



Parent Handbook Amended 7.10.09

All items in *italics* have been updated since 9.15.08

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The mission of the Weekday Program is to provide a safe and nurturing environment promoting the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development of children.

The FUMC Weekday Program includes early education and enrichment for children 2-months old through Pre-Kindergarten. Before- and after-school, holiday and summer care is available for children enrolled in the Weekday Program. After-school, holiday and summer-care is available for children attending local elementary schools. For over 30 years, the Weekday Program has maintained a standard of excellence in education, enrichment and care. The Weekday Program is proud to serve the children and families of Plano and its neighboring communities.

My Friends' Place

My Friends' Place is after school programming for children in Kindergarten–Seventh Grade. Transportation is provided each afternoon from Barron, Dooley, Forman, Hedgecoxe, Hickey, Hunt, McCall, Meadows, Memorial, and Mendenhall. If needed, we will also pick up children from other East Plano elementary schools or Armstrong and Bowman Middle Schools. Each day, enrollees enjoy a healthy snack and may participate in a supervised homework time. In addition, outdoor recreation is provided (weather permitting) and indoor gym recreation. Children also have the opportunity to participate in games and creative activities. My Friends' Place is designed to offer a safe, fun, Christian, after school alternative.

Summer Breakaway

My Friends' Place is open Monday-Friday 7:00-6:30 during the PISD summer break for Summer Breakaway. The summer program is a child-centered vacation from the everyday classroom experience, which uses a hands-on project approach for the children to explore their real-world interests with the creativity and guidance of our experienced and enthusiastic summer staff. Children will go on two or three field trips weekly including swimming.

Governance:

The Weekday Program of the First United Methodist Church is a non-profit organization and is governed by the Weekday Program Board. The Board consists of the following persons: one parent representative from Children's Day Out, one parent representative from Preschool and one parent representative from My Friends' Place, six elected members from the church (one of whom will be elected to serve as the chair person), the Senior Pastor and the Director of the Weekday Program. All matters concerning policy and procedures are under the supervision and action of the board.

Licensing:

The Weekday Program is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. As such, it meets and follows the regulations established by the state of Texas for early childhood settings.

NAEYC Accreditation:

The Weekday Program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. For more information on NAEYC, visit their website at www.NAEYC.org.

Hours, days and months of operation:

My Friends' Place follows the calendar of the Plano Independent School District. Hours of operation are 2:45 pm-6:30 pm on school days and 7:00 am-6:30 pm on school holidays and during the summer with the following exceptions:

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King B-day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- July 4
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the Friday following
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Enrollment procedures:

Parents must complete the following parts of the enrollment process:

- Enrollment form (which includes release information and emergency contacts)
- Enrollment fee
- Copy of most recent court order (if any) affecting the custody, possession and/or access to a child
- Homework agreement signed by parent and child

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the WP office in writing of any change of home address, work and/or home telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and/or emergency release information.

Immunization requirements:

Children must have all immunizations as required by state law. Parents may provide a copy of the child's immunization record or indicate on their enrollment form that the child's immunization records are on file at their elementary school. *(TDFPS Minimum Standard 746.625)*

Tuberculin Testing Requirements:

*Documentation of a TB screening of children is not required.
(TDFPS Minimum Standards 746.627)*

Tuition and fees:**Rates:**

- The Weekday Program Board of Directors will set enrollment and tuition rates each spring for the summer and the following school year. All payments may be dropped off in the Weekday Program/My Friends' Place office in the green box marked "WP Tuition".

Discounts:

- For families with multiple children, the first child (child with the highest tuition) will be charged full tuition. The lower tuition amount/s will be given a 10% discount.

Enrollment Fees:

- Non-refundable enrollment fees are due at the time of enrollment each school year and/or summer session.

Tuition:

- Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. Parents may make arrangements with the office to make two monthly payments if desired (1st and 15th).

- A late fee of \$25 will be assessed on payments that are 10 days past due.
- If a family's account is not current on the last day of the month, the family will have a 10 day grace period to make payment arrangements with the Weekday Program office or to withdraw from the program.

Returned checks:

- A \$25 fee will be assessed for returned checks.
- If two checks are returned for insufficient funds within a one-year period the Weekday Program will require that payment be made by cash, money order or cashier's check for the remainder of the school year or summer program.

Extra fees:

- If a child needs to be picked up from school at a time other than the regular pick-up time (for tutoring, band, choir, summer school, etc.) a fee of \$10 per month will be added to the family's bill for each day the child has the activity. For example, a child who has tutoring once a week would be charged \$10 a month and a child who has tutoring three days a week would be charged \$30 a month.
- A late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged anytime a child is picked-up late from My Friends' Place. This amount is due at the time of pick-up.

Refunds and/or make-up days due to illness, vacations, etc.:

- *No refunds will be made for days missed, or if the school is closed due to illness or unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather, pandemic, or building maintenance problems.*

Transportation/Arrival and Departure of Children:

On school days, children will be picked up in a FUMC vehicle after school. Children will be signed in by a WP employee and must be signed out by a parent or someone approved by a parent. On holidays and during the summer, parents must sign the child in and out each day.

The state of Texas requires all children be signed in and out each day.

All parents/guardians must include on their enrollment form a complete list of all persons, other than parents, to whom the child may be released. Additions and/or changes on this form must be made in writing.

Children will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than the people designated on their enrollment form, unless written permission is provided. Proof of identification will be required of anyone unknown to our staff. If a court order denying parental custody exists, please furnish the Weekday Program director with a copy of the document for your child's file.

Dress code:

Busy, creative, active play can be messy regardless of the age of the child. We encourage parents to dress their child/ren in clothing that can get dirty. Parents are asked to dress children in clothing that is durable and washable each day so that s/he can enjoy the classroom activities without fear of soiling an outfit. We suggest that parents dress children as if they are painting everyday. Children should wear comfortable, functional shoes that allow them to run and climb. For the children's safety, heeled shoes are not recommended (particularly cowboy boots). One-piece swim suits are required for girls when swimming.

Meals and food services practices:

On school days, a healthy snack including milk, juice and water is available after school. On school holidays, children are also provided a morning snack and should bring a lunch from home. Parents are encouraged to bring food that meets the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. We ask parents to provide food items that do not require heating or refrigeration. Items that need to be kept cool should be kept in an insulated lunchbox with a "cold pack." Items that require preparation, such as slicing apples, or peeling oranges should be done in advance. Lunch sacks or boxes and all food containers should be labeled with the child's name. We recommend that each child's lunch include at least one serving of each of the following major food groups.

1. Milk: milk, cheese, yogurt

2. Vegetable/Fruit: ¼ cup of each
3. Protein: meat, eggs, beans
4. Grain: enriched bread, whole grain crackers

(NAEYC Standard 5.B.02, based on CACFP guidelines)

http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm#Child_LunchSupper)

Snacks that are provided by the Weekday Program are posted on weekly menus in the kitchen. These menus are then filed in the Weekday Program office and kept for a period of 6 months.

WE ARE A PEANUT FREE FACILITY. Due to the frequency and severity of peanut allergies, the Weekday Program does not allow foods that contain peanut butter or nut products. Children who bring peanut butter or nut products will be given an appropriate alternative and a note will be sent home reminding the family that these products are not allowed and indicating what the child was given as an alternative. Children may bring peanut butter alternatives, but these items must be labeled each day.

Sodas, Fast food and candy are not allowed.

Special Diets: If your child has food allergies and/or cannot eat certain foods for health reasons, please send a statement to be included in your child's file.

Homework:

Each Monday-Thursday a quiet room with a proctor is provided in which children may do homework. Children are responsible for knowing what homework is required and completing it. MFP staff will remind children of study hall, but may not force any child to attend, nor will they take responsibility for looking for assignments in children's bags. Children are expected to work quietly and independently in the homework room. When they complete their work, they may ask the proctor to look over it. If a child is disruptive, s/he may be asked to leave the homework room.

Toys from home:

We have so many great activities planned that there is no need for your child to bring any toys from home.

- **Electronic Games:** If your child brings handheld electronic games or any other toys, there will be scheduled centers and times that they may bring them out to play. We will not be responsible for any misplaced or broken items. Video/electronic games must be rated E.
- **Movies:** Please do not allow your child to bring movies to MFP.
- **Scooters:** There will be designated days on which your child may bring scooters. When scooters are brought to MFP, protective gear (helmet, elbow and knee pads) must be worn.
- **Cell Phones:** *Children are not permitted to use cell phones at MFP. If a child has a cell phone, s/he should keep it in his/her bag. If a child needs to make a phone call, s/he should come to the office to make the call.*

Field trips:

Children enrolled on holidays and during the summer will participate in off-campus field trips. All field trips will be announced at least 48 hours in advance. There is no extra fee for field trips. Children should never bring money on field trips; all expenses will be paid by MFP.

Outdoor Play and Exposure to the Elements and Insects:

Unless inclement weather is present, children **MUST** go outside each day. To protect against cold, heat, sun, and injury, the following procedures are required:

- **Clothing-**Children should wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather.
- **Shade and sunscreen-**Shaded play areas are always available. However, parents are encouraged to dress children in sun-protective clothing and/or apply sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection of SPF 15 or higher. Weekday Program staff will not apply sunscreen.

- Insect repellent-Based on recommendation from the Texas Department of State Health Services, parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent containing DEET on their children before arriving at preschool. Weekday Program staff will not apply insect repellent. For more information go to <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us> and search for insect repellent.

Discipline and Guidance Practices:

The Weekday Program follows the discipline and guidance policies of the State of Texas. The policies are as follows:

- 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.

(TXDFPS Minimum Standard 746.2801-2805)

Illness and Exclusions Criteria:

We are unable to care for children who are ill. Children may not attend school/MFP if they have an illness that:

- *prevents the child from participating comfortably in the program's activities, as determined by his/her teacher,*
- *makes the child have a greater need for care than the caregivers can manage without compromising the care of other children in the group, and/or*
- *is likely to expose others to a communicable disease*

(TDFPS Minimum Standard 746.3601, NAYEC Healthy Young Children)

The following specific conditions require exclusion:

- *Fever (over 100.4) accompanied by a behavior change*
- *Symptoms of a severe illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs (until a medical evaluation determines that the child may remain in care)*
- *Diarrhea, defined as more watery less-formed, more frequent stools not associated with a diet change or change in medication-a stool not contained by the ability to use the toilet. Children who are in diapers who*

develop diarrhea must be excluded and children who have learned to use the toilet, but can't make it to the toilet in time, must also be excluded

- *Blood in stools not explained by diet change, medication or hard stools*
- *Vomiting*
- *Persistent abdominal pain*
- *Mouth sores with drooling*
- *Rash with fever or behavioral change*
- *Purulent conjunctivitis (pink or red eye lining or whites of eyes with white or yellow pus coming from the eyes)*
- *Lice*
- *Scabies*
- *Tuberculosis*
- *Impetigo*
- *Strep throat*
- *Chicken Pox or shingles*
- *Whooping cough*
- *Mumps*
- *Hepatitis A*
- *Measles*
- *Rubella*
- *Herpes*

(NAEYC Healthy Young Children)

If any of these symptoms develop while at school, the child will be isolated from the other children and every effort will be made to contact parents or individuals designated by the parents. The child must be picked up within the hour.

Staff are also required to stay home from work when sick (using the criteria above).

If a child is too sick to attend PISD, s/he is too sick to attend MFP.

Procedures for handling medical emergencies:

If a child receives a minor injury while in our care, an accident/incident report is completed, noting the type of injury received, first aid procedures administered, and the name of the person who administered the aid. This report is signed by the teacher and administrator. A copy of this form will be placed in the child's file and one will be provided to the parent.

In the event of a severe injury, parents will be notified immediately along with Emergency Medical Technicians through the local authorities if necessary. An incident/accident report will be completed that must be signed by the teacher, administrator and parent. A copy of this form will be placed in the child's file and one will be provided to the parent.

Procedures for dispensing medication:

When at all possible, medications should be administered by the parent before and/or after program hours. If children must be given medication during program hours, state requirements will be followed. Parents must give daily written authorization on the "Authorization for Medication" form for any medication that needs to be administered to a child.

Prescription medication must have the pharmacy's label showing the child's name, the doctor's name, medication name, prescribed dosage and the date the medicine was prescribed. Non-prescription medicine must be labeled with the child's name and will be administered according to label directions if approved in writing by the parent or health professional. Without complete labels, instructions, and written authorization, medication will not be accepted and/or administered.

Medication (including lip balm) of any kind may not be stored in a child's cubby, schoolbag, or lunch box. Children may not self-administer any form of medication.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency that would require evacuation of the building and area, the Weekday Program children and staff will be relocated to the following location. Signs will be posted indicating that the children have been relocated. As soon as the children are safely relocated, parents will be e-mailed and called (if possible).

*First Baptist Church Plano
1300 E 15th St
Plano, TX 75074-6296
(972) 424-8551*

Or

*Custer Road United Methodist
6601 Custer Road
Plano, TX 75023
(972) 618-3450*

(NAEYC Standard 10.D.08)

- Security Breach Procedures
*In the event of a security breach (ex: someone threatening violence) teachers will take all steps necessary to insure that children are secure in the building, unless it is necessary to evacuate the building.
(NAEYC Standard 10.D.08)*
- Fire Drill Procedures
*Monthly fire drills are required by the State of Texas. Fire exit routes that are labeled as primary and secondary are located in each classroom near the door.
(TXDFPS Minimum Standard 746.5205, NAEYC Standard 2.K.04, 10.D.08)*
- Severe Weather Drill Procedures
*The State of Texas requires Severe Weather Drills once every six months. In severe weather, the children of the Weekday Program are directed to a safe location in the building as indicated on the evacuation map in each classroom.
(TXDFPS Minimum Standard 746.5205, NAEYC Standard 2.K.04, 10.D.08)*

Closings:

If and when The Weekday Program is unexpectedly closed an e-mail will be sent to all parents who are signed up to receive e-mail notifications.

- *In the event of inclement weather, the Weekday Program preschool (9:00-2:00 program) **and** MFP/ LFP (before- and after-school program) will close if PISD is closed or releases students early. If PISD opens late, preschool (9:00-2:00 program) will be closed for the full day and the extended day (before- and after-school program) will open at the same time as PISD.*

Please consult local TV and radio stations for information whenever inclement weather is predicted. You may sign up to get e-mail or text message alerts by going to <http://kxasstore.hipcricket.com/>. They will alert you immediately when PISD makes a decision regarding closings.

- *In the event that building conditions, natural disasters, pandemics, epidemics, or other events make it unsafe for children to attend school, the Weekday Program/MFP will close as directed by appropriate authorities such as the Collin County Health Department, TDFPS and/or the Centers for Disease Control.*
- *We are unable to offer refunds for school closings.*

Procedures for Concerns:

In the event that a problem or difficult situation occurs, individuals are requested to talk to the person directly involved. Prompt action is necessary to facilitate a quick resolution of the problem. If a problem still exists after

conferring with the preschool staff, parents and/or teachers are asked to schedule an appointment with the Weekday Program Director. This meeting may include the director, parents and/or staff member involved. At this meeting those present will determine the problem, generate possible solutions and decide on a means of action. In the event that a suitable agreement cannot be reached at that time, the parent, staff member or Director may schedule an appointment with the Senior Associate Pastor.

If parents are concerned about the policies and/or procedures of the preschool, they are encouraged to speak to The Weekday Program Director or their Weekday Program Board Representative.

Reporting Abuse and Neglect:

Texas law requires caregivers to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or law enforcement. Call 1-800-252-5400 or go to www.txabusehotline.org to make confidential reports. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime.

Suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others must be reported to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

(Texas Family Code 745.261, NAEYC Standard 10.D03-04)

Dismissal Policy:

My Friends' Place reserves that right to request that parents withdraw a child from the program. All resources available will be utilized before such a request would be made. Reasons for requesting the removal of a child from the program include serious behavior problems, repeated failure to pick-up a child by closing time, lack of tuition payments, failure to comply with My Friends' Place policies and procedures, or if we feel that we cannot meet the physical, mental, or emotional needs of the child.

Withdrawal Policy:

In the event a parent decides to withdraw his/her child from the Weekday Program/My Friends' Place, 2-weeks written notice is required.

Procedures for Parents to Review Minimum Standards and Licensing Reports:

Many of the policies in this book are based on the minimum standards published by the state. Parents are encouraged to download a copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Service's Minimum Standard Rules or to review a copy belonging to the Weekday Program. This book may be found at www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/child_care/child_care_standards_and_regulations/centers746.pdf. The Weekday Program is required to keep current licensing reports in the school office and parents are free to view these at any time. The reports are also available online at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

How to Reach the Local Licensing Office, DFPS Hotline, and DFPS Website:

If parents have questions or concerns about the Weekday Program or child care policies in the state of Texas they may contact the child abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400, or go to the DFPS website at www.txabusehotline.org.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy:

The Weekday Program admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy:

The Weekday Program of First United Methodist Church recruits, hires, evaluates, trains, disciplines and promotes in all job titles without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, marital status, age, persons with a disability or status as a disabled veteran, except where an accommodation is unavailable and an individual disability is a bona fide occupational disqualification, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) effective January 26, 1992.

(NAEYC Standard 10.E.01)