

# Welcome to New Shores Mother's Day Out!

We are honored that you have chosen New Shores Mother's Day Out to support and partner with you in the care and education of your child. We hope that this handbook will help you better understand our desire for this exciting ministry. Please read this book carefully and keep it handy for future reference.

Should you have questions at any time, please feel free to contact us and we will be more than happy to discuss them with you.

I believe you will find our MDO staff to be very compassionate and loving. You can be sure that they will treat your children with respect and will guide them in a Christ-like manner. It is our goal to assist your children in every facet of their development- physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Please know that you and your family are always welcome at New Shores Church. It would be our church's privilege to minister to you and your family in any and every way possible. If you do not already have a regular church home, please accept our invitation to come and worship with us.

This year will be a year of tremendous growth for your children. Our church and MDO staff will be praying for them as they grow and learn.

In Christ's Love,

Tera Keener

Children's Minister

New Shores Church

# Our Purpose

To provide a nurturing Christian environment to enrich a child's emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and spiritual development. To help each child develop healthy self-esteem and positive feelings toward playing and learning.

These goals are achieved through a varied curriculum which includes creative play, arts and crafts, music participation, playground interaction, and special celebrations. Together, with the support of our church family, the New Shores MDO ministry will continue to meet the ever-changing developmental needs of our community's preschoolers.

# Our Philosophy

The philosophy guiding our program is based on several principles:

1. Each child is viewed as a unique person of inestimable worth and value, with an individual pattern and timing of growth and development.
2. Developmental appropriateness is central to successful learning. Programs are both age-appropriate and individually appropriate; that is, the program is designed for the age group served and implemented with attention to the needs and differences of the individual child.
3. The curriculum and teachers' interaction are based on the recognition that all areas-physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual - of a child's development are related.
4. Younger children learn by doing. Knowledge is not something that is given to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled. Children acquire knowledge about the world in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people.
5. Teachers are seen as guides and/or facilitators. They prepare the environment so that it provides stimulating, challenging materials and activities for children.

# Our Goals

1. To provide a spiritual and biblical foundation.
2. To encourage physical development of large and small muscles.
3. To provide stimulating experiences which encourage the child to think and analyze problems and arrive at possible solutions.
4. To encourage creative expression through art and music.
5. To stimulate language development.
6. To encourage the child to express himself/herself through material, movement, and language.
7. To encourage independence.
8. To give basic experience and develop the behavior necessary for effective social living.
9. To encourage the child to develop a positive attitude towards school and learning.

# School Hours & Calendar

New Shores MDO classes are offered from the beginning of September through May. School hours are from 8 AM until 2 PM. Classes are held Tuesdays and Thursdays.

New Shores MDO will observe the holidays of Sweeny ISD. In the event of severe weather, always check with the local television and radio stations for announcements specifically for Sweeny school district. If Sweeny schools close, MDO will close. Bad weather days are not made up. In case of a power outage that cannot be restored within two hours, parents will be called to pick up their child or children. In the event of severe weather while your child is attending class, MDO will immediately act according to safety plans.

# MDO Staff

Our staff is comprised of people who have a desire to share the love of Jesus with our children. All teachers are preferably a member of New Shores Church, and have experience working with preschool age children. Each employee is selected because of special qualities, talents, education and skills needed to create a well-balanced administrative, teaching, and support staff. We provide the materials, curriculum and proper training to equip our teachers to successfully accomplish our goals.

You will find our MDO staff to be a wonderful group of people. They will love your children and your children will love them. You can be sure that they will treat your children with respect and will guide them in a Christ-like manner.

# Our Curriculum

**New Shores Mother's Day out maintains that all preschoolers need to grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically and socially. We recognize the way children learn spiritually through watching, hearing and modeling. Therefore, every staff member is aware of the role they play in the Christian development of the preschoolers.**

We are using a variety of curriculum sources to guide our Circle and Learning Times. We lean heavily on ABC JESUS LOVES ME, using their storybooks, songs, and other printed material to cover letters, numbers, shapes, and colors throughout the year. In addition, we will pull in activities and ideas from other resources as needed.

Learning will be woven throughout the day. Do not underestimate the value of playtime. Children learn valuable skills through play and will be given a variety of opportunities for play each and every day.

The teacher is responsible for providing experiences and opportunities that are related to the child's level of learning. The director will assist each teacher in planning the daily, weekly and monthly learning activities that adhere to our program guidelines.

From time to time, people in the community may be brought in to help the children relate to and understand their contribution to their lives. These community helpers will be asked to visit during our thematic units. For example, the fire department may visit us to talk to our classes about fire safety and their job.

# Enrollment Policies

New Shores MDO classes will be provided for children ages 18 months until pre-kindergarten.

Admission will be granted first to families with children enrolled in the MDO program. This enrollment will open the month of March to allow time for all students to register for the following calendar year. Children from the community at-large will then be enrolled on a first-come basis the first week of April. Enrollment is based on space availability. Registration will continue throughout the year until all classes are full. Those who are unable to secure a position in a class will be added to our waiting list for that age group. We will notify those on the waiting list when an open position becomes available. There is no charge to add your child's name to our waiting list. New Shores MDO will not discriminate in the admission of children on a basis of race, gender or religion.

Placement for children in the MDO classes will be determined by their age on September 1 of the current school year. For example, your child must be four years old by September 1 in order to enter the pre-K 4 year old program. The completed registration forms must be turned in along with the registration fee and supply fee before your child attends their first class.

**ALL registration and supply fees are non-refundable or non-transferable.**

We must have a current shot record on file. If you opt not to have immunizations we must have an immunization exemption form completed by your child's physician and signed by a parent. These forms must be updated as needed and sent to the MDO office.

After a predetermined date, children who do not have a current immunization form on file will not be accepted to attend classes until this form is brought into the MDO office. Parents will be responsible for paying the child's tuition payment during this time to continue to secure the child's position in that class.

Children with possible or identified special needs shall be reviewed and admittance shall be based on our ability to meet the child's needs.

The director or such person or persons designated by the director, shall review, approve or deny all applications for enrollment.

**ALL children MUST be potty trained in order to participate in our PreK-3 or PreK-4 year old program.** This requirement is common among preschool ministries. Teachers with as many as ten children in a classroom cannot meet the needs of those who are not potty trained and interact appropriately with the others in the class. Each child should be able to take care of their potty needs with minimum assistance from their teacher. If your child is unable to care properly for his/her potty needs, they will not be able to attend this ministry until they can do so. Returning to the program that same year will depend on space available unless tuition is continued to hold the spot.

# Payments & Rates Policies

An annual registration fee is due and payable at the time the child has registered for admission to the program.

A supply fee is charged each semester and provides your child with daily supplies and materials necessary for instruction.

**Registration and supply fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.**

Tuition payments provide the teachers and staff salaries, as well as other expenses that help provide a quality program. If paid monthly, tuition payments are due by the 1st of each month beginning in September and ending in May of the program year. If paid weekly, tuition payments are due every Monday. Tuition amounts are the same each month or week for a total of nine months or 37 weeks each program year. There is no reduction of tuition payments when your child is sick, on vacation, gone from the program, or if the program is closed due to holidays, etc. The entire amount of fees and the nine months of tuition for a child may be paid at the beginning of the program year but is not subject to a discount.

Monthly tuition payments paid after the 5th of each month will be considered late and a late fee of \$10 will be applied to the child's account. If you fall behind one week on your tuition payment, we will work with you on making a payment plan. If you fall behind two weeks on your monthly tuition payment or your payment plan, your child/children may be removed from the program. Weekly tuition payments paid after Wednesday of that week will be considered late and a late fee of \$10 will be applied to the child's account. If you fall behind one week on your tuition payment, your child/children may be removed from the program. Once you have caught up on your balance, you will be eligible to re-enroll in the program if your child/children's spots are still available. It is very important that you communicate with the MDO director any financial difficulties so that we can avoid unnecessary actions.

Fees and tuition payments may be paid by check, cash, money order, or credit card. Credit payments can ONLY be made through the New Shores Church website. All monies may be mailed to the church, given to the director on MDO class days, or turned in to the church office during office hours. Money should not be sent in backpacks or handed to MDO teachers.

Checks should be made payable to New Shores Church. Please write your child's name on the check/money order. If paying by cash, please place money in a sealed envelope with the child's name and amount enclosed. If mailing the payment, please include your child's name and MDO payment on the check and envelope to avoid confusion. Payments can be mailed to: New Shores Church PO Box 27, Old Ocean, TX 77463.

The payment of tuition is your responsibility. However, out of courtesy, MDO will send home a reminder memo in your child's daily folder if your tuition is late. Receipts will only be written for cash transactions unless you request a receipt for each transaction.

A \$7.50 fee will be administered for all returned checks. After two returned checks to the program, all payments must be made by cash or money order for the remainder of the program year. If a parent is late in picking up a child, she/he may be charged one dollar per minute. Parents will be considered late after 2:10 PM. If you encounter an emergency or

realize that you will be late in picking up your child, please call the main church office at 979-647-4609 to notify the MDO director.

Families with the existing balances from a prior program year will be unable to re-enroll their child/children until their account has been reconciled. MDO program will not hold a spot for said families until the existing balance has been paid in full. If you should decide to withdraw your child from the MDO program, you must give a two weeks written notice to the director. Otherwise, the parents/responsible parties will be responsible for the following month's tuition.

## Arrival and Departure Procedures

All children should be dropped off and picked up by their parents or by persons designated in writing by parents. Be sure to list on your registration form all people who may pick up your child from MDO. Please update your form as needed. Designated persons can only be changed personally by a parent with the approval of the MDO Director.

Parents and guests may need to show their ID when entering the MDO facilities. A driver's license or photo ID will be matched against the list of names you have designated to pick up your child. Once our staff members begin to recognize you personally as the usual person and parent of the specific child you are picking up, they may not be as apt to asking for your ID each time. However, you should always be prepared to show your ID each time you enter the facilities. Please make certain other designated persons assigned to pick up your child are aware of this procedure to prevent any misunderstandings. This is for your child's protection!

We understand child custody battles happen; however, our church nor any of its employees will be involved in litigation for children in our MDO program or our children's ministry. No church employee, based solely upon their employment in this church, will testify in child custody litigation

Under no circumstances should a child be allowed to enter or leave the building alone. Preschool children should never be alone in the front area outside the preschool counters. Children must always be accompanied by a parent or MDO staff member. MDO resumes responsibility for children only when they have been checked in and delivered directly to MDO personnel.

All children must be checked in to our program each day by a designated person. Parents and authorized pick up persons are permitted to enter the New Shores MDO area between 7:50 AM and 8:15 AM and 1:45 PM and 2:10 PM for arrival and departure routines. Parents and guests are asked not to enter the preschool hallway during any other time other than the above assigned time periods without an appointment or permission from the MDO director.

**MDO doors will be open to students at 7:50 AM.** Early arrivals will wait with their parents until that time. The staff enjoys being able to greet parents each day.

**Arrival and pick-up times are not the ideal time to have a conference with your child's teacher. If you wish to have a conference, we will be glad to make a special time just for you.**

Also, we have found it is best if you do not linger after telling your child goodbye. If he or she is upset, the quicker you are out of sight, the quicker he or she can be calmed. If your child is upset and his/her teacher cannot get him/her calmed after a reasonable amount of time, we will contact you. We will not allow a child to continually cry and be extremely upset for extreme long periods of time. Parents, relatives and friends are requested to avoid coming to New Shores during the hours of operation to “check-on” or “admire” the children. It disturbs the child to see someone he or she knows at the door. If you need to check on your child, please do so through the MDO director by calling the office at 979-647-4609.

## **Walk-In procedure**

We ask that parents be respectful of the teacher’s time and keep from lingering or talking in the classroom or at the door. This is to benefit your child as well as the other children in the program. You can make an appointment or leave a note for the teacher if you need to do so. You can also check on your child through the Director.

Please be cautious in the parking lot. It is important to us that everyone is safe. Look for small children and other vehicles that may be pulling out. Children should never be allowed to play in the parking area. Children should never enter or exit the building without an adult. Be sure to hold your child’s hand as you cross to enter the building.



# Food Policies

**\*We are a NUT-FREE ZONE! Absolutely no peanut butter or other forms of nuts should be sent in lunches. Any nut products found in a lunch will not be served. This is to ensure the safety of any and every child that may come into our preschool/children's classrooms as part of the weekday program and also to attend our church/church programs.**

Children should always be fed breakfast before arriving. It is important for the child not to bring in food items to finish eating in class. This can cause a serious disruption in the classroom and we must be alert to specific allergies of children in the class. New Shores MDO will provide a daily morning snack, which includes water or apple juice and a food item. Food items are generally goldfish crackers, pretzels, fruit loops, animal crackers or fruit. We have special snacks during certain theme weeks, celebrations, or special studies. We will notify you of such changes when needed. MDO staff members are aware of specific food allergies in each classroom so that we keep the food items out of that room which could be a danger to any child. Parents who contribute food items to any classroom will be notified of potential allergy alerts for that group.

Every child needs to bring a lunch and a full sippy cup/drink for lunch each day. Lunch should be brought in a lunch box or bag with a handle for the child to carry. Please plan for your child's lunch to be as convenient and neat as possible. **Please label your child's lunchbox with your child's name on the outside, so that it is visible to MDO staff.** Lunches will be placed in a refrigerator each morning. Lunches will not be placed back inside the refrigerator after lunch. Please provide items in moderation that your child will likely eat during this time. **Due to limited time and space, we do not heat food items.**

Please send food in containers that are easy and neat for the older preschoolers to open, eat and throw away. All food items and liquids must be in non-breakable containers to prevent injuries. Dry food items may be placed in sealed plastic bags. Use your discretion when sending certain Lunchables and other foods which may be messy.

Please be aware that it may become necessary for your child's teacher to notify you of specific food items that will not be allowed in that specific class due to allergies or other situations. We ask that all families be understanding of the situations and agree to provide alternative foods when necessary. **No carbonated drinks or chewing gum will be allowed to be served to the children for lunches.**

# Potty Training and Diaper Changing Policies

Parents of children enrolled in our young toddler and two-year-old classes must provide their child with enough diapers for each day. We suggest at least 4 to 5 diapers per day. Mother's Day Out will provide the wipes needed for your child.

We are excited to help your child during the potty training process! Please inform your child's teacher of your potty training routine at home so that we may reinforce those habits during class time. It is our policy that you do not send your child in underwear until they can complete a successful weekend with no accidents. We ask that you notify your child's teacher if you send your child in underwear to class.

We understand accidents happen, and we are happy to get that cleaned up! If you send pull-ups, please send the ones with Velcro on the sides. In the event that your child needs to change, they will not need to undress completely. If your child has two accidents, in underwear, in one MDO day, we will put them in a pull-up.

All children enrolled in the preschool three and four-year-old classes must be potty trained. There are no diaper changing facilities in these classrooms. This requirement is common among the preschool ministries. Teachers with as many as 10 children in the classroom cannot meet the needs of those who are not potty trained and interact appropriately with the others in the class. Each child should be able to take care of their potty needs with minimum assistance from their teacher.

## Clean-Up

Each day, teachers clean our toys using bleach, bleach wipes, disinfectant spray and/or a disinfectant solution. A fresh changing pad liner is used on the changing pad for each diaper change. Teachers also wipe down tables, changing pads, etc. with bleach wipes. All contact areas are sprayed daily with disinfectant solution.

## Clothing

Children should wear comfortable clothing and shoes that allow them to move freely and can be manipulated independently when they go to the restroom. Daily activities include active and messy play, and children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothing. Please make sure that your child wears suitable clothing for each day. All children must wear shoes at the program.

Label all clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all possessions. Please bring a complete extra set of clothing for your child in a Ziploc bag. This is very important! A complete set of clothing includes a shirt, bottoms, underwear and socks. Children may feel embarrassed if they have to wait for clothing to be brought.

Remember: Do not send your child in special or expensive clothing. Accidents will happen!

Tennis shoes are recommended footwear. Be sure shoes are comfortable and accessible for those who need to be changed. Take into consideration that sandals, slip-on shoes, crocs and flip-flops can be a danger for children when running and playing. If your child is wearing improper shoes for certain activities, they may not be able to participate during that time.

## Personal Belongings

Children should arrive daily with a bag for their possessions, a lunchbox, a blanket, pillow and an extra set of clothing and diapers if needed. Your child's bag needs to be an appropriate size for them to carry. Your child bag needs to be able to hold their daily folder and other belongings each day. Please do not put notes, tuition, etc. in lunchboxes. Lunchboxes are not opened until lunchtime.

Each child will have a folder which will be sent home every day with pertinent information and papers to be viewed by parents. You should empty the folder daily so that we know you have received any notes sent home. It is very important for you to return this folder with your child every day. You may include any information you need to communicate to our staff in this folder. Teachers will check each folder at the beginning of each day.

All items your child brings must be clearly labeled with their name. New Shores MDO will provide toys and equipment in sufficient quantity to allow for a variety of play and learning activities during the day. **Please do not allow your child to bring toys or stuffed animals to class.** Exceptions are made for a child's initial adjustment period, sharing days as specified by your child's teacher, and for special nap comfort items as approved by the teacher. These will be placed in their bag and brought out only at naptime. Children are never allowed to bring toy guns, knives, ropes, or toys of great value.

Pets or animals are never allowed in the facilities without prior permission from the director. Please remember to bring only the items your child really needs for the time they are attending classes. No unnecessary items please.

## Holidays and Special Occasions

New Shores MDO will observe the holidays of the Sweeny ISD. Parties may be held at school for the following special occasions: birthdays, Christmas, Easter, and end of the year.

If a child wishes to share his/her birthday celebration with the class, you may send something to share with the class during snack time. You should arrange this with your child's teacher ahead of time and plan for any special allergy situations.

## **Rest Time**

Most children physically require a period of rest during the day. Since we keep children until 2 PM, they will be required to lie down for a rest. We ask that you provide your child with a pillow and blanket. Blankets and pillows should also be taken home daily for washing. Please be sure that each item is clearly labeled with your child's name.

Children will begin their napping by 12:00 PM. During this time, children will lay down to quiet music so that they may rest. No child will be forced to sleep but all children must lie down to rest for a period of time.

## **Photographs and Videos**

Throughout the year, we will be taking photographs and videos of your child for many purposes. We use these for photographs/videos for arts and crafts, classroom decorations, bulletin boards, newsletters, media publications, and PowerPoint presentations. You will complete the form authorizing our use of these photos in your registration package.

Professional portraits are taken twice a year, once in the fall and once in late winter/early spring. You will have the opportunity to purchase these photographs if desired. Our Pre-K4 class will have their graduation portraits made in late winter/early spring.

## **Parental Involvement**

New Shores MDO is a ministry to parents as well as to children. New Shores MDO believes that the primary teachers and most important educators are the parents. All parents are a vital part of their child's spirituality and education and are invited to visit and to take part in their child's day by volunteering their time and talents. Each class asks for parents to help with special events and for help with in class activities. Please notify your child's teacher if you are interested in helping. It is our goal to keep parents informed as to their child's progress. Any parent desiring a conference may schedule one with their child's teacher at any time during the year. If you are interested in working as a substitute teacher, please contact the MDO office. Substituting allows you to have fun with the children while earning a few extra dollars.

# Withdrawal and Re-enrollment

A two-week notice is required when a child is withdrawn from the program for any reason. Otherwise, the parents are responsible for the following month's tuition. Please keep in touch and let us know what is going on! If a child is absent for more than two weeks without notification, we will assume the child has been withdrawn and we will proceed to register another child. If the child is withdrawn from the program and later wishes to re-enroll (if space allows) within a three month period, the registration fee will be waived. After a three month period, the full registration fee will be required. Please be aware that all registration and supply fees are non-refundable.

## Expulsion Policy

The MDO program reserves the right to permanently remove a child from the enrollment of the program at any time for nonpayment of tuition and/or fees or for extended absences without payment unless prior arrangements are made with the Director. The program also reserves the right at any time to permanently remove a child from the enrollment of the program if the staff feels that the needs of the child are not being met or if the child becomes a danger to himself or to other children. Teachers will be expected to devote time to all children, not neglecting others because one child requires constant supervision and/or attention.

## Discipline Policies

Our main objective is to love your child as Jesus does. Our discipline will be positive and will encourage children to make good choices instead of punishment. Should a problem arise, distraction will be the first step in any age group, explaining why the behavior is inappropriate and then suggesting if the behavior happens again, he/she will have to sit quietly and miss certain activities for a brief period of time. This is usually all that is required. Corrective measures of a verbal reminder, restriction of privileges, or a brief time-out period will then be used by the teacher.

Should a child demonstrate a more aggressive or disruptive behavior the parent will be contacted, and the MDO staff will work together with the parent to solve the problem. A conference with the Director, parents, and teacher may be scheduled. Parents may be called to pick up their child from the program if the Director feels the child should not be attending classes on that day due to behavior problems.

If any child exhibits persistent biting behavior while in a MDO session, the Director will take steps to ensure the safety and health of the children until this behavior ceases. Children with persistent biting behavior or aggressive behavior may be removed from the program until his behavior ceases and their position in the class may be in jeopardy unless tuition is continued. If the child is aggressive or noncompliant and the parents are not willing to work with the program to address these behaviors or if the efforts are not working as planned, the child may be expelled from the program. Re-enrollment will be based on space availability and a conference with the director will be required to re-enroll after being removed for these types of behavior.

# Health and Injury Policies

In order to prevent the spread of disease or infection and keep our children as healthy as possible, MDO requires adherence to the following policies:

1. All students must have an original updated immunization form on file in the office. If you opt not to have immunization records, we must have an immunization exemption form completed by your child physician and signed by a parent. These forms must be updated as needed and sent to the office.
2. Children who are or appear to be ill cannot be admitted to the program.
3. Your child must be symptom-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to class.
4. Any child who is put on antibiotics must be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to class.
5. If a child is too sick to go outside to play, he/she is too sick to attend the program. In order to maintain adequate teacher/child ratios, we are unable to keep a child from outdoor play.
6. When a communicable disease has been introduced into the program, parents will be notified. Parents are urged to notify the Director when their child is known to have been exposed to a communicable disease outside the program.
7. New Shores MDO is not permitted to administer medication of any type, including over the counter or prescription medications. We will call parents immediately if medication is required. Parents with children who must have medication due to asthma, diabetes, EpiPen, etc. will need to notify the MDO Director of such needs and have a medical authorization form on file in the MDO office. All medications will be stored in a locked cabinet and will be administered only by the MDO director unless it is an emergency situation.
8. When you are called to pick up a sick child from the program, you must do so within one hour after you have been notified. Your child will be immediately separated from the other children in the classroom and removed from the classroom as soon as possible, in order to reduce exposure to the other children. Your respect for the safety and well-being of the other children, their parents, and the staff members at MDO is required as part of your child's enrollment.

**Remember: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."**

Your cooperation is essential to the well-being of your child and the other children at New Shores. You will be notified that your child is ill if he/she has a fever greater than 100.3°, vomits during the day, develops purulent drainage or redness of the eye, or has more than two loose, watery stools during the day.

# Common Illnesses

**Fever:** Must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning to class. We consider 100.3° as a fever.

**Rashes:** Cannot return to class until diagnosed and determined by a physician. A Physician's note may be required for the child to return.

**Diarrhea/vomiting:** May not return to classes until symptom-free for 24 hours. The child may be admitted sooner with a note from a physician stating that the symptoms are noninfectious (for example: antibiotic associated diarrhea).

**Runny nose/mild dry cough:** May continue to attend classes unless (no other symptoms or fever) conditions persist more than 7 to 10 days. A child may not come to class if there is a colored mucus discharge from the nose, eye, or ear. If child has serious allergies that may cause these symptoms, you may need a note from the physician for the child to attend classes.

**Strep throat:** Minimum of 24 hours after the child is given a shot or started oral medications.

**Pink eye (or other eye infections):** Until infection is entirely gone.

**Chickenpox:** At least six days after onset of rash. Contagious period: Until crusts have fallen off and scars have healed.

For any and all other illnesses, please contact your child's physician pertaining to the symptoms and exclusion period. A note from your physician will likely be required for most other illnesses.