



Parent Handbook

Welcome to Mother's Day Out.

We are delighted that you and your child will be a part of our Fellowship of Oso Creek's Mother's Day Out preschool program (MDO) this year. We value children and believe in families. This Weekday Early Education program is an outreach ministry of the church. You are welcome and invited to visit Oso Creek as a family during other gatherings. Please ask us for a schedule of activities your family may enjoy or visit our website at www.osocreek.org.
(updated July 2022)

Our Purpose

The first purpose of MDO is to provide your child a safe, developmentally appropriate, and positive learning experience that has God as the center. We desire to integrate biblical teaching into everything we do and bring honor and glory to God by building positive first impressions toward God, Jesus, the Bible, and church.

Because we believe parents or guardians are a child's most important teachers, our second purpose is to minister to and help families. During the year, we provide opportunities for you to participate through parties and special events. Families are also informed of special ministries at Fellowship of Oso Creek. Our staff prays each school day for parents and their children. We believe parents are a very important part of our program.

"Behold, children are a gift of the Lord." Psalm 127:3

MDO has been designed for children ages 12 months by September 1 of the current school year through pre-kindergarten. Our goal is to meet your child's physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs in an atmosphere of loving care and guidance. MDO is a place where laughter and play are cherished and where learning is fun. We acknowledge that children learn through play. We offer your child open-ended, hands-on opportunities that celebrate the process of learning.

As parents, you are cordially invited to visit us at any time, ask questions, and make suggestions. The best assurance for the success of your child's experience is the close cooperation and understanding of parents and staff. This handbook has been prepared so you may know the policies and better understand the program, its mission, and the guidelines under which we operate. We desire to work together to provide your child with a successful year in our MDO program.

CALENDAR OF OPERATION

MDO operates from August through May. Classes generally begin the week following local school starts and continue through the third week of May. During the school year, the preschool is open Monday and Wednesday except on CCISD bad weather days and designated holidays. See this year's calendar which includes all school holidays and important dates.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum and lesson plans are from a Bible based curriculum that allows children to explore, create, learn, and understand through hands-on activities. Language development, early science and math concepts, and pre-reading skills are learned in an environment rich in discovery opportunities. We will encourage, but never pressure or rush your child to learn any skill. We respect each child as an individual and recognize that God has uniquely made them.

SCHOOL DAY

MDO is open from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday. Please do not arrive any earlier than 9:00 a.m. as the teachers are preparing for the day. Please be prompt in picking up your child. If you have more than one child enrolled, please arrive in time to have **all** your children picked up by 2:00 p.m. There will be a late fee of \$1.00 per minute after 2:05 p.m. The teacher's clock will be the standard. Please remember that your child will benefit the most by arriving on time and being picked up on time. If you know you will be picking up your child early, please inform your child's teachers that morning. For security, the doors will be locked at 9:30 a.m. and unlocked at 1:30 p.m. For access to our facility during these times, please ring the front doorbell and the director will open the door for you.

During The School Day

Your child will participate in a variety of activities such as:

- ✓ listening to Bible stories and learning about God and Jesus
- ✓ working with paints, crayons, glue, and other art materials
- ✓ playing with blocks, puzzles, and a variety of manipulative materials
- ✓ enjoying stories, puppets, poetry, dramatizations, and books
- ✓ learning to share, take turns, plan, work, think, and reason
- ✓ developing preschool skills
- ✓ learning Christian values and character
- ✓ enjoying theme days, special events, and classroom parties
- ✓ learning to respond rhythmically to music, singing new songs, and listening to different kinds of music
- ✓ acquiring good health and cleanliness habits

All classes will enjoy a weekly music & movement time on Mondays and chapel time on Wednesdays.

CHILD/TEACHER RATIOS

The child to teacher ratio of enrollment will be as follows:

Toddlers	4 to 1	(8 children/ 2 teachers)
Twos	6 to 1	(12 children/ 2 teachers)
Threes	7 to 1	(14 children/ 2 teachers)
Pre-Kindergarten	8 to 1	(16 children/ 2 teachers) Pre-K children must be potty trained.

REST TIME

Classes will have a quiet rest time usually at the end of the day. Parents must provide a **labeled nap mat** for each child. If you do not plan for your child to stay for the entire rest time, please arrange to pick them up before rest time begins. Picking up children during rest time awakens sleeping children and disrupts the class. Nap mats may be left in the classroom on Mondays and taken home on Wednesdays.

HEALTH POLICIES

All must understand that being present in a childcare environment naturally exposes your child to communicable diseases including COVID 19, which is a continually changing health concern. The health and safety of your children, your families, and our staff is our top priority. Our endeavor is to do as much as we can to prevent the spread of any infectious diseases within our program. We will follow new guidelines recommended by our government officials to increase health and safety protocols, and we reserve the right to put health and safety precautions in place as needed.

- In the case of contagious illnesses, we will follow health and safety guidelines from the state and local public health authorities to determine when a return to the program is appropriate for both staff and children.
- I understand that my child's participation in childcare provided by Fellowship of Oso Creek MDO is completely voluntary and at our sole risk.
- I agree that I will not hold Fellowship of Oso Creek responsible should my child contract COVID-19 or any other contagious disease while in childcare at MDO.

CHANGES OR CLOSURES

- If the current situation changes and it becomes necessary to update our procedures or close our program temporarily, you will be notified.
- There are no refunds for days missed during health related exclusions from care nor unforeseen school closures out of our control.

Medication can only be administered by a parent, with the exception of emergency medications such as an Epi-pen or inhaler, which can be administered by MDO staff. Please leave emergency medication with the child's teacher in a ziplock bag. Please label with the child's name and instructions. Please review the instructions with the child's teacher.

In all emergencies, the program has permission to take such reasonable measures as are, in the judgment of the staff, necessary for the welfare and safety of the child. In case of illness or accident when the school cannot contact a parent and if, in the judgment of the staff member, the illness or accident requires immediate medical attention, the parent will be responsible for all medical expenses incurred.

MDO has an emergency preparedness plan in place to ensure the safety of children during an emergency. In an emergency, the first responsibility of our staff is to move the children to the designated safe place. Parents will be contacted once all students are accounted for and it is safe to do so. To ensure preparedness in an actual emergency, we conduct fire drills. Our plan also includes procedures for medical emergencies, severe weather, toxic fumes, and lock down procedures. Support staff are available to assist with the evacuation of individuals with limited mobility or who otherwise may need assistance in an emergency.

We are depending on you to help keep the children healthy. Please keep sick children at home. We care about your child, please call, email, or tell us if your child is ill or will not be attending. If your child has an illness diagnosed by a doctor as a communicable disease or lice, please notify the director so that other parents can be notified of possible exposure. A parent will be asked to come and pick up a child should any symptoms of illness occur while at MDO.

Parents are asked to keep their child at home when the child:

- has had vomiting, diarrhea, or fever within the last 24 hours
- has a green or yellow nasal discharge
- has abnormal breathing
- has a sore throat or mouth sores
- has any discharge from the eyes
- has any skin eruptions or unexplained rashes

- has lethargy, behavior changes, or other signs that indicate the child may be ill
- cannot participate in activities or play outdoors

Your arrival at the building each day is confirmation that none of these symptoms or situations are present.

A company periodically applies pesticides at the school. Information concerning these applications may be requested.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

A reliable adult must drop off and pick up your child. Your child will be sent home only with persons authorized by you on the registration form, which includes their driver's license number, unless you give written permission to do otherwise. Unless personally known by the staff, the identity of the individual picking up your child will be verified prior to their release.

FOOD

A mid-morning snack will be served, provided by MDO. Send **water** daily in a non-spill cup (or water bottle for older preschoolers) labeled with your child's first and last name. If your child has allergies, you must let the teacher know and provide an alternate snack for your child.

Please pack your child a nutritious lunch with a drink, which he/she can eat independently. MDO does not have a food preparation license. Please bring food that does not have to be prepared in any way, this includes needing to be cut, peeled, and opened with a can opener. We are unable to serve any foods that present a choking hazard. MDO is unable to heat or refrigerate foods. Include an ice pack in your child's lunch to keep foods at the proper temperature. Please limit sugary treats in your child's lunch. Since lunch is brought from home, MDO cannot be responsible for its nutritional value or for its ability to meet your child's daily food needs. Also, please make sure your child eats a nutritious breakfast before starting the day.

You have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for your child while they are in our care. We will provide a comfortable place for mothers who wish to breastfeed their child.

PERSONAL ITEMS

The preschool provides a variety of toys for all children. It is best for children to leave personal toys at home. Instead, we encourage bringing a pillow or cuddly to rest with at rest time. No toy guns, knives, or war toys are allowed. Please help your child understand this policy before arrival. Occasionally, your child's teachers may allow your child to bring certain items for show and tell, nature activities, or special days. We will make every effort to safeguard labeled belongings, but cannot be responsible for lost or broken items.

In addition to a ready-to-eat healthy lunch, each child should bring a backpack or diaper bag that contains the items he/she will need throughout the day. Please put your child's full name or first name and last initial on **everything** including all lunches and plastic dishes, backpacks, diaper bags, extra clothing, coats, caps, mats, blankets, etc.

CLOTHING

Children should wear comfortable, washable clothing appropriate for active and sometimes messy play. Clothing should be simple for the child to manage alone. Please send an adequate supply of disposable diapers if your child is not potty trained. Pull Ups are appropriate for a child showing interest in potty training who is able to communicate their needs to an adult. Underwear may be worn to school when the child is having only occasional, if any, accidents. In the interest of safety, children need to wear closed toe, rubber sole shoes. Sandals are uncomfortable because of the mulch on the playground. No flip flops allowed.

Corpus Christi weather can change rapidly, so always provide layered clothing for your child in the cooler months. We will play outdoors every school day, if the weather permits. In inclement weather, the children will play indoors in a large room. On cold days your child may need mittens and a hat.

Please provide a change of clothes for your child, including socks. It is helpful to send the clothes to school in a ziplock bag with your child's name on it.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthday recognition will be simple, but special. Each teacher will have a special way of recognizing the birthday child. Parents are welcome to bring a special treat for the mid-morning snack or after lunch. This must be arranged in advance with your child's teacher. Private party invitations may be distributed through children's cubbies only if they include the entire class. This policy prevents hurt feelings among children who are excluded.

FIELD TRIPS / ANIMALS

No school wide field trips will be planned. For the safety and security of your children, we prefer to keep them on our campus and bring interesting activities and visitors to our school. If animals visit our school, you will be notified in writing before the animals are on the premises.

WATER ACTIVITIES

Once or twice a year we will enjoy a splash day. Our toddlers and twos will participate in sprinkler play. Wading pools will only be available for our threes and fours. In order for your child to participate in water activities, a signed permission must be on file.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Special events are planned throughout the year that include both the children and their parents. You will receive information about these events from your child's teacher.

If you would like to volunteer in the classroom at MDO, we need a copy of your photo ID. Volunteers will not be left unsupervised with children.

As a parent, you are always welcome at MDO. Please be sensitive not only to your child's needs to adjust to separating from you, but also his or her classmates' need to adjust to their parents' departure. You are welcome to call or come by and check on your child at any time. Understand that health and safety procedures must be followed in the building.

MDO is not licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as a two day program, however we do follow the best practices set up through the minimum standards created by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. You are welcome to bring any concerns or comments to your child's teacher's attention. If the teaching staff does not resolve your concern, you may bring this matter to the director's attention. You may also contact the Fellowship of Oso Creek pastoral staff.

CHILD SAFETY

We are committed to help reduce child abuse and neglect. The staff is trained annually to recognize, prevent and report child abuse and neglect. More information is available at www.centerforchildprotection.org. The staff is required by Texas State Law to report suspected child abuse or neglect. To file a report: Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400.

OUR STAFF

We believe all our teachers each have different gifts to bring to our program. We select our staff carefully in order to provide the best possible care and education for your child. We employ people who are warm and nurturing, who have an understanding of child development, and can apply their knowledge in the classroom. They value working as a team with parents, colleagues, and volunteers. Each staff member is screened through an interview, criminal background check and ongoing observation and training. Not only do our teachers love the Lord and love children, they are certified in CPR and first aid and are involved in additional training classes that help them learn and grow as childcare providers.

TUITION AND FEES

MDO tuition is based on the total number of days for the school year. It has been divided into 10 equal monthly payments. A registration fee is due at the time of enrollment. Tuition payments are due by the first class day of the month. Tuition payments are given to the director, paid at the welcome desk, or mailed to the

office or paid online through EasyTithe (osocreek.org). Our teaching staff is not allowed to accept tuition. If you choose, you may pay by the semester or by the year. See the director for details. We are unable to give change back. Overpayments will be applied to your account. Checks should be made payable to FOC MDO. If you pay by check, your canceled check will serve as your receipt. If you pay by cash, a receipt will be issued. If you desire a semester or yearly receipt, special arrangements should be made with the office. If other financial arrangements need to be considered, please see the director. There will be no reduction in fees for illness, vacation, bad weather days, or other absences or school closures.

The registration fee paid at the time of registration is non-refundable.

Please note the following schedule of charges:

- Enrollment will be forfeited if the full payment is not received by the end of the month.
- An insufficient check charge of \$25.00 will be assessed on any returned check.
- A late pick-up charge of \$1.00 per minute per child will be assessed at 2:05 p.m. Parents will be asked to sign a late arrival form, which the teacher will turn in to the office.

WITHDRAWAL

Upon registration the student is automatically enrolled for the entire year, 10-month period, August through May. A two-week notice must be given to the director in writing before withdrawing a child. Failure to notify will result in continued tuition payments. If a two-week written notice is given, any tuition paid beyond those two weeks will be fully refunded. No tuition will be refunded if a two-week notice is not given.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDANCE

MDO desires to show love and acceptance to all children. We want to help children develop a healthy self-esteem and self-discipline concerning their actions. When discipline is necessary we attempt to:

- Show patience and understanding
- Redirect the child when necessary
- Be consistent and loving
- Help the child talk about misunderstandings

Discipline will 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 will 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 by using clear, positive statements;
3. Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
4. Using brief supervised separation 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 will 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;
9. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

If a child's behavior should become chronic or unresponsive (i.e. biting, hitting, crying), the program may follow any of these steps:

1. Request a parent conference
2. Ask the parent to have the child examined by a pediatrician
3. Ask the parent to have an evaluation by a child guidance professional
4. Reserve the right to request immediate withdrawal of the child

MDO reserves the right to dismiss any child from the program if he/she is unable to participate appropriately in group experiences, fees have not been paid, the MDO's policies/procedures are not followed, or disruptive behavior by the parent or guardian.

CHANGES

Please let us know, within two weeks, if:

- You have a change of address or phone number
- You need to update authorized pick up persons or emergency contact information
- Anything changes at home (birth, change in family structure, family illness, etc.) This allows us to help you and your child.
- Status of toilet training

BAD WEATHER DAYS

For the safety of our students MDO will close or delay opening according to the Corpus Christi Independent School District schedule. Please check the CCISD website, radio or TV stations for CCISD school closings or late openings due to inclement weather. If schools are delayed one hour, MDO will begin at 10am.

PARKING

For the safety of our children, please park your cars in the parking spaces. In rainy weather, please bring an umbrella. It is difficult to see our preschoolers in the parking lot, so use extreme caution as you drive. Never leave a child unattended in a parked vehicle.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Classes are assigned according to the age of the child as of September 1st of the current school year. Children will not promote or change classes during the school year. Should it become necessary to reassign your child to a different class, parents will be notified prior to the change.

A TYPICAL DAY AT MDO

Your child will benefit from a structured day centered on the Lord Jesus and the Word of God. MDO will study units based around a particular theme from a Christian perspective and apply them appropriately for each age group. You may expect the following to occur in your child's class daily:

- Bible stories
- Learning centers
- Art time
- Outdoor play
- Snack and lunch time
- Music and group time
- Nap/rest time

The entire staff will gather daily to pray for your children and the day's activities.
Please feel free to make suggestions that would help us serve you better through this ministry.

*MDO is non-profit and operates as part of the total ministry of Fellowship of Oso Creek.
We do not discriminate against any child based on race, color, national origin, sex, or religion.*

IT LOOKS LIKE PLAY BUT WE ARE LEARNING

- . . .to work and play together
- . . .to respect the rights of others
- . . . to listen as well as speak
- . . . to express ourselves creatively
- . . . to grow from dependence to independence
- . . . to listen to directions and to follow them
- . . . to develop good working habits
- . . . to finish what we start
- . . . to clean up after work time
- . . . to participate in group activities
- . . . to enjoy using a variety of materials
- . . . to share toys, equipment and experiences
- . . . to dramatize stories and experiences
- . . . to develop an interest in books
- . . . to develop an interest in the world around us
- . . . to improve muscular coordination
- . . . to stay with plans for increasingly longer periods of time
- . . . to develop new interests and extend old ones
- . . . to understand new words and symbols and be able to use them

Please keep this handbook for future reference.