds. "Our staff will make every effort to accommodate student needs, but this policy is to be strictly enforced."

For more information, call SCF Manager Galen Raether at 458-5859.
Policy on Children in UTSA Student Computing Labs

Children under twelve (12) years of age are not permitted in the Student Computing Labs at any time UNLESS the children are participating in a University-sponsored program under authorized, adult supervision. The same restrictions apply to all pre-college age children between the ages of twelve (12) and eighteen (18) years.

Academic Environment. In order to focus on their academic tasks, the computer lab’s student users require an academic environment free from excess noise and disturbance. Although not all children are noisy or disobedient, the lab staff cannot discriminate between children who are and those who are not.

Safety. The large scope of the computer lab entails multiple potential hazards to children, including electrical shock, workstations that may impede vision, paper cutters, electric staplers, and equipment that could become displaced to fall over.

Crowding. Seating in the computer labs is limited. Students must have priority access over non-students to this seating.

Adult Material. Although pornography is prohibited in the facilities, students are allowed to access non-pornographic, adult-oriented material for research purposes. This material may be unsuitable for children. The lab staff cannot accept the liability resulting from a child's exposure to such material. Because the computers have complete access to the World Wide Web, a child sitting at a system could be accidentally exposed to an uncensored site.