



Parent Handbook 2024 -2025

Dear CHUMS Families,

Welcome to Colonial Hills United Methodist School, an independent, private school with an established history since 1970.

At CHUMS, we understand that your child's educational journey extends beyond the traditional classroom setting. We focus on providing a holistic learning experience that fosters essential social-emotional skills, preparing your child for long-term success both academically and personally. Our educational approach combines decades of experience with a commitment to embracing new and innovative programs over the next 50 years. This handbook serves as a reference to help you familiarize yourself with our school policies and understand your role as a supportive parent in our school program.

We believe that each child's success depends upon strong partnerships between parents and teachers. Together we will work with you to prepare and guide your child, both academically and socially, to transition smoothly and excel into his or her next level of learning. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to lead a remarkable group of caring, creative, and gifted teachers and staff. We are all here because we are passionate about having a positive impact on young lives.

We look forward to being a part of your child's growth and development. Welcome to Colonial Hills United Methodist School.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Hamblin
School Director

INTRODUCTION

Colonial Hills United Methodist School was founded in 1970, as a ministry of Colonial Hills United Methodist Church. Since that time, we have been providing one of the most consistent and developmentally appropriate private toddler, Pre-K, and Kindergarten programs in San Antonio.

MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Our mission is to provide a safe, loving environment that nurtures the whole child. Our curriculum and developmentally appropriate environment help children grow socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and intellectually. We develop self-esteem, socialization, and skills for life.

The educational experience children receive at CHUMS goes beyond the classroom and provides them with the key social-emotional skills necessary for future academic success. At CHUMS, we provide hands-on activities and discovery methods of learning, in conjunction with our social-emotional curriculum, Conscious Discipline, to provide the tools necessary to be not only successful in school, but also successful in life.

Children experience joy in learning and build positive self-esteem as they discover and explore. Concrete experience provides the conceptual background necessary for the later development of all abstract learning. Children learn by "doing." In the learning environment, each child's imagination, independence, curiosity, and creativity is encouraged. Our curriculum encourages children to be actively involved in the learning process, to experience many developmentally appropriate activities, and to pursue their own interests while learning about life and how they relate to the community and to the world.

Our curriculum focuses on exploration and experimentation within a play and social environment. Daily activities include: facilitated play through centers, creative art experiences, music and movement, dramatic play, storytime, math & science, gross and small motor activities in and out of the classroom. There is a balance of structured and unstructured activities during each day. Through play and problem solving, children learn the basic skills necessary to achieve academically, emotionally, socially and physically.

STATE LICENSING

Colonial Hills United Methodist School is licensed by Texas Health and Human Services and is designed to meet or exceed licensing standards. The school is licensed and accountable to the Texas Health and Human Services Department. You may view our license and our most recent Licensing Inspection Report in the School Office.

Our local licensing office may be reached at (210) 337-3399 or at [DFPS - Texas Child Care Licensing \(CCL\) \(state.tx.us\)](http://dfps.state.tx.us).

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Colonial Hills United Methodist School does not discriminate (in the administration of its admissions policies, financial aid, or other school administered programs) against families, employees, or applicants for employment based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical conditions, gender, sexual orientation, or marital status.

TEACHERS/STAFF

We take great pride in the special qualities, experience, and talents of our teachers and staff. They are selected not only for their educational background and work experience in the field of early childhood education, but also for their personal qualities of warmth, empathy, and the ability to relate positively to others. All CHUMS staff participate in yearly in-service training as well as receiving a minimum of 24 hours of Early Childhood Continuing Education each school year. The staff is also required to be trained in CPR and First Aid.

SCHOOL BOARD

CHUMS is managed by the School Director, and our CHUMS School Board. The CHUMS School Board meets three times a year to approve the school budget and to set policy for the school. The board is composed of the School Director, CHUMC Pastor, the Director of the Child Development Center, the CHUMS Assistant Director, the CHUMC Director of Family Ministries, CHUMC Finance Committee Representative, parents of currently enrolled CHUMS and Little CHUMS children, and one member-at-large from the CHUMC congregation.

