



**SonShine**  
PRESCHOOL

# Parent Handbook

Welcome to SonShine Preschool. We are a ministry of Austin Ridge Bible Church, serving families in Austin since 1987. Our preschool program offers your child an opportunity for a tender and loving introduction to school in a safe, fun, Christian environment. Our desire is to love and care for our children and our families in a way that encourages and nurtures their love for Jesus. Additionally, because children learn best through play, we strive to provide daily opportunities for play through the mediums of art, science, literacy, and music. Our strong child development program provides an opening for children to interact and explore the world God has created, while nurturing a love for learning and encouraging problem solving skills and language development. We are so happy and thankful you are here!

*Annie Rabke*  
Director of SonShine Preschool

### Our Vision for SonShine Preschool

Our vision at SonShine Preschool is to impact children's lives for eternity with the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

### Our Mission Statement

SonShine Preschool's purpose is to provide a rich learning environment for children that places God at the center. We seek to integrate God's Truth in all we do, daily convey God's love to each child, and foster a natural wonder about God's creation. Because we believe parents are a child's most important teachers, our secondary purpose is to support our parents every way we can. Our desire is to love and care for our children and families in a way that encourages spiritual growth and a love for Jesus.

*"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."* Proverbs 22:6

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## Philosophy of Education

The SonShine Preschool program is a developmental, play-based program, so our classes are designed based on the needs of preschool aged children. Because play is children's work, we seek to provide activities which are developmentally appropriate for each child.

*"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning." ~ Mr. Rogers*

## Enrollment Procedures

### Registration

For the coming school year, registration takes place during the **last week of January**. The first day of registration is for the families currently enrolled in our program. The second day of registration is open for members of Austin Ridge Bible Church and SonShine alumnae families. Day three of registration is for the general public. Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. During registration, if the class you wish to enroll your child in becomes full, you will be placed on a Wait List for that class. The SonShine office will contact you when, and if, a space becomes available. The Wait List does not roll over from year to year.

*For all classes, the child must be the class age by September 1. The two-year-olds will be divided into two classes based on age with a younger 2s class and an older 2s class.*

### Supply/Event Fee

There is a non-refundable Supply/Event Fee due a registration.

### Enrollment

The first week of May, **\*ALL ORIGINAL FORMS** (Medical Form, Immunization Record, Allergy Questionnaire, etc.), and one month's tuition (*applied to May of the following school year*) are due.

\*See **Step 2: Required Forms** <https://austinridge.org/sonshine/registration>

### Tuition

Regular tuition payments begin September 1 and continue through April. Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. A late fee will be assessed unless prior arrangements have been made with the SonShine Office. Failure to pay tuition may cause the child's place in the class to be forfeited. SonShine Preschool may charge a fee for each check returned from the bank.

Tuition may be paid online through ProCare. Checks, cash and money orders are all acceptable forms of payment, as well.

\*\*\* No adjustments or refunds in tuition can be made for illness, vacation, transfer, or withdrawal.

\*\*\*Tuition is non-refundable.

### Vision & Hearing Screening for 4 & 5 Year Olds:

PreK classes (ages 4 & 5) are required by the state to have an annual *Vision & Hearing* screening. We contract with an outside source to conduct the screening on campus in the fall for which parents will be invoiced via ProCare. Tests results will be sent home. If preferred, parents may choose to have the screening completed at their pediatrician's office and submit the results to the SonShine office no later than December 1 of the current school year.

### Policy Changes

If policy changes occur, parents will be notified by email.

### **Hours, Days, & Months of Operation**

SonShine Preschool hours are 9:00-1:00. Older 2s-PreK meet Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Our Young 2s meet Wednesdays and Fridays. We are in session late August through mid May.

### **Developmental Lesson Planning**

Learning activities will be based on the developmental level of the children in a particular age group.

Our preschool curriculum *may* revolve around a monthly theme. Some of the themes covered during the school year might include: All About Me, On the Farm, Families, Winter, Community Helpers, Spring, Animals, Our Environment or Under the Sea.

