

Volume

1

TREE OF LIFE CHURCH

Mother's Day Out Handbook

MDO Handbook

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16108 Yellow Sage
Pflugerville, Tx 78660
Phone 512.990.3444
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the *Tree of Life Church* Mother's Day Out program. We are pleased that you have chosen our program. We hope that your association with us will be a delightful experience for your family. At TOLC, we believe that children are precious gifts from God. Thank you for sharing your precious gift with us.

This parent handbook contains the philosophy and policies of our Mother's Day Out (MDO) program. Please keep this handbook as a handy reference. If you have any questions after reading the handbook, please call the MDO director at 512-217-8030.

Thank you,

MDO Staff

Tree of Life Church Mother's Day Out
16108 Yellow Sage
Pflugerville, Tx. 78660
(512) 990-3444
admin@treeoflifeaustin.org

Our Philosophy

Tree of Life Mother's Day Out offers a program where children learn and grow in a safe, nurturing environment filled with God's love.

Children are unique and at different stages in their developmental process. We will work to assess and meet the needs of our students on an individual basis in order to optimize their experience in our program.

Our curriculum reflects many types of activities including Bible stories, music, art, crafts, finger plays, games, and other experiences to stimulate all types of learning. There is a balance between free and structured play, group and individual experiences, quiet and active times, and indoor and outdoor activities.

Our desire is that each child will become an enthusiastic learner. We will encourage children to imagine, to explore, to be curious, and to express themselves in positive ways.

We encourage teamwork among our staff and parents. It is our hope that your family will experience love and joy as you encounter all aspects of our program.

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”
Proverbs 22:6 NIV

Program Days and Hours of Operations

The MDO program is a yearlong program. Our school year begins in August and ends in May. Our summer program begins in June and ends in July. We are open on Tuesdays and Thursday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. In the fall, we assess classrooms and children in order to create appropriate age-levels in each classroom. Your child will be assigned to the classroom that you as a parent, the teacher, and director think is a good fit.

Enrollment

The TOLC MDO program does not discriminate against any child or family member because of race, color, sex, creed, or political beliefs.

Children are enrolled in classes as space permits. Priority placements are as follows:

1. MDO director and teachers' children
2. Currently enrolled children
3. Siblings of currently enrolled children
4. TOLC church members
5. General public

We do maintain a waiting list. If an when an opening occurs, the director goes through this list in order of who signed up first.

School Year Enrollment

Enrollment for the fall season will begin each year in April. Currently enrolled families and church members have two weeks to enroll before classes are opened to the public. The number of spaces in each class is limited to ensure a quality program, so please register early. Classes are filled on a first come first served basis.

There is a non-refundable \$100 enrollment fee per child. This is due at the time of registration. This fee is charged once a year to help cover costs for the program.

Summer Enrollment

Depending on parent interest and staff availability, TOLC MDO offers an eight-week summer program during the summer. Summer sessions enrollment begins in April. Currently enrolled families and church members have two weeks to enroll before the classes are open to the public. The number of spaces in each class is limited to ensure a quality based program, so please register early. Classes are filled on a first come first served basis.

Holidays

Our MDO program has four holidays. We are closed for one week in December, one week for Spring Break, one week in the summer, and Thanksgiving Day. The monthly tuition is not adjusted for these closures. This is due to families paying a flat rate of \$220.00 a month no matter how many days of care are offered. We believe that this makes our program fair and we appreciate your understanding of our closure dates.

Documentation Requirements

The enrollment form must be filled out in full and kept on file in the MDO office. In order to participate in the MDO program each child must have a current copy of immunization that will be kept on file. Parents must update the record as needed.

Tuition

Tuition is calculated on an annual basis and is paid in equal monthly installments. Installments remain constant regardless of the number of classroom days, holidays, or absences in any given month. **Therefore, no reductions or refunds are given.**

The current tuition rate is \$220.00 a month for all ages. Make tuitions payments payable to TOLC. Tuition must be paid by check, cash, or online through the TOLC donation page. A recurring monthly payment can be set up online. Tuition is due, in full, the first day of school of each month. Late fees are assessed at a rate of 10% for balance due after the 5th of the month. If the balance due, including late fees, is not paid in full by the end of the month, the child may not attend MDO the following month. Return check fees are \$25.00.

Withdrawal Procedures

Please give the MDO director two-four week's notice, in writing before withdrawing your child from the program. This will give the director time to contact someone on the waiting list.

Child Arrival and Release Policy

Arrival:

Children are walked into their classroom by an adult and are left only with a TOLC MDO staff member. Class begins at 9:00 am. We encourage you to bring your child promptly at 9:00 am in order to experience the full day's activities. We request that you do not enter the classroom until 9:00 am. Teachers use the time beforehand to prepare their rooms for the day.

Departure:

MDO ends at 2:00 pm. Children are to be picked up in their classroom by an authorized adult. Please make every effort to pick up your child promptly. If you have more than one child in the program, please allow enough time to pick up both children by 2:00 pm. A \$1.00 per minute late fee will be charged after 2:00 pm. This fee is due the following school day. We recognize that emergencies arise, so please notify the MDO office before 1:45 pm if extended supervision is required.

For the safety of your child, we ask that you inform us if you are not picking up your child. For any adult not listed on the enrollment form as an authorized person, you must complete a "pick-up authorization" form and turn it into the MDO office. In the event of an emergency, you may call the MDO director and give verbal pick-up authorization. However, in this case, you will be asked to verify your identity by your Texas driver's license number or another piece of personal information. Any individual picking up your child will be asked to verify their identity with a driver's license. We will not release your child to an individual that has not been previously authorized. Please understand that these precautions are for the protection of your child.

If a parent has legal custody of a child and does not want the other parent to pick up the child, the MDO director must have the request in writing and a copy of legal custody papers.

If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please schedule a parent/teacher conference. Please avoid using arrival and departure times as a conference time.

What to Bring Daily

Ages 12 months - 24 months

- Diapers- Please send enough disposable diapers for the day. Write your child's name on each diaper.
- Diaper rash medication (if necessary)
- Bottles, pacifiers, and food- Please send what your child needs
- Sippy cups- (if needed, spill proof)
- Change of clothes (for mishaps)
- Wet wipes

We provide bibs, spoons, blankets, and burp-rags.

PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING INCLUDING ITEMS IN THE LUNCHBOX

Ages Two-Four

- Diapers- Please send 2 disposable diapers for the day. Write your child's name on each diaper. (If your child is still in diapers).
- Food- Send a lunch that does not need to be refrigerated or heated. Please send foods that your child can eat and drink without assistance. Send any utensils needed to eat the items in the lunch.
- Sippy cup or cups (spill proof)
- Nap mat or blanket
- Change of clothes (for mishaps)

PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING INCLUDING ITEMS IN THE LUNCHBOX

What NOT to bring

Please do not bring the following items to Mother's Day Out unless the teacher has requested them for Show-n-Tell or a special activity.

- Toys from home
- Money
- Gum/candy
- Pretend weapons (not even for Show-n-Tell)

DON'T FORGET TO LABEL EVERYTHING THAT COMES TO MDO WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME. Label lunch box, pacifies, nap mats, juice cups, etc.

Morning Snack

A mid-morning snack will be served daily. Please be sure your child's teacher is notified of any allergies and list them on the registration sheet. Notify the office as soon as you are aware of any allergies not previously disclosed.

Dress Code for Children

Children are urged to wear play clothes in order to comfortably participate in all sorts of creative and sometimes messy (painting, markers, colors, glue, etc) activities during each day.

The children will be going outdoors daily, weather permitting, so please send a jacket, hat, or sunscreen when necessary. We do ask that sandals, cowboy boots, and cleats not be worn to school. Tennis shoes and socks are recommended and encouraged. Don't forget to send an extra change of clothing in your child's bag each day in case of an accident.

Health Policy

We have a "good health" policy at TOLC. The teachers assess your child's health each morning. A child is not admitted to MDO if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Cold (runny nose, green drainage, cough/congestion)

- Fever (100.4 degrees or more)
- Sore throat, earache, or headache
- Reddened eyes with discharge or crusted eyelids
- Upset stomach (vomiting or diarrhea)
- Rash of any form (small pinpoint or large blisters)
- Lice- immediately removed and classes will be notified of a student infected.

If your child has had any of these symptoms, please wait 24 hours after symptoms have ceased before returning to MDO.

If your child becomes ill while at MDO, you will be called immediately, and your child will be separated from the other children. Any child with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will be sent home. Please ensure the names and phone numbers provided on the enrollment form is accurate in case you are unavailable for pick up in this situation.

In the event of an emergency situation, we will obtain emergency medical care and then notify the parents or an emergency contact. The MDO director or a TOLC church staff member will accompany a child to the hospital if parents are not present. If a child sustains a minor injury while in the care of MDO (eq. scraped kneo or elbow), the teacher will inform the parents when the child is pick up.

Medication Policy

Medications and special medical procedures are administered only with written, dates, and signed request from a licensed physician and/or parent or guardian of the child. The MDO director will administer medications. A second staff member will supervise the administering of any medications.

All medications should be kept in the original container. Prescribed and over-the-counter medications should bear the original pharmacy or manufactured label with dosage instructions. We are required by law to follow these instructions. All medicines to be administered to the child are to be turned into the MDO director.

Allergies

Be sure to complete the allergies and medical condition section of the enrollment form.

Bad Weather Policy

For bad weather, we follow the Pflugerville independent school district's decisions. We will also remain apprised of changing weather through the National Weather Service Radio.

Please tune in to one of the local radio or television stations for current school information should bad weather occur.

Should PISD close school due to bad weather then TOLC MDO will close.

Should PISD start 2 hours late on a bad weather day, TOLC MDO will remain closed for the day. We will NOT open 2 hours late. If PISD dismisses early due to bad weather, we will close early as well.

Bad weather days are not included in our calendar and will not be made up if a day(s) is missed, nor will a refund on tuition be given for missed day(s).

Curriculum

The Bible tells us “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:52) Children grow and develop in the same way. They grow in wisdom (mentally), in statures (physically), in favor with God (spiritually) and in favor with men (socially). A child’s growth and development is viewed as a process, not an event. Our aim is to help lay a foundation for understanding God, Jesus, the Bible, self, and family. As part of this foundation and understanding, we strive to develop “kindergarten ready” children in the areas of language development, reading, writing, and math skills. Our curriculum provides a range of activities designed to meet these needs.

Teachers select materials and activities developed around themes that provide opportunities for children to learn God’s world and how to live in it. The work that is planned is intended to emphasize the process rather than the product. Each child’s daily routine will incorporate a balance of free and structured play, group, and individual experiences, quiet and active times, and indoor and outdoor activities.

Classrooms include learning centers appropriate for each age level. Examples of these centers include art, books and listening, home living, music, nature and science, and puzzles and manipulative. Learning centers allow children to choose experiences that interest them. Children are able to play, talk, move around, and engage in meaningful activities.

Outside Play

Outdoor play is part of the daily schedule and extends the learning environment. Children go outside every day, weather permitting. Every class is assigned a time to play on the playground or the sanctuary. Supervised playtime outdoors or in the sanctuary ensures safety of all children. Children need to wear tennis shoes with socks.

Celebrations

Celebrating is fun! We celebrate all holidays in the spirit of Christianity. If you would like us to help you celebrate a child's birthday, we'd love to! Birthday invitations must be distributed to the entire class or mailed individually. If you would like to bring a birthday cookie, etc. to celebrate in the classroom, please coordinate this with your child's teacher at least one class day in advance regarding what you would like to bring.

Classroom Management

Preschool age children are continuously experimenting with behavior as they learn to distinguish between what is acceptable and unacceptable in various situations. Knowing this, our staff patiently and lovingly works with children to teach them acceptable social behavior.

Teachers are committed to provide a safe environment where activities are thoughtfully planned. Effective classroom management ensures that children are actively involved and on task. When children follow a routine, stay on schedule, and are involved in stimulating activities, inappropriate behavior is less likely to occur.

Positive reinforcement methods are used to encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Teachers will seek to redirect aggressive, problem behavior and teach the child to respect authority and the rights of others.

While children are entrusted to TOLC MDO, no corporal punishment or verbal abuse will be used. In the event that a child is unruly, the following forms of discipline will be administered:

- Give a verbal request to the child to stop the unruly behavior and provide an explanation as to the appropriate/inappropriate behavior.
- Redirect the child's focus.
- Brief, supervised separating from the group may be used, if necessary. The Director may require removal of a child if he/she becomes a disciplinary problem that other children should not be subjected to, or that we are not capable of handling.
- If these efforts have been exhausted and the child's behavior is totally unacceptable, then the parents may be asked to pick up the child.

Unruly behavior by a child includes hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, foul language, disrespect of other children or teachers, or disruption in the class. If a child has

special needs, the parents should discuss them with the child's teacher and the MDO director.

Parent Participation

Parent Communications

Teachers will send home a daily activity report. The MDO director will send home a monthly newsletter. Please check your child's backpack/bag daily for important communication.

Parent Visitation

Parent visitation is welcomed! We encourage you to schedule visits ahead of time in order to avoid classroom disruptions. Please stop by the MDO office and check in before entering a classroom.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to participate in the MDO program. Examples of opportunities to participate are: helping with class parties or special days, helping with special projects, sending goodies for parties or special days, and substituting when a teacher is out. Volunteers (to sit in the classrooms for 1 ½ hours) twice a year (Dec. and May) while the MDO teachers have their Christmas and end of the year teacher luncheon.

Meet the Teacher

If you would like to meet the teacher, and allow your child to visit our program, please schedule a tour with our director. We encourage all families to take advantage of this service to help ensure children feel more comfortable on their first day and that we are a good fit for your family. Our teachers love to meet new families and answer any questions you may have.

Praise, Suggestions, or Concerns

We encourage input from parents! Please express your praises and suggestions to any staff member at MDO. The MDO director is available if you have a concern. *TOLC* has a MDO Committee that is available to hear any praise, suggestions, or concerns. To reach a member of this committee, call the church office and leave a message. A committee member will return your call in a timely manner. Your input is vital to the success of the MDO program!