PROGRAMS/HOURS OF OPERATION, HOLIDAYS, CLOSURES

PROGRAMS OFFERED: In each of our programs, we provide a curriculum with dedicated teaching staff who are trained and skilled to meet the specific needs of the age group.

- Little CHUMS (Sept. - May)
Toddlers - 18 months through 35 months by September 1st of the current school year
- CHUMS (Aug. - May)
Pre-K3 - 3 years of age by September 1st of the current school year
Pre-K4 - 4 years of age by September 1st of the current school year
Kindergarten - 5 years of age by September 1st of the current school year

HOURS/DAYS

School office hours are Monday- Friday 8:00 am-3:30 pm. Our school programs hours are as follows:
Your child's hours may be limited by his or her enrolled program.

PROGRAM	ATTENDANCE OPTIONS	HOURS
Little CHUMS - toddler	T/TH, MWF, M-F	8:45 am - 2:30 pm extended morning and afternoon available
CHUMS Preschool - Pre-K3 & Pre-K4	Half Day: MWF, M-F Full Day: MWF, M-F	8:45 am - 12:10 pm 8:45 am - 2:30 pm extended morning and afternoon available
Kindergarten	M-F	8:45 am - 2:30 pm extended morning and afternoon available
Early Bird / Late Bird	T/TH, MWF, M-F	8:00 am - 8:35 am 2:35 pm - 3:30 pm

STUDENT-TEACHER RATIOS

Little CHUMS: 2:10

PK3: 1:10

PK4: 1:12

Kindergarten: 1:12

HOLIDAYS

School holidays typically include Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Spring Break, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Battle of Flowers holiday.

School holidays are reflected on the current school calendar and are based on Northside/North East School District calendars. As such, dates may vary year to year. Our school calendar is available on our website, www.chums-sa.com, and is updated with the next year's dates every spring.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

When inclement weather or another unexpected event requires special precaution, the school may be forced to close. In the event of an emergency or closing of the school due to extreme weather, parents will be notified via ProCare SMS alert messaging system. If weather has forced NISD to close, CHUMS will be closed also.

CURRICULUM

Extensive resources and materials are provided to help teachers create a stimulating learning environment. Our custom curriculum is designed to give children the opportunity to explore a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities within a warm and supportive setting. Teachers work to provide a good balance of child and teacher-initiated activities. Children are provided with a variety of open-ended activities and materials that promote creativity through:

- Language Development
- Creative Art
- Math, Science, and Sensory Experiences
- Music and Movement
- Learning Centers and Manipulative Exploration
- Fine and Gross Motor Development
- Natural Outdoor Experiences

A wide selection of developmentally appropriate materials are available for children throughout our programs. Teachers provide alternating activities using different materials daily. Materials that are selected to

- emphasize concrete experiential learning.
- encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment.
- encourage language and literacy development.
- enhance physical development and skill.
- build upon their curiosity to initiate discoveries in science and social studies.
- encourage sound health, safety, and nutritional practices.
- respect cultural diversity

Group times, large and small, which are part of the daily routine help the children develop social skills, to listen, to participate, and to care for one another

Because play is a child's "work," the classroom is divided into carefully curated learning centers, which provide

opportunities for children through various activities. The children are provided with daily experiences that will promote their overall level of development. Our curriculum embraces the value of phonemic awareness. In addition to thematic units, letter and number hands-on learning activities are provided. Social development, cognitive skills, language skills, and perceptual skills are all emphasized through play in our learning centers and in circle time activities. Each child is unique and develops at their own rate.

Kindergarten

Our Kindergarten curriculum is led by a certified-teacher and designed to prepare students academically, and socially, for 1st grade through engaging the children in active learning experiences that promote creativity, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking. Through play, children learn to work with partners, engage in small group collaborations, and develop essential social skills that will benefit them for a lifetime.

Academic learning in CHUMS Kindergarten utilizes the following curriculum.

