

Dayspring Christian Pre-School

Parent Handbook

April 2007

Amy Count
Director

Parent Handbook Checklist

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Welcome to Dayspring Christian Pre-school

Welcome to Dayspring Christian Pre-School. God conceived a plan by which we would enter the world as babies, grow up through the joys of childhood, learn how to rely on others, and see the world through eyes of simple faith before taking on the world as adults. We at Dayspring Christian Pre-School strive to help you as parents develop this faith. Our mission at Dayspring Christian Preschool is to reach out to children and their families by providing an environment that nurtures sound spiritual, physical, mental, social and developmental needs. We hope to help each child build the foundation needed for successful Christian living now and forever.

SPIRITUAL – We believe that basic Christian principles are essential in providing children with a sound foundation for their future growth. Through special Christian curriculum, we are able to meet this task. Children are taught that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is their Lord and Savior, and that the Bible is the written Word of God and the way for their lives to be patterned.

PHYSICAL – We recognize the need to provide an age-appropriate physical environment for each child, and have designed an environment to meet its physical activeness.

MENTAL – We strive to provide children with a safe, secure, learning environment to develop their emerging skills. We recognize that you are your child's first and most important teacher and feel it is important for parents to be part of their child's growth. Therefore, we will keep parents informed of their child's progress and activities and strive to provide ways for parents to be active in the school.

SOCIAL – We provide channels by which children are able to experience positive ways to develop socially through basic Christian concepts.

DEVELOPMENTAL – We believe that the majority of a child's learning foundation is established at a young age. We focus on this concept by providing an accepting, non-threatening, learning environment that is developmentally age-appropriate. We provide a hands-on learning style environment that allows exploration and discovery through the use of the five senses.

- We are a non-profit ministry of Dayspring Christian Fellowship specializing in full-time care for infants six weeks to four years and after school care.

Amy Count, Director

OUR ENROLLMENT POLICY

Dayspring Christian Pre-School accepts children between the ages of six weeks to twelve years of age whose parent wants to provide their children with a Christian developmentally age-appropriate learning environment that will build a sound foundation of Christian values needed for successful Christian living now and forever.

Dayspring Christian Pre-School offers full-time care for children six-weeks through four years of age. The classrooms are as follows:

- Infants – six weeks to 11 months
- Transition – 12 months to 17 months
- Toddler 18 months to 23 months
- Toddler 24 months to 35 months
- Toddler 3 years
- Toddler 4 years
- Before/After School
- If there are no openings, we do provide a waiting list for future enrollment. Openings are filled on a first come, first serve basis. Priority will be given if the family already has a child enrolled in Dayspring Christian Pre-School.

Upon Enrollment, there will be a registration fee of \$75.00 per child with a maximum of \$150.00 per family. This fee is payable immediately upon enrollment.

When you enroll your child at Dayspring Christian Pre-School, you will be asked to fill out a number of forms. The Protective and Regulatory requires some of these – (i.e., the child's registration record and the health and immunization record) and others are for our records. The following information must be on file before your child may attend Dayspring Christian Pre-School:

- **Registration form** – provided in your enrollment packet. All information must be completed before a child can be accepted in our program.
- **Medical information** – provided in your enrollment packet. Please make sure that your doctor's signature is on all forms where required. Immunization information must be included and current. Please make sure to bring in any updated immunization information when your child receives them. This information must be in the file before your child starts. If you cannot comply with this requirement, we must have a copy of our health statement on file and the date of your child's next doctor's appointment. **Every Child must be TB tested.**
- **A statement of special needs**, including known allergies or existing illnesses
- A signed acknowledgment of receipt of the following:
 - Parent Handbook
- Notarized Emergency Medical Form (Notarization provided)

Please make sure all forms in our enrollment packet are filled out and turned in to the Director. If you have any questions, please feel free to give management a call or schedule a time for them to go over each form with you.

OUR HOURS OF OPERATION

Dayspring Christian Pre-School is opened Monday through Friday 6:45 a.m.- 6:00 p.m. We observe the following holidays in which the center will be closed:

- New Years Eve
- New Years Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed on the previous Friday. If it falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday.

