

**Mother's Day Out
at
Covenant Lutheran Church**

**4202 Hickory Road
Temple, TX 76502
254-773-7718**

Parent Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

Mother's Day Out focuses on the whole child by providing a quality learning environment that supports children developing skills necessary to construct their own knowledge, preparing them for their next school environment and encouraging them to become life-long learners.

Covenant Preschool uses developmentally appropriate practices to provide a rich learning environment where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. Our well-trained staff strives to keep current with the best practices in early childhood education and provides developmentally appropriate practices.

GOALS

The early years in a child's life set the tone for future learning. Our curriculum is designed with specific objectives for each age level and child.

- Develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively
- Develop language skills
- Develop problem solving skills
- Develop conflict resolution skills
- Learn to be a member of a preschool community

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Mother's Day Out is under the general supervision of Covenant Lutheran Church in Temple, Texas.

TUITION RATES AND FEES

Annual registration fee - \$105

non-refundable, non-transferable

Includes a \$75.00 fee to reserve a spot for your child,

\$25.00 supply fee, and

\$5 online processing fee.

Half day Tuition 9 AM-Noon \$165/month

Full day Tuition 9 AM-2 PM \$195/month

A monthly discount of 10% will be applied to the tuition of each additional sibling who is enrolled.

Payment made via cash or check will receive a \$5 discount.

Tuition is due on the first of each month. Accounts paid after the 10th of the month will be charged an additional \$20.00. Tuition not paid by the end of the month will prevent your child from attending classes until your account is current. Tuition is payable by cash, check or credit card through our online payment portal.

There are no discounts/reimbursements for days missed due to illness, absences, vacation, or the program being closed for holidays or emergencies.

Closing time is 2:00 PM. A late fee of \$1.00 will be charged for every minute you are late picking up your child after 2:05 PM. This same policy applies to those attending the 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM session. We understand emergencies occur, but please call to keep us informed so that we may help your child adjust to the wait. Repeated failure to pick up your child on time may result in enrollment termination.

There is a \$25.00 fee assessed for any returned check. Should this occur more than once, the program will require all further payments be made by cash only.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

Mother's Day Out enrolls children ages 12 months and walking to five years (pre-kindergarten). Eligibility is maintained only if a family's account is current and all paperwork has been completed and received by the established deadlines.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS/APPLICATION PACKET

All children must be enrolled in Mother's Day Out before attendance in the program begins. Once the decision to enroll is made, families must complete the following items, sign where applicable and return them to the center prior to the child's first day of attendance:

- Registration form
- Registration Fee (non-refundable)
- Tuition
- Vaccination Records
 - An up-to-date immunization record must be submitted with registration.
 - "Exemptions for Reason of Conscience" will NOT be accepted.
 - Signed medical exemptions will be accepted from a medical doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant on letterhead.
- Photo Permission
- Parent's acknowledgement for receipt of *Parent's Handbook*

We encourage parents to meet with the Director and participate in a facility tour before the enrollment process is complete. As long as a child remains enrolled in Mother's Day Out, all of the information in the child's file must be kept updated and current. All enrollment information is confidential and will not be released or discussed outside the leadership of Mother's Day Out.

CANCELLATION OF ENROLLMENT

Cancellation of enrollment must be requested in writing, with two weeks prior notice, otherwise enrollment remains in effect for the full contract period. Parents who do not provide the program with the minimum notice must pay fees for two weeks after notice is given, even if the child no longer attends.

DRIVING AND PARKING

Safety for the children and consideration of other drivers are the basis for our policies related to driving and parking on church property. Parking spaces are clearly marked. Be vigilant for children to do the unexpected, and refrain from talking on the phone or texting while driving through the parking lot. Cars are never to be left parked and running. It is against the law to leave children unattended in a parked car.

ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL/ABSENCES

Our doors will open at **8:55 AM**. In order for children to receive the full benefit of our program and to participate with the group activities, we ask that you have your child to his/her classroom promptly at 9:00 AM. Classes begin curriculum instruction at 9:15 AM. Please call if your child is going to be absent. Please note: Tuition is not discounted for missed classes.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

Each parent is required to sign his/her child in and out upon arrival and departure. You will be asked to designate who will be picking your child up and leave the parent's emergency phone numbers for the day. Children should be escorted by the parent to their classroom and released to the staff. Parents are responsible to ensure the attending staff member is aware of their child's arrival/departure.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

Children are released only to a parent or person as authorized by your Enrollment Form. Mother's Day Out cannot release any child to an unauthorized person; therefore, we must emphasize the importance of keeping this information current and accurate.