- Literacy growth: UFLI Foundations | UF Literacy Institute
- Investigations Math: The Curriculum - Investigations3 (terc.edu)
- Philosophy of the Science of Reading:
https://www.thereadingleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Science_of_Reading_Defining_Guide_eBook.pdf
- *Handwriting Without Tears* is also used to supplement handwriting skills.

Kindergarten students may take a variety of exciting, educational field trips. Community visitors may also offer supplemental learning experiences with special presentations for the Kindergarten classes.

Each month you will receive a monthly newsletter identifying the concepts and activities the class will be working on.

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE

All classes teach Conscious Discipline, our social emotional curriculum. Conscious Discipline is an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach. It is recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), and received high ratings in 8 of 10 categories in a Harvard analysis of the nation's top 25 social-emotional learning programs. The Harvard study's authors say, "Conscious Discipline provides an array of behavior management strategies and classroom structures that teachers can use to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities."

Special Enrichment Classes ("Specials")

All CHUMS students engage in additional enrichment classes including Music, Motor Skills, Computer/Keyboarding (Kinder only), Library, and outdoor classroom/garden experiences.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Colonial Hills United Methodist School strongly believes in daily physical activity for children. It helps build strong bones and muscles, boosts strength, lowers disease risks, enhances self-esteem, and reduces stress. Furthermore, physical activity has been linked to improved academic performance, cognitive skills, and motor skills development.

CHUMS ensures kids play actively for at least 45 minutes for half-day students or 67.5 minutes for full day students, with outdoor play encouraged whenever possible. Structured activities, teacher-led games, and continuous gross motor skill development are integral components of CHUMS' commitment to promoting daily physical activity. Proper attire, including sun-protective clothing and supportive footwear, is essential for

ensuring children's safety and full participation in active play. To optimize student safety, we have a firm no Crocs footwear policy at CHUMS.

RELIGION

Colonial Hills United Methodist School students participate in a weekly non-denominational chapel service where they engage in Christian-centered activities and celebrate Christian holidays. Bible stories are read to the students in chapel and in the classroom, and the Christian way of life is exemplified. Chapel takes place every Wednesday at 8:55 am, with parents encouraged to join their child's class. Additionally, money is collected during Chapel for Habitat for Humanity to model serving others.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNICATION

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Close communication with parents is essential to providing quality care and education. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in supporting their child's early education. Families are encouraged to participate in school activities and events. Parents can help their child by discussing and expanding on each day's learning at home. Parents can involve themselves in a variety of ways, such as volunteering, sharing their talents or hobbies, accompanying children on field trips (Pre-K 4 & Kindergarten), and assisting with school events.

COMMUNICATION

It is essential for the healthy development and growth of your child that parents and teachers communicate frequently, directly, and effectively. We strive to be a team and encourage you to come directly to us with your questions and concerns. While teachers are not able to have lengthy conversations in the classroom during drop off or pick up, we are always happy to arrange a time for more detailed conversations. It is through working together that we can best meet your needs and those of your child. If you would like to have more than a few moments to talk, we encourage you to set up a phone call or a face-to-face conference with your child's classroom teacher(s). Early intervention by parents and the school provides the best opportunity for the resolution of difficult issues.

The connection between home and school is essential. We ask that you share information with us; including any changes at home that may affect your child at school. These changes could include a death in the family, moving to a new residence, loss of a parent's job, a parent away for business, someone from the immediate family moving out of the home, family status change, or a new sibling. It is also important for us to be aware of any special support or services your child may be receiving outside of school. Information you share about your family is kept confidential. Changes that may seem routine or ordinary to an adult may be regarded as unusual by a young child who has not had as many years of experience in dealing with changes. These changes and others often lead to different behavior in the classroom. We can teach and work better with your child if we are aware of any changes at home.

Parents have a variety of options when it comes to learning about their child's day at school. Some avenues used daily include: verbally speaking with a teacher, reading posted information outside the classroom door, messages, pictures and videos of your child's day on the ProCare app and through school wide emails.