In addition to our monthly themes, each class has a daily Bible time with story and songs. Additionally, the students memorize a Bible verse each month. Each week the Austin Ridge Children's Ministry Team leads chapel for our 3s-PreK children, with our Older 2a joining when ready.

Also, in our weekly Music class, we have interactive stories, learn new rhythms while playing instruments, dance to silly songs, and sing solfège just like they did in *The Sound of Music*. Most importantly, the children learn to use music to worship Jesus!

### **Special Care Needs**

SonShine Preschool staff will work with parents and their health-care professional to assist and accommodate activities and learning for each child and will ensure reasonable accommodations and modifications are made.

### **Outdoor Play**

Children will have at least 30 minutes of outdoor play each day; however, most days, an hour is allotted for outside activities. If temperatures reach 100 degrees Fahrenheit or drop below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, children will have indoor play in one of our large meeting areas or in the large foyer on Level 3. Plenty of room allows space to run, jump, and play.

### **Clothing**

Children should wear comfortable, washable play clothes in which they can move easily and are free to play and explore. Please keep in mind that any clothing worn to preschool will be subject to paint, glue, outside elements, etc. Clothing should be simple enough for children to manage alone. In the interest of safety, children should wear closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes. We recommend tennis shoes. Please do not send your child in crocks, sandals, flipflops, or cowboy boots; they are problematic for preschool activities. The exception will be on special event days such as Cowboy Day. On these occasions, notification will be sent home by office staff or teachers.

Austin weather can change rapidly, so please provide layered clothing, particularly during fall/winter months. We play outdoors every day except when it's raining, temperatures are below 40 degrees, or above 100. Please send your child with warm outerwear, and please be sure to label all removable clothing.

Please provide a labeled zip-lock bag containing a change of clothes for your child. Even if they have never had an accident, we need a change of clothes. In the world of preschool and play, many things can happen. Included in the bag should be shirt, shorts (or pants in cold weather) underwear and socks. In the event we need to change your child's clothes, we will send soiled clothing home in the provided bag. Please send a replacement set the following school day.

We have a *no costume* policy at SonShine Preschool.

## **Sunscreen / Insect Repellant**

SonShine Preschool staff members are not authorized to apply sunscreen or insect repellant. Parents should apply to their child before school.

## **Attendance, Drop-off and Pick up**

### **Attendance**

Attendance is documented and tracked through monthly sign-in & out sheets.

### **Drop-off**

Preschool begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. As much as possible, please ensure that your child arrives at school on time each day so they do not miss beginning activities and are not disruptive to the class when it is already in progress. If your child will be absent, please call or email the preschool office (512-263-1722 or [sonshineschool@austinridge.org](mailto:sonshineschool@austinridge.org).) *Thank you so much.*

Parents need to personally escort their child(ren) to the classroom to sign them in and out. If you arrive before 9:00, please remain outside the classroom until door is open.

### **Pick up**

Pickup is promptly at 1:00 p.m. at the classroom. Parent, or authorized person, must sign out their child. Please understand our staff have responsibilities after the children are picked up, so we appreciate your commitment to picking up promptly. We do understand there can be extenuating and unforeseen circumstances. If you find yourself in an unanticipated situation, please call the office as soon as possible.

**Please note:** Anyone picking up your child must be listed as an “authorized pick up” on your child’s information sheet. Phone requests will be accepted for emergencies only and must be followed up with a note for your child’s file. No child may be released to the care of anyone under 18.

### **Late Policy**

Save for unexpected occurrences, our late fee policy is \$5 per five minutes after 1:00.

### **Discipline**

**See Appendix D for HHSC Guidelines**

Discipline shall reflect the truth of God’s Word and shall be based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child. Our desire and goal in discipline is to point children to Jesus and to how He has instructed we interact and treat others. Using Scripture, employees shall seek to redirect when needed and teach the child to respect and obey those in authority and to respect others. No physical punishment will ever be given.

If a problematic behavior persists, the teacher or director will notify parents. A conference may be requested. A plan will be implemented with a follow up in approximately two weeks. If behavior persists with no improvement, next steps will be discussed with parents. Suspension or expulsion will be implemented if not change is observed or if harm is done to another student.

It is most important that children learn rules are followed because it pleases God, and He has called us to obey Him and His Word.

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

SonShine Preschool has an Emergency Preparedness Plan in place. Staff are trained and have a copy of the plan in their emergency folders. A copy is available for reading and review in the office. According to the plan, fire drills are practiced monthly. Severe weather and active attacks (Lock Down) drills are practiced 4 times each per calendar year.

## Food Allergy Policies

SonShine Preschool is committed to the safety of our students and acknowledges that some students have allergies that are triggered by certain foods and may lead to an anaphylactic reaction, which can be life threatening. The preschool reserves the right to prohibit specific foods from the classroom area or full campus if deemed necessary. SonShine Preschool is a nut and peanut free environment. Refer to the following list for tree nuts and foods commonly containing tree nuts that are not allowed at SonShine Preschool.

| List of Tree Nuts and Foods Commonly Containing Tree Nuts   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Almond</li><li>• Artificial nuts</li><li>• Brazil nut</li><li>• Beechnut</li><li>• Butternut</li><li>• Cashew</li><li>• Chestnut</li><li>• Chinquapin nut</li><li>• Coconut</li><li>• Filbert/hazelnut</li><li>• Gianduja (a chocolate-nut mixture)</li><li>• Ginkgo nut</li><li>• Hickory nut</li><li>• Litchi/lychee/lychee nut</li><li>• Macadamia nut</li><li>• Marzipan/almondpaste</li><li>• Nangai nut</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural nut extract (e.g., almond, walnut)</li><li>• Nut butters (e.g., cashew butter)</li><li>• Nut meal</li><li>• Nut meat</li><li>• Nut paste (e.g., almond paste)</li><li>• Nut pieces</li><li>• Pecan</li><li>• Pesto</li><li>• Pili nut</li><li>• Pine nut (also referred to as Indian, pignoli, pigfiolia, pignon, pifion, and pinyon nut)</li><li>• Pistachio</li><li>• Praline</li><li>• Shea nut</li><li>• Walnut</li></ul> |

Source: Food Allergy Research and Education [www.foodallergy.org/allergens/tree-nut-allergy](http://www.foodallergy.org/allergens/tree-nut-allergy)

## Snack, Lunches, & Water Bottles

Each school day, parents should send a peanut & nut free snack and lunch along with a water bottle. All items should be clearly labeled with child's first name and last initial. Snacks need to be:

- in a separate Ziploc baggie
- labeled "SNACK" with your child's first name and last initial

Please do not send foods that require heating. Please provide drinks in containers that do not easily leak or spill. Sippy cups sent for younger children must be labeled with child's first name and last initial. Remember that water is a very thirst-quenching and healthy beverage.

Please keep nutrition in mind when preparing your child's snack and lunch. Sandwiches, cheese, fruits, mini-bagels, raisins, craisins, crackers, vegetables, and pasta are a few good choices. Foods on which children can easily choke, such as grapes, should be cut in half. \*\*Please do not send candy in your child's lunch box to preschool.

Foods which contain excessive amounts of sugar, salt, food additives or preservatives should be avoided. According to the standards set by the *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*, SonShine Preschool is not allowed to serve beverages with added sugars such as carbonated beverages, fruit punch or sweetened milk save for particular occasions such as holidays or special events.

Water will be always be available at lunch, snack, and after active play.

## Birthdays

Simple recognition is given to each child on his or her birthday. Parents may provide a set of disposable birthday paper goods to be used. At snack time or lunch, children's food will be served on the party plates. Stickers may be sent to share with the class on your child's birthday; however, it is optional. Additionally, if a birthday treat (cupcakes, popsicles, etc.) is to be provided, please notify the teacher and families a week in advance. **Birthday treats must be nut/peanut free.**

Private birthday party invitations may be handed out only if they include the entire class.

## Holidays and Class Parties

- We do not celebrate Halloween.
- Classes celebrate Thanksgiving with a special feast. The meal is in keeping with our food policies. A week in advance, your child's teacher will share the menu.
- We focus on and celebrate Christ at Christmas and Easter.

## Cooking in Class

Occasionally, teachers may cook in their classrooms. Prior to any cooking, teachers will notify parents at least one week in advance.

## Illness & Health Policies

**\*Please see Appendix A for SonShine Preschool Health Protocols**

SonShine Preschool has a "zero tolerance" policy. Therefore, if your little one has any of the following symptoms please stay home:

- Persistent cough
- Continual runny nose (**Please have a doctor's note if symptoms are due to allergies.**)
- Green or yellow nasal discharge
- Discharge from the eyes or red eyes and puffy eyelids
- Diarrhea, fever, sore throat, or vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Persistent headache and/or muscle pain
- Skin eruptions or rash (until diagnosed by a doctor)

Also, if your child meets any of the following conditions, please stay home:

- Has been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours
- Requires fever-suppressing medication or cough medicine
- Stomach Bug – symptom free for 48 hours

Parents will be notified if their child develops symptoms of illness during the day. Please make every effort to pick up your child within 30 minutes of the initial phone call.

If you keep your child at home for illness, will you please call the office and let us know? Thank you.

SonShine Preschool, per HHSC requirements, follows *Austin Public Health's Isolation & Exposure Guidance for Pre-K - 12th Grade Schools & Child Care Programs*.

<https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/8.17.2022%20Isolation%20Exposure%20Guidance%20for%20Schools%20and%20Child%20Care%20Programs.pdf> (August 17, 2022)



## **Injuries**

In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. All injuries not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day.

In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care, the staff will call 911 and, as appropriate, CPR and/or first aid will be administered by a staff member. Parents will be also be notified immediately.

## **Communicable Diseases**

SonShine Preschool follows the communicable diseases exclusions required for schools as defined by the *Texas Department of State Health Services*. This list includes, but is not limited to, the communicable diseases listed below. If your child has been medically diagnosed with a contagious disease, by law, the school must be notified as soon as possible.

- Chickenpox, Measles, Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Covid
- Fifth Disease accompanied by fever
- Strep Throat
- Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Influenza

## **Lice**

SonShine Preschool has a "no nit policy" regarding lice. This means that a child must not attend school until he/she receives one treatment and all head lice, nits (lice eggs), and egg cases have been removed from the child's head. On the child's first day back, he/she will need to come to the office for a head inspection before reentering the classroom.

## **Medical and Immunization Records**

According to the rules of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a Medical Form, signed by a physician, and Immunization Records *or* an Affidavit exempting Immunizations are required for each child. For the protection of the entire student body and staff, no child will be allowed to begin school without completed or updated documentation on all health records. *Please see Appendix F for the current Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child-Care Facilities.* If there are any changes to the immunization record, the child's general health or any other contact information during the year, please notify the preschool office as soon as possible.

The Texas Department of State Health Services does not require tuberculosis testing for children enrolled at SonShine Preschool.

## **Medication**

Authorization to administer medication to a child must be obtained from the child's parent in writing, signed, and dated or in an electronic format that may be viewed and saved. Authorization by telephone to administer a single dose complies with Licensing (746.3803). Any medicine dispensed will comply with Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers.

If medications are to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

1. A completed TFPS Authorization for Dispensing Medication Form must be on file in the office before any prescription or non-prescription medication can be administered.
2. Medication administered according to manufacturer's recommendation.
  - a. Must be in original container labeled with the child's full name & date brought

- b. Not be administered after expiration date
  - c. If applicable, must include a copy of information provided by pharmacy
- 3. Prescription medication must be unexpired and provided in its original container.
- 4. When administering medication, the following must be recorded:
  - a. Full name of child to whom it was given
  - b. Name of medication
  - c. Date, time, & amount of medication given
  - d. Full name of employee administering medication

All medication must be disposed or returned to parents when the child withdraws, the medication is out of date, or no longer required by the child.

### **Food Allergy Action Plan**

A plan is required for a child with a known food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional. Both the health-care professional and parent must sign and date the plan. Copy must be kept in child's file.

The plan must include:

1. List of each food child is allergic to
2. Possible symptoms if exposed to food listed
3. Steps to take if child has an allergic reaction

### **Requirements for EpiPens:**

1. Please provide **1** EpiPen to the school office on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school
2. Provide an **Anaphylaxis Emergency Action Plan** for your child signed by their pediatrician or allergist.

Please do not send any medication mixed into your child's drink container from home.

### **Parent Conferences**

In late October, your child's teacher will send communication regarding your child's progress.

Conferences for all classes are held in late winter/early spring. Please see the preschool calendar for dates. Approximately 2 weeks before conferences, your child's teacher will contact you to schedule a time. This conference is designed to share achievements, progress, and recommendations. *At anytime during the school year, parents or teachers may request a conference.* There is no school on *Parent Conference Day*; however, child care is provided during the time of the conference.

### **Parent Notifications**

The SonShine Preschool office staff and classroom teachers will maintain on going communication with parents throughout the school year. Communication to parents may include emails, letters, posted signs, notifications via ProCare, and phone calls as needed. Parent communication pertaining to SonShine Preschool policy changes will be distributed from the Director by both email or written letters sent home the same day with the parent at pick up.

### **Parent Orientation & Meet the Teacher**

Parent Orientation and Meet the Teacher is typically the Friday before the first day of school. The purpose is to acquaint parents with the values, policies, teachers, classrooms, and other parents. There will be opportunities for parents to hear from the director, meet their child's teacher and visit the classroom. Time will also be given for parents to sign up for volunteer activities throughout the year.

### **Parent Participation**

There are many ways you can participate at SonShine Preschool, and we love and are grateful for all parental involvement. 😊

- At Parent Orientation, or during the first week of school, opportunities to sign up to help in the following areas are offered:
  - Room Parent, Care Parent, staff appreciation opportunities, and special events.
- If you have a special hobby, talent, or skill to share, please let the office know so we can get you involved!
- We seek to make SonShine Preschool moms and dads aware of activities or programs at Austin Ridge Bible Church and in the Austin area.

### **Parent Visitation**

We welcome parents at any time in our school. No prior approval is required. At the beginning of each school year, all parents will be issued the door keypad code so they may enter at any time during school hours. We encourage parent involvement, especially with class parties and special events. Also, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's teacher and/or the Director to discuss or schedule a visit.

### **Severe Weather & Emergencies**

In case of an emergency or school closure, parents will be alerted via ProCare.

SonShine Preschool will follow Eanes ISD for any school closures or delayed start times due to severe weather.

### **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)**

SonShine Preschool meets all Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers as required by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). A copy of our license may be found on the bulletin board in the SonShine Preschool Office. For more information visit: <https://hhs.texas.gov/> or call 512-834-3426

A copy of the Minimum Standards Rules may be found in the SonShine Preschool office or online at the site listed above.

*If at any time during the school year you have questions about any of the policies and procedures in this handbook, please contact the Director to discuss.*



SonShine Preschool  
Health Protocol &  
Operational Policies  
Continued  
&  
Appendixes

# SonShine Preschool Parent Handbook

## Appendix A

### Health Protocols



## Health Protocols

Currently, Health & Human Services Commission, with whom we are licensed, has no emergency guidelines in place. SonShine Preschool prayerfully continues to work closely with HHSC, Austin Public Health, and Austin Ridge Bible Church as we make decisions for our staff and those within our walls.

SonShine Preschool's Health Protocol requires your help. We need you to monitor the health of your child and not send him or her to school if any symptoms of illness are observed. Please notify the office if you keep your child home due to illness.

### 1. Preventing the spread of illnesses & Covid-19

1. We have a **NO Tolerance** policy for any illness and require sick children and staff to stay home.
2. If a child becomes ill at school, he or she will be kept in the office or an unoccupied classroom until a parent is able to come.
  - a. A school staff member will stay with the child until parents arrive.
  - b. We require immediate pick up by a parent (within 30 minutes).
  - c. We follow CDC guidelines on how to disinfect areas where a sick child or staff has had access
3. SonShine Preschool, per HHSC requirements, follows *Austin Public Health's Isolation & Exposure Guidance for Pre-K - 12th Grade Schools & Child Care Programs*, updated on August 17, 2022.

<https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/8.17.2022%20Isolation%20Exposure%20Guidance%20for%20Schools%20and%20Child%20Care%20Programs.pdf>

4. If a child has a **reportable communicable disease**, families will be notified.
5. Each classroom will be furnished with hand sanitizer.
  - a. This will be used throughout the day.
6. Handwashing will be our first line of defense.
  - a. Staff will wash hands upon arriving and throughout the day.
  - b. Supervision of children during handwashing will be conducted by our staff. They will ensure children wash for a full 20 seconds.
  - c. Children's hands will be washed:
    - Upon or before entering the classroom each morning
    - Before eating
    - Upon entering after outdoor play
    - After using the bathroom
    - And any other time deemed necessary by the teacher
  - d. If handwashing is not available, then a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be used. Children will be closely monitored during this use, and the hand sanitizer will

be out of their reach.

## 2. Health Screenings

1. The “CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.4 F”. Any SonShine Preschool staff member or child with a temperature of 100.4 or greater will be sent home.
2. At drop-off & throughout the day, staff will also check for any of these signs or symptoms:

|                                     |  |                        |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| *Persistant cough and/or runny nose | Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing        | Chills                 |
| Green/yellow nasal discharge        | Persistent headache                                | Sore throat            |
| Persistent muscle pain              | Discharge from eyes and/or red puffy eyelids       | Loss of taste or smell |
| Diarrhea                            | Skin eruptions or rash until diagnosed by a doctor |                        |

- \*If cold-like symptoms are due to allergies, please send a doctor’s note to keep in your child’s file.
  - Staff and children will not be allowed to stay if any of the above symptoms are seen.
  - If they develop during the day,
    - Staff will be sent home
    - Parents will be notified to pick up their child
3. Staff or children with new or worsening symptoms listed above may not return to campus until they are 24 hours symptom and fever free without medication.
  4. Also, please keep your child home if he or she has:
    - Been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours
    - Requires fever-suppressing medication or cough medicine

## 5. Cleaning and Disinfecting

1. We will follow HHSC and CDC guidelines for cleaning and sanitizing products.
2. Per state licensing requirements, table tops, furniture, and other similar equipment used by children will be sanitized regularly and throughout the day (before & after eating, toileting, heavy use, etc.).
3. Routine cleaning throughout the day will occur.
  - Toys, when placed in a child’s mouth, will be removed until sanitized.
4. Each classroom will have tissues, hand sanitizer, and cleaning sanitizer, which will be stored out of reach of the children.
5. Machine washable toys and dress up clothes will be washed weekly.

Helpful links:

- The World Health Organization: <http://www.who.org>
- The Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>
- Texas Health & Human Services Commission: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>

# SonShine Preschool Parent Handbook

## Appendix B

### Breastfeeding



**Breastfeeding**

Austin Ridge Bible Church has a designated room for breastfeeding mothers on the first floor of Building A. It is a quiet, private room with adult sized rockers. Please ask the SonShine Preschool office to unlock this private room for your use.

Also, you have the right to provide breast milk for your child while in care at school.

# SonShine Preschool Parent Handbook

## Appendix C

Child Protection  
Reporting and Preventing  
Child Abuse

## **Child Abuse and Neglect - Prevention and Reporting**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services states that there are three general reasons people do not report suspected cases of child abuse:

1. Fear of lawsuit or reprisal if abuse is reported.
2. Ignorance of where and how to make reports.
3. Belief that the abusive treatment is within normal range.

The law **requires** any person who believes that a child is being abused, neglected, or exploited to report the circumstances to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Abuse Hotline. A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Teachers and other professionals must report suspected abuse or neglect of a child within 48 hours of suspecting the child has been or may be abused or neglected. Unfortunately, many cases go unreported. While it is sometimes a matter of no one recognizing the signs, often the suspicion is there and still no complaint is made. Reporting suspected child abuse makes it possible to protect the child and for a family to get help. DFPS would rather get a report and later learn it is unfounded than for people to hesitate until they are certain abuse or neglect is going on.

**SonShine Preschool Staff will receive at least one hour of annual training covering the prevention and reporting of child abuse. Our staff will communicate to Austin Ridge Bible Church's Children and Family Pastor any concerns as to the well-being of children and/or families in the program.** If a staff member sees signs of abuse, or has reason to suspect abuse, the staff member will contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services/Health and Human Services, as well as take other appropriate actions to obtain assistance and intervention.

There are several agencies that will act on reports of abuse:

- Austin Police Department
- Travis County's Sheriff's Department
- Texas DFPS
- Texas State Child Abuse Hotline:

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT HOTLINE: 1-800-252-5400 or [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)  
24hr Abuse/Neglect Hotline:1-800-252-5400

### **Preventing Child Abuse**

Child abuse prevention is stopping child abuse and neglect before it happens. The best way to prevent child abuse and neglect is to support families and provide parents with the skills and resources they need.

Although all causes cannot be summed up, certain issues make people more at risk. Stress, relationship problems, substance abuse, financial problems, depression, and other mental health problems can all lead to abusive or neglectful behavior.

Prevention builds on family strengths. Through prevention activities such as educating parents, frequent communication with families, and parent support groups, many families are able to find the support they need to care for their children. Prevention efforts help parents develop their parenting skills, understand the benefits of positive discipline techniques, and understand and meet their child's emotional, physical, and developmental needs. Prevention programs can help parents identify other needs they may have and offer assistance in getting additional support.

### **Community Resources offering parenting classes and other support to families:**

- Center for Child Protection, 512-472-1164, <https://centerforchildprotection.org/>

- Austin Child Guidance Center, 512-451-2242, [www.austinchildguidance.org](http://www.austinchildguidance.org)
- For Kids' Sake, 512-476-9490, [www.for-kids-sake.com](http://www.for-kids-sake.com)
- For help with a family crisis contact Safe Place, 512-267-SAFE, [www.safeplace.org](http://www.safeplace.org).
- Online training is available at Texas A&M Extension Service, <https://agriflifeextension.tamu.edu/>

More information can be found under parenting at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

# SonShine Preschool Parent Handbook

## Appendix D

### Discipline and Guidance Policy

*Minimum Standards Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers  
Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance*

**§746.2801 To what extent may caregivers discipline the children in their care?**

*Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance  
September 2003*

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.

**§746.2803 What methods of discipline and guidance may a caregiver use?**

*Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance  
September 2003*

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.

**§746.2805 What types of discipline and guidance or punishment are prohibited?**

*Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance  
September 2003*

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.

# SonShine Preschool Parent Handbook

## Appendix E

Texas Penal Code

**Gang-Free Zone**

Under the Texas Penal Code any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.



# SonShine Preschool Parent Handbook

## Appendix F

Current Texas Minimum  
State Vaccine  
Requirements for  
Child-Care and Pre-K  
Facilities

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/child-care-requirements.aspx>