We will be closed the week of Dec. 25th thru Jan. 2nd

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

An adult must accompany all children inside the building and to their classroom. Once in the classroom, please make sure the teacher is aware your child has arrived. You will need to sign your child in and out each day on the "Sign In/Out" sheet located in your child's classroom. Before and Afterschool children's "Sign In/Out" sheet is located on the Parent Information Table. When you pick your child up, please make sure the teacher is aware that you are taking your child (do not forget to sign them out). If your child is ill or will be absent, please call and notify us by 10:00 a.m. so we can schedule the day accordingly.

If anyone other than a parent is picking up your child, please make sure his or her name and driver's license number is on file. It is also very important that you inform both the child's teacher and the Preschool Office that someone other than you will be picking up your child. Authorized persons must come directly to the Preschool Office and show proper identification. **We will not release a child to anyone who is not authorized or who does not have proper identification.**

ITEMS TO BRING

There are a number of things you should bring with your child to the center. Use the following list as a checklist to assure that you have not forgotten anything your child may need at the center:

- Complete change of clothing (weather appropriate) (please label with the child's name)
- Naptime blanket, small pillow (kept in child cubby) (please remember to take these items home on Friday to be washed).
- For infant that's not ready for table food
 - Bottles with caps (please label both with the child's name)
 - Baby food (please label with the child's name)
 - Extra juice (please label with the child's name)
 - Formula

- Bibs
- For children not potty trained
 - Diapers and wipes
 - Powder, creams or ointments
 - Extra clothes including socks (weather appropriate)
- Books and music are always welcome

We ask that you leave all other toys at home. Dayspring Christian Pre-School is not responsible for lost or misplaced toys.

Our learning is creative; hands on and sometimes can be messy. Please dress your child for comfort and durability. Clothes should be easy to get in and out of to encourage independence in dressing. Each child needs to have weather appropriate change of clothing, with their initials marked inside, kept in their cubby at all times. Please remember to send a new pair of clothing each time soiled clothing comes home. While most of the older children will never need to use the clothes, it is very embarrassing to a child to have an accident and not have any clothes to put on.

All children at Dayspring Christian Pre-School will play outside everyday, weather permitting. Please make sure your child has the appropriate outerwear.

Dayspring Christian Pre-School is not responsible for lost articles of clothing.

ITEMS NOT TO BRING

We ask that you do not allow your child to bring in any play guns, knives, or any other toy of destruction.

OUR DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline must be:

- (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
- (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;

- (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

OUR LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Our center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. If your child is picked up after 6:00 p.m., you will need cash at the time of pick up for \$1.00 per minute. We understand that certain situations may arise that will prevent you from arriving by 6:00 p.m. Please give us a call if something does come up so that we may inform the teacher and your child. If this situation occurs frequently, **Dayspring Christian Pre-School reserves the right to raise your late fee or terminate your enrollment in our program.**

BAD WEATHER POLICY

In the event of foul weather, we will be following New Braunfels School District decisions concerning closings or delays. If the weather turns inclement, we ask that our families are considerate and pick up their children as soon as possible so that we can get our staff home safely. No tuition credit is available for days closed due to weather closings.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

We would appreciate a two-week notice prior to removing your child from our program (no refunds are given on any fees if a student withdraws).

DISCHARGE POLICY

A child may be discharged from the Center if:

- It is determined that the child's needs are not being met at the Center.
- If the parent's do not comply with the policies of the Center.
- If it determined that a child is disruptive, uncooperative, or in any other way disturbs the other children or the program.
- If tuition payment has been late for over one month, payment and additional late charges will be required before your child may attend.

TUITION

A \$25.00 late charge will be assessed if payment has not been received by 12:00 p.m. on the 3rd of the month. A \$25.00 late charge will be assessed if payment has not been received by 12:00 p.m. on the 17th of the month.

Please note that tuition must be paid in full without deduction for absences or holidays. This is because our staffing and other operation expenses are arranged on the basis of fixed enrollment levels and employees benefits. Obligations must be met on a continuing basis. Few of the operational costs of the facility are eliminated when a particular child is absent. We are confident that you will understand our need for financial stability, and we appreciate your cooperation.

There will be a \$35.00 charge for any returned checks. After two returned checks, you will be required to pay cash for all future tuition payments.

DISCOUNTS AND VACATION CREDITS

After your child has been enrolled in full-time (five full consecutive days) care for twelve consecutive months, you will accrue a vacation credit. Enrolled families will receive a credit of five vacation days. While enjoying vacation credit, your child's place will be held at no extra charge to you. Vacation credit will not be carried over from year to year. It is the parent's responsibility to claim vacation credit. You may do so by writing to the Director two weeks prior to your vacation. Vacation credit is awarded in kind only; therefore it is not payable to families upon withdrawal.

SUPPLY FEES

In August, you will be charged a \$50.00 supply fee and/or additional book fees where applicable. This fee is **non-refundable**. This will cover all ages.

REGISTRATION FEE

Upon enrollment, there will be a registration fee of \$75.00 per child with a maximum of \$150.00 per family. This fee is **non-refundable** and is payable immediately upon enrollment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Lunches and snacks are provided Monday- Thursday and will meet state standards for nutritional value. You can find menus posted on the bulletin boards in each room and in the hall by the office. The times these meals are served can also be found in your child's class.

We consider snack and meal time a wonderful social learning opportunity. We never force a child to eat, but we do encourage children to try different foods. If a child has continual difficulty eating, we will contact the parent, and at that time, discuss other options for mealtime. We always encourage self-help skills. Each meal is home-style. Teachers sit with the children at every meal to help encourage good manners and to offer assistance wherever needed. Parents are always welcome to join their child for lunch.

*If your child requires a special diet due to food allergies, health or religious reasons, please send a statement to be included in your child's file. **It is a State requirement that we have a physician's statement on file.** We are not equipped to provide individual menus for children with special diet needs. **You will be required to provide substitute foods for your child.** Always make sure you have informed the teacher in your child's class of any special needs.

ILLNESS

When a child becomes ill at school, they will be separated from other children, supervised by a staff member, until they can be taken home. If a child exhibits symptoms of illness, a parent or emergency contact listed on the child's registration form will be asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. The child may return if free of fever or symptoms for 24 hours (**without the aid of fever reducing medicines**) or a note from a physician stating they are no longer contagious and no longer have a fever.

If your child shows any of the following symptoms at school, you will be asked to pick them up immediately:

- A temperature of 100.4 or higher
- Vomiting or uncontrolled diarrhea
- Unexplained rashes or open sores on body or in mouth
- Obvious symptoms of communicable disease
- Reddened, watery eyes

We will follow the guidelines set by the Texas Department of Protection and Regulatory Services. Our goal is to keep our center as free from illness as possible. This can only happen if the lines of communication stay open between school and home. If you have a question as to whether your child should attend school, please call before bringing them in, and we can assess the situation.

MEDICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

We recognize how important a medicine is to a child's recovery, and will administer medication according to the following guidelines:

- ***Medication is only given after a medication form is filled out and signed by a parent or guardian. Medication forms are located in the Pre-School Office or individual classroom.***
- Medicine will be dispensed to children only when medication dosage cannot be adjusted to exclude hours the child is in our care.
- Medication must be labeled with the child's name and date that it is bought in to school
- Over the counter medicines can only be administered if the dosage on the label includes your child's age and/or weight (remember to label with their name and date).
- Unclaimed medicines will be disposed of at the end of the week.
- All medications must be brought in its original container, in zip-lock bag with a calibrated measuring spoon enclosed.
- To avoid having to bring medicine back and forth each day, ask your pharmacist to put your child's medication in two bottles (Remember we MUST have a pharmacy label, with your child's name and dosage, on prescribed medicines).
- Please personally hand all medicines to a staff person. Never leave medicines on a counter, where a child may have access.
- If your school-age child will be carrying medicines from public school in his/her backpack, please notify us by telephone that morning.
- Medications may not be left in a child's cubby or backpack.

EMERGENCIES AND ACCIDENTS

If an accident occurs while your child is in the care of Dayspring Christian Pre-School, and your child requires immediate medical attention, the proper authorities will be called, first aid and/or CPR will be started and you will be notified. An emergency medical release is included in your enrollment packet. If the accident or injury is minor, first aid will be administered, and you will be called immediately. Illness and injury reports are filled out for every occurrence. You will be

asked to read and sign the form. It is then kept in your child's file. You may request a copy at any time.

All of the staff members at Dayspring Christian Pre-School are trained and certified in CPR and first aid.

It is very important that you keep all phone numbers and contacts current. If we cannot reach you, or any of the contacts you have listed, and there is a question of whether the child should have medical attention, we will err on the side of caution, and your child will be transported to the nearest medical facility.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Dayspring Christian Pre-School will have monthly fire drills and bi-annual severe weather drills. In the case of an actual emergency, and we are unable to return to the building, we will move the children to the back of our property to the baseball diamond. If this occurs you will be contacted by phone immediately and asked to pick up your child.

Evacuation procedures can be found posted in your child's classroom.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the family and the school is vital. We have an open door policy, and welcome you to visit or observe your child at anytime. Parents and teachers are encouraged to communicate immediately with each other when concerns or problems arise. To help facilitate communication, Dayspring Christian Pre-School will:

- Hold parent/teacher conferences two times a year
- Provide daily sheets for children 2 and under
- Place "What We Did Today" boards outside your child's room.
- Place all letters of communication from management in each child's classroom.

You can also find a parent board to help keep you informed of all upcoming events and to offer support in all the developmental stages of your child's growth.

ANIMALS AT THE CENTER

Parents will be notified in writing when animals are or will be present in the center.

BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES

Parents are welcome to have their child's birthday celebration at Dayspring Christian Pre-School. Please make sure you discuss the time and arrangements with the child's teacher. We will also have other occasions for celebrations. These include Valentines Day, Resurrection Day, the end of summer, Independence Day and the birth of Jesus Christ (Christmas). Parents are always welcome to help in the preparations for our parties and should let their child's teacher know they want to be involved.

TOYS, VIDEOS AND GUM

Recognizing that bringing toys to the center can become an unpleasant issue between parent and child, we leave that choice up to the family. However, the center can in no way be held responsible for the toys brought to the day care or for their safe return home. We suggest that parents initiate a home rule of no toys to day care, except for show-and-tell days. Labeled books are always welcomed. We also ask that on show-and-tell days war or violent toys be kept at home. No guns or swords are allowed. We do allow TV and occasionally we will show a video, with strict attention to movie showings and ratings. Other activities shall be available to children during video viewing. Please do not allow children to bring or chew gum in school.

DONATIONS

Dayspring Christian Pre-School is a nonprofit organization funded mainly by tuition. The IRS considers any donations of money or new or used materials acceptable tax deductions. Tax receipts can be provided, when requested, to anyone making a donation to the Center.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to become involved in program activities, both through fund raising activities and through classroom involvement. Staff welcome parental assistance on field trips. Also, parents may have a special profession, interest or skill, which can be integrated into the daily program. In the past, doctors have become involved in sunscreen talks, dentists in tooth care demonstrations (including a field trip to the dentist's office) and a parent came to play his violin. Staff can always use assistance with special crafts. (Please volunteer your talents and time to the staff.)

Even if you lack the necessary talent, the staff may have a special project or tasks in mind, which requires extra help.

MOONLIGHTING

Dayspring Christian Pre-School is not responsible for any employee or child that is in the care of a Dayspring Christian Pre-School employee's care outside of Pre-School hours.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PUBLICITY

Photographs of your children participating in our programs may be taken from time to time and may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures or other publicity materials. Your participation for this is assumed unless we hear otherwise from you. There will be no compensation given for the use of these pictures.

POTTY TRAINING

Potty training is a huge milestone to children and parents. Consistency is the key to success. Please discuss your child's potty training with his/her teachers before you send your child to school in training pants or underwear. Every child is different and we want to meet the needs of the children on an individual basis. Warm weather is a good time to start. If you begin potty

training before your child is two, and he/she loses interest, stop and try again in a few weeks. Once an older child starts the process, keep trying, they will catch on eventually. We will keep in close communication with you during this important learning process. When your child begins to show interest we will start to work on potty skills. Children entering the Pre-School Class (Three's) must be completely potty trained and able to communicate their potty needs to the teacher. Accidents are handled matter-of-factly and the child cleans him/herself and changes his/her own clothes. Children having an accident one or two more times per week are not considered completely potty trained.

BITING

Since toddlers (approximately one to three years old) have limited language and few of us can read minds, we can only make an educated guess as to why they bite. Some of the problem reasons that toddlers bite:

1. **TEETHING.** Cutting teeth hurts. Chewing on something relieves the pain. Toddlers are egocentric and cannot put themselves in the place of others. They do not know they are hurting another.
2. **SENSORY EXPLORATION.** Anyone who has spent much time with babies and toddlers knows that they put everything in their mouths. This includes other children and adults. Biting is sometimes a way of learning about another child.
3. **CAUSE AND EFFECT.** "If I bite Andrew, I hear a high pitched scream and my special adults come running to my side. I wonder if it will happen again." Seems to be in the mind of some biting toddlers. Toddlers are learning to have an impact on their world and biting definitely has an impact.
4. **MIMICRY.** Modeling or copying the actions of others is an important and powerful way for toddlers to learn. Unfortunately sometimes the toddlers learn negative behaviors like biting. Any adult who has spent much time with a group of toddlers can testify to the fact the biting is more contagious than chicken pox.
5. **SELF-ASSERTION.** The accident report given the parent by a caregiver at the end of the day reads, "Child was bitten during a struggle over a toy." Toddlers have very limited language skills. Consequently, biting is a way to register a complaint.
6. **FRUSTRATION, FATIGUE, STRESSES.** Some children bite when they are tired, hungry, rushed or when Mom is out of town, etc. Adults need to be aware of what is happening in the life of the biting child and take action to prevent other children from being physically hurt.

Biting is an age-appropriate behavior for toddlers (approximately one to three year olds). Biting is especially likely among those toddlers in-group care settings. Even so, biting is not an acceptable behavior and adults must help toddlers control their urge to bite other children. (Caregivers and teachers cannot promise that your child will never be bit again. (We wish we could.)

Uncontrolled biting or biting that breaks the skin could result in immediate discharge.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parents are reminded that smoking is not permitted in the center, or on the grounds. We thank you for your cooperation. According to the Texas gun laws, it is unlawful for guns to be carried into a school.

HELPFUL HINTS

When picking up your child at the end of the week, make sure you have all of your child's belongings and weekly folders. Please leave valuables and keepsakes at home. We cannot be responsible for items left in the classrooms. Notices and announcements will be placed on all main doors and bulletin boards.

Inform us of any different or unusual situations at home, which might upset your child during the time they are in our care. Such information will help us minister to your child.

Admire your child's artwork and let him tell you about it. Avoid asking question such as "What is this?" Instead, comment on the colors used the textures, and the materials thus allowing your child to verbalize what they have done. Please remember that the process of learning and experiencing is what counts, not the finished product.

When cleaning out closets or discarding old toys and books, remember us. We can make wonderful things out of discards.

Please do not leave any children unattended in your car.

Remember God's advice ... "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6.

Minimum Standards and Licensing

Dayspring Christian Pre-School's State of Texas child-care license and minimum standards are available upon request at any time.

Instruction on how to contact Licensing office, Protective Regulatory Services to report child abuse hotline and website: **1-800-252-5400** <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

DISCLAIMER: Many factors are used to determine our programs. Those factors will impact availability and structure of our programs. We reserve the right to change our programs and availability at any time to ensure quality in the best interest of our students and teachers.

Dayspring Christian Pre-School

Parent Handbook Agreement

I, _____ have reviewed a copy of the Dayspring Christian Pre-School Parent Handbook and Discipline Policy. I have read, understood, and will abide by the policies set forth in this document.

Signature _____

Date _____