PARENT TEACHER CONNECTION

Parent teacher connections (conferences) are held twice a year; normally in October and April. Conferences provide an opportunity for teachers to form a connection with their students' families and to share insight on your child's unique development.

During conferences teachers will share their observations, as well as report on your child's progression in the

classroom as it relates to the classroom assessment report. Parents will receive a copy of the assessment report in May. This will be used as a guide to provide an overview of how your child is doing. Parents or teachers may request additional meetings if the need arises during the school year.

PROCARE APP

The primary source of communication with the office and your child's teacher will be through the Procare App. Be in the habit of checking this frequently so that you don't miss out on important information about school, including school closure notices. Because Procare is the preferred mode of communication from the teacher, be sure to download this app prior to the beginning of school.

Please note that a teacher may not respond to a message during the school day as their focus will be on the children. Contact the office should you need to get an important message to your child's teacher. You may also find information in your child's folder so be sure to check your child's tote daily.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

A CHUMS school calendar is published yearly in August and in alignment with both the Northside ISD and North East ISD calendars. The school calendar is updated regularly and available on our website at www.chums-sa.com.

CLASSROOM CALENDARS

A monthly class-specific calendar will be placed in your child's tote. This calendar is informative in conveying information about classroom activities, snack rotations, learning themes, and important reminders and serves as a tool to promote conversation with your child about their school day.

CHUMS NEWSLETTER

Each month the office will post on our website, send in an email, and post on ProCare our school newsletter, CHUMS NEWS. We will announce birthdays, special upcoming school events, and keep parents informed of any important school wide information

ROOM PARENT/PARENT VOLUNTEERS

To create a sense of community we encourage our parents to volunteer to be a room parent. The room parent is responsible for communication between the class party volunteers, coordination of teacher birthdays, end of year gifts, and general relationship building between not only the parents but also the students within the class.

The Room parent will be provided the phone number of each parent in the class, in order to create a class communication group on the app GROUP ME. Once a room parent is designated, the teacher will provide the following information to the parent to establish the GroupMe account:

- List of name and numbers of the parents in the class (ask the office admin for this information)
- Set up an account: Enter your email address, Microsoft Account, Google Account, or Facebook information, then tap Continue. Next, enter your name, create a password, and set a profile photo.
- Start a group: Go to the Chats tab and tap New chat, then Start Group. Enter a name for the group (Bird class, Tiger class etc.) and add an avatar, then tap Next. To add members, you can type their name, email, or phone number, or select from your GroupMe contacts. You can also invite members using a link, QR code, or SMS. Once you're done adding members, tap the checkmark to create the group.

The commitment of a "parent classroom volunteer" will look different for each class age group. Please note

that when **Little CHUMS or Pre-K3 parents** sign up to volunteer for a class special snack for Valentines, Christmas etc., they will only be providing the snack and or plates/napkins etc., and **they will not be present during the special snack time.** Although they are not required to, Pre-K4 and Kinder parents are welcome to attend, set up and provide the special snack, activity, game if applicable. Parents will also have opportunities to volunteer during our Fiesta celebrations, book fairs, and other school events.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The person who drops off/picks up your child must sign your child in/out every day with a complete (full legal) signature and time of arrival. Never leave your child unattended. It is important to remember, in order to benefit from the learning program children are expected to arrive by 8:45 AM. When children are late, it disrupts the learning process not only for that child, but for their classmates as well. If we find a child is frequently arriving at school late, we will require a parent conference to address the issue.

Morning Arrival: Doors will be opened and manned by a staff member at 8:35 am, 10 mins prior to class beginning. Doors will close and lock at 8:50 am. Parents arriving after 8:50 am will report to the office and a staff member will let them in the building. Teachers will NOT OPEN THE DOOR FOR LATE ARRIVALS.

Dismissal: Doors will be opened at 12:05 pm for half day dismissal (Pre-K only), and at 2:25 pm for full day dismissal.