ROOM ASSIGNMENT

Placement of a child in a classroom is determined by age and developmental level. We want your child to be placed where his/her needs are met and his/her interests challenged. While we do accept input from parents about room assignments, the program's Director and teachers will make the final decision based on what is best for the child, other children, teachers and the program.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Mother's Day Out will follow the Temple/Belton Independent School District calendar. We will be closed for observed holidays and inclement weather. Mother's Day Out will be closed if area schools announce closure. If unsure, please contact Mother's Day Out at 254-773-7718.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

As required by law, if we suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, we will report our findings to the appropriate authorities.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

It is our intent to meet the needs of the children, especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation or remarriage. However, we cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records or picking the child up unless we have been furnished with current legal documents stating such directives. Copies of these documents must be kept in the child's file for reference.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mother's Day Out does not discriminate against any child or family based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex or disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made to provide services to all children enrolled in our program.

VISITOR POLICY

Any visitors to Mother's Day Out must sign in, provide identification and have a purpose for their visit. For your child's safety, the doors will be locked at 9:30 AM and reopen at 11:45 AM. We will relock the doors at 12:10 PM and unlock once more at 1:45 PM. Please keep all family members informed about our policies and respect our desire to keep all children safe.

ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCIES/FIRST AID

The Mother's Day Out staff is certified in CPR and First Aid. Mother's Day Out works hard to provide a safe environment for the children at all times; however, part of growing up can include bumps and bruises. We are equipped with simple first aid supplies, and if a child has a minor accident, the staff will provide appropriate first aid to the child. When injuries do occur, we will communicate with parents regarding the incident and severity.

If a child has a serious injury, a staff member will provide first aid, and you will be contacted to pick up your child. If there is an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, 911 emergency personnel will be called and the parent and/or the child's physician will be notified. If a child needs to be transported by an ambulance, a staff member will accompany your child if the parent is not available. When the parent is unavailable, alternate names in the child's file are contacted as well.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Mother's Day Out places a high priority on being prepared for a variety of emergencies that may arise. We have set up emergency plans for severe weather, fire, etc.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a critical illness or injury we will take the following actions:

- Call 911 or take the child to the nearest emergency room
- Administer CPR or first aid when needed
- Contact the child's physician
- Contact the child's parent or designated emergency contact if the parent cannot be reached
- A staff member will be with the child until a parent or designated emergency contact has arrived

HYGIENE/ILLNESS

One of the most serious challenges facing group care situations for young children is preventing illness. Every effort is made by Mother's Day Out staff to prevent the spread of germs. We strive to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness, which includes frequent hand washing for children and teachers and instruction in hygiene to help minimize the spread of germs.

Mother's Day Out uses the following guidelines to protect your child as well as others from contagious illnesses. We realize that this sometimes can be an inconvenience for parents, but we trust that you will understand the necessity for such a policy. If any of the following conditions occur while your child is in attendance, you will be notified and then your child must be picked up as soon as possible.

- Fever, 100.5 degrees or greater
- Vomiting and/or Diarrhea
- Head lice
- Symptoms of an infectious disorder such as ringworm, pink eye, etc.
- Communicable disease
- Any other condition deemed necessary by the Director/teachers for the well-being of your child and the other children enrolled
- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the facility activities
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.

One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease is to have strictly enforced standards regarding the exclusion of ill children. We need your help for this. Do not bring ill children to Mother's Day Out, and if your child becomes ill while at Mother's Day Out, please pick up your child immediately. If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, please notify Mother's Day Out. It is important for us to be aware of what children may have been exposed to so that we can communicate this with parents.

THE 24-HOUR "SYMPTOM FREE" RULE

The program's policy requires that your child be free of symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea or vomiting for at least 24 hours. Do not rush a child's return to school following an illness. We reserve the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be readmitted.

MEDICATIONS

We will not administer medications to children while they are at Mother's Day Out.

DISCIPLINE/GUIDANCE METHODS

At Mother's Day Out, the purpose of discipline is to help children develop self-control and to become responsible for their own behavior. Knowing what behavior is appropriate or acceptable in a situation is an important skill. We are committed to helping children learn to express feelings appropriately, to consider other people's feelings and to negotiate their own conflicts.

We use non-punitive methods of discipline which are directly related to the child's behavior and encourage the child's participation. We ask the child to think about the problematic behavior and to find ways to remedy the situation. Teachers like to work closely with parents to understand each child and to determine which methods work best for that child; teamwork with parents is very important.

If a child exhibits continually disruptive and unsafe behavior that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the teachers will discuss the situations with the Director and parent to develop an action plan. All reasonable attempts will be made to work with the child and the family to resolve the behavior problem. Staff will keep parents informed of the progress made. If a parent refuses to work with the staff in resolving the problem, and/or the behavior problem persists resulting in a chronic situation requiring greater need for care than Mother's Day Out can provide, then the child's enrollment shall be subject to termination.

SNACK/LUNCH/WATER

Each child needs to bring a water bottle clearly labeled with their name.

A snack time is scheduled for each class. Parents must provide their child with their own, age appropriate snack. We ask that all foods be age appropriate and easy for children who are capable of feeding themselves to do so.

For those children staying until 2:00 PM, parents must also provide their child with their own lunch. Food should be supplied in containers for preserving heat or cold as microwaves and refrigerator are not always available.

BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS/HOLIDAYS

Mother's Day Out celebrates children's birthdays in age-appropriate ways in the classroom. Parents may bring cake/cookies/cupcakes that will be served during the morning snack, and parents are welcome to join the children. Birthday party invitations for parties away from Mother's Day Out may be distributed at school only through the classroom teacher. If you do not want your child's birthday celebrated, please notify Mother's Day Out in advance in writing.

Mother's Day Out does observe and celebrate all traditional and Christian holidays with activities that are child-centered, educationally oriented and developmentally appropriate. These holidays include but are not limited to:

- Thanksgiving
- Christmas
- Valentine's Day
- Easter
- Mother's Day

NAP TIME

For those children staying until 2:00 PM, we provide an optional supervised sleep or rest period. Please supply your child with a nap mat or pillow and blanket, all of which should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

BRINGING ITEMS FROM HOME

We discourage children from bringing toys from home. We will allow items of comfort to be brought to school to help a child sleep more comfortably if needed. When a child brings a toy from home, it is sometimes difficult for them to share, and the toy could get lost or broken.

POTTY TRAINING

If your child is beginning potty training, please bring your child to school in a pull-up and bring pull-ups in his/her bag. We will encourage your child to learn how to use the potty and give positive reinforcement.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Your child should be dressed in play clothes that are durable, comfortable and appropriate for play and for the season. We will go outside daily, weather permitting. Because a wide variety of activities take place on Mother's Day Out, we recommend clothes that allow for freedom of movement. Many of your child's favorite activities may tend to be a little messy, like finger painting and digging in the dirt.

At Mother's Day Out, safety is of great concern, therefore, we ask that you send your child to school wearing a sturdy shoe that supports the foot properly and protects their toes. Sneakers with socks are the best. Children are not permitted to wear clogs or flip-flops on the playground because they are dangerous for running and climbing.

We ask that you provide your child with a backpack daily with a complete change of clothing for your child. If your child is in diapers, please bring enough diapers for your child. In order to avoid confusion of lost items, please label each article of clothing clearly.

PARENTS: SCHOOL/HOME CONNECTION

Parents' involvement in their child's education is encouraged at Mother's Day Out. It is important for parents to know what is happening in their child's classroom as well as at Mother's Day Out. Please make every effort to stay informed; you are your child's advocate and his/her most important teacher. Mother's Day Out is always happy and available to speak with you about any questions or concerns you may have about your child or the facility. Please feel free to contact the Director at any time to set up a meeting.

SUMMARY OF PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Mother's Day Out expects parents to be reliable and responsible for:

- Completing all forms for enrollment/registration and paying all fees
- Keeping current on all emergency telephone numbers and other information
- Informing us if your child will not be present for the day
- Providing us with a complete change of clothing (and diapers if needed) for your child
- Correctly checking your child in and out each day
- Picking up your child promptly in case of injury or illness at school.
- Picking up your child promptly at the close of each day
- Keeping your child at home for 24 hours after all signs of a contagious illness are gone
- Reading the Parent Handbook and supporting our policies
- Keeping open communication lines between your family and us, seeking to avoid problems and misunderstandings.
- Making sure your payment is made on time and that your account is current.
- Packing a water bottle, snack, (and lunch if staying until 2pm).

Failure of a parent to abide by Mother's Day Out policies and procedures may result in enrollment termination for their child.

Disregard of policies also includes hostile disrespect to any employee, sexual harassment, hostile phone calls, voicemails, texts, or e-mail communications.

We reserve the right to maintain a harmonious, safe, Christian environment for your child.