Early Bird and Late Bird: In order to pick up or drop off your child (ren), parents will be provided a security code to enter the gym and or Education Building during those program hours only. Early Bird 8:00 am - 8:35 am; Late Bird 3:35 pm - 3:30 pm.

LATE ARRIVALS

Our morning check-in tables close at 8:50 AM. If you arrive after 8:50 AM, you must check-in with the office to obtain access to your child's classroom. Please be respectful of your child's teacher and our office staff and do your best to arrive on time. This is for the benefit of your child and not having them miss out on valuable classroom time with their peers. Parents arriving late to pick up (5 mins after dismissal time) will need to report to the office to pick up their child. Parents will incur a late pick up fee.

SIGNING STUDENTS IN/OUT

When your child is dropped off and picked up, please sign in next to your child's name and indicate your time of arrival/departure on the sign in sheet. Your complete (full legal) signature and time of arrival/departure is required to sign your child out each day.

Your child must be picked up promptly according to your program's hours. Children will only be released to adults (18 and older) previously authorized, and picture identification is required for anyone not recognized by our staff. You must make sure that your child's teacher acknowledges that you are taking your child from the class or playground. It is unlawful for a person under the age of 18 (other than a parent), to sign in or out, regardless of their relationship to the child. Therefore, children will not be released to siblings, relatives, or friends under the age of 18. We take the safety of all children on campus seriously.

While children are in the care of our staff, we supervise them carefully and enforce rules that pertain to safety. It is important for parents to follow and enforce the same safety rules when picking up their children and moving outside the classrooms, since the children are no longer in the presence of our staff. While you are

welcome to stay at school and socialize with other children and parents, we would like to request that you pay particular attention to your children when they are in your care to ensure their safety .Once a parent has signed a child out, the teachers will no longer be responsible for the supervision of that child. At that point, the parent is solely responsible for supervising the child.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP

Staff members can only release your child to those individuals listed on your pre authorized list completed at the time of enrollment. Authorized persons are identified on the Authorized Pick Up form and Emergency Card.

Advance authorization is required for a child to be released to an individual other than those already listed. It is recommended that parents name everyone who might pick up their child when enrolling and update this information regularly. Only in cases of necessity or emergency should a change be made over the telephone. When notified by telephone, we may request that certain family information be confirmed for verification. The person picking-up the child will be required to present identification when arriving at school.

Should a person other than the child's parent(s) or those indicated on the pick -up authorizations form arrive to pick up the child, a parent and/or the first available person on the emergency contact form will be notified and the child will not be released until proper authorization is received. Should an unauthorized person become confrontational or uncooperative with our staff, we will immediately notify the police.

We will not release a child to any parent, relative or other authorized adult who appears to be impaired by the use of drugs or alcohol. In the event this situation occurs, a telephone call will be made to an alternate emergency contact person or the police.

UPDATING EMERGENCY CONTACTS

It is important that the school maintain current and accurate records for each child so that parents can be contacted in the event of an emergency. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that the school has current contact information. If there are any changes to this information, the office must be notified promptly so that they can update their records.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

We expect parents to observe a certain standard of conduct as a part of our school community. The following items are not acceptable while on our campus:

- Threatening, harassing or otherwise disrespecting staff, other parents, or children
- Swearing, cursing, or foul language
- Threatening or obscene gestures
- Quarreling with other parents or staff
- Making disparaging comments regarding the school to staff, parents, or anyone other than Administration (including outside of school)
- Using contact information of CHUMS families for commercial or any other improper purpose
- Not following policies designated to protect the safety and security of everyone at the school Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate withdrawal of the family.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you have any concerns regarding school policies or the care your child is receiving, you are encouraged to speak to the appropriate person. If the concern is regarding a teacher, the classroom, or your child, you should first initiate a conversation with the teacher. Many times, this approach will result in a satisfactory outcome

not requiring any further discussion. If you feel that the issue merits the attention of the Administration, you should ask for a meeting with the Director of School. The following steps will be taken in order to resolve the conflict:

- Keep the problem confidential, dealing first with the problem directly with whom it involves.
- Bring the problem that has not been resolved with reasonable effort, or to the satisfaction of those involved to the Director. The Director will provide support towards helping the parties find a resolution, and documentation of the meeting will take place with each party completing the Grievance form.
- After the above steps have been taken and resolution has not been made a meeting with the School Board may be required

CUSTODY/COURT ORDERS

CHUMS encourages parents to be actively involved in their child's care and education. In providing care for a child, continuing and meaningful contact with both parents is required. Therefore, the school will not prohibit parents from accessing records, attending activities, or participating in conferences pertaining to their child unless otherwise required by court order or law.

The school denies a parent access to their child only if there is a legal document which addresses that denial. In these circumstances, we require (1) a certified copy of the current court order which states the rights or restraints ordered, (2) a letter from the custodial parent stating that the noncustodial parent is not allowed to pick up the child and (3) a photo of the non-custodial parent to help us with identification. We cannot accept information regarding the validity of orders over the phone; only legitimate written instruction will be accepted.

Visitation schedules and parenting plans are agreements made between parents and are not binding to the school. The school will release a child to either parent in accordance with school policy, unless otherwise directed by a valid court order. Visitation with the non-custodial parent may not take place at school.

The school discourages parents from involving school staff in disputes over custody, visitation schedules, child support and other related issues. Staff members must stay focused on providing children the highest level of care. To do so, they must maintain good relationships with both parents and should not be asked to support one parent over another. Staff will not testify or otherwise participate in a custody dispute in their capacities as school employees unless served with a subpoena. Often, child records can provide the same information as the testimony of a staff member, and parents have access to child records by law. Parents are encouraged to use these records rather than staff testimony in resolving these types of disputes.

HEALTHY AND SAFETY

MEDICAL FORMS

Each child must have a current medical form on file in the office. This form must be signed by you and your physician, and must indicate the results of your child's hearing and vision test if your child is four by September 1 of the incoming school year. You are also required to have a current immunization record on file. These two forms are required in order for your child to attend school.

MEDICATION

Medication may be administered to your child ONLY if the parent has completed and submitted the Medication Authorization form. All medications (i.e. prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, lotions/ointments, lip balm, cough drops, etc.) must be in the original package, have the child's name clearly marked on it and will be stored in a medication cabinet or medication refrigerator in the school office. All

medications must be administered in accordance with the pharmacy or manufacturer's label. The Medication Authorization form will be used to record any medication given to a student and will include the date, time, dosage, and administering staff's signature. Medication forms must have a beginning and ending date and can only be kept for a short period of time, except for approved long-term medications held for emergencies. If your child requires an EpiPen to be kept at school, the parent will be responsible for supplying and instructing staff on how to administer the EpiPen. The child's parent must communicate any new physician's orders (i.e. dosage changes, etc.) and track expiration dates and replace medicine. All medications will be stored in the School Office.

SUNSCREEN/BUG SPRAY

Sunscreen and/or bug spray should be applied prior to your child coming to school. The CHUMS staff can not apply these items to your child at school.

HEARING and VISION SCREENING

It is the Texas Health and Safety Code that all children turning four years old must have a Vision and Hearing screening on file in the school office. CHUMS does not provide a Hearing and Vision screening for students.

EMERGENCIES

In case of accidental injury or severe illness, we will first contact the child's parents, then the designated emergency persons. If necessary, the school will arrange for emergency medical care. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school records updated with current telephone numbers and emergency information.

WEATHER

CHUMS will use the Child Care Weather Watch information provided by Childcare Regulation to determine if the weather outside is safe and appropriate for us to be going outside during the day.

INSURANCE

Colonial Hills United Methodist Church carries liability insurance. The children are covered at school and on field trips.

ACCIDENTS

Parents will be informed of any accidents involving their child during school hours. A written report will be made and signed by the teacher and a parent or guardian. Such reports will be filed in the school office.

ILLNESS POLICY

When a child becomes ill and or has a temperature of 100 or higher, or is injured at school, the staff's priority is to meet the child's physical health needs. In case of illness, we will take the child's temperature, as well as perform an overall visual health assessment. A phone call to parents will be made when the school deems it necessary. If parents are requested by the school to pick up their sick child, they must do so within one hour and the child may not return to school for 24 hours following the time sent home and until the symptoms subside.

Parents are advised to make alternate plans for care in the event that the child becomes ill and is not able to attend school. If a sick child is not picked up within one hour of being called, we may call your alternate contact to request pick up. Failure to pick up a sick child in a timely manner, or disregard of this policy by

parents, may result in the removal of your child from school. If a child is well enough to come to school, we will expect him or her to go outdoors with the class, weather permitting.

Children must be free of symptoms of illness for 24 hours before returning to school. These include:

- Fever higher than 98.6. Your child must be fever free for 24 without fever reducing medication in order to return to school.
- A runny nose that is not clear or opaque (Heavy green nasal discharge or yellow discharge indicates a probable cold or infection)
- Internal symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Red or runny eyes, discharge from the eyes
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Moist or open sore(s)
- Mouth sores (including cold sores)
- Persistent cough
- Unusual rash
- Head Lice
- Any one of the following: ear aches, signs of irritability or confusion
- Lethargy or inability to participate in the normal classroom activities

Our teachers are authorized to refuse admittance to a child who has or has had, within 24 hours, those symptoms. We ask that you not put our teachers in that awkward position. If you are in doubt about bringing a child, call the school office and discuss the symptoms with the office staff. Your child's teacher will do a health check on your child daily.

1. Open and/or partially healed sores and scratches must be covered by a bandage. If bandages must be changed during the day, you must fill out a medication release form and provide the bandages and medication, if necessary. If sore(s) persist, we may ask for a doctor's note explaining the nature of the sore.
2. Cold and allergy symptoms can be confusing. A child's sinus discharge may be thick and cloudy in the morning. If the discharge does not run clear by mid-morning, we will contact you to pick up your child.
3. Report to the school any contagious diseases your child contracts, such as pink eye, the flu, or strep throat. The program, in turn, will notify you if any contagious diseases are present in your child's classroom.
4. If your child is unusually quiet, listless, distressed, or exhibiting unusual behavior, we will contact you and let you make the decision to pick them up or not.

Your child may return to school when he or she is symptom-free for at least 24 hours or has been on antibiotics for the appropriate time as determined by your child's pediatrician. If your child has been seen by a doctor and is told he or she may return to school sooner than 24 hours, please provide a note from the doctor.

NUT AWARE INFORMATION

To provide a safe environment for our students with nut allergies, parents are asked to not send any food containing peanuts, tree nuts, or buy items that indicate on the nutritional label words such as "may contain traces of..." or "made on equipment that processes or manufacturers..." or "made in a facility that also manufactures..." The item should not be brought to school. This includes food for snacks, lunches, and class

parties. If we find that your child's lunch contains nuts, we will contact you.

ALLERGIES OR SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

If your child has severe allergies that require monitoring and intervention in case of an allergic reaction, please be sure to outline all allergies and the required treatment onto a Food Allergy Action Plan form, and discuss it with both your child's teachers and office staff. The allergy information will be attached to all required medication(s) and copies made for your child's teachers, classrooms, school office and in your child's file. All classrooms must post the Allergy form. This form will list any students who may have a food allergy and or intolerance. This list will also be accompanied by a child specific Food Allergy Action Plan, if needed.

If there are additional items your child is allergic to, we will work with you in trying to prevent your child from coming into contact with the item(s).

Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that other parents or children will be as conscientious as we are and, therefore, cannot guarantee your child will not come into contact with an item that may affect him or her. If your child develops an allergy during the course of the school year, please be sure to notify the school office.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND WEAPONS FREE ENVIRONMENT

The use of cigarettes, E-cigarettes, vapor devices, and chewing tobacco is not permitted. The possession and/or use of drugs (including marijuana or cannabis infused items), alcohol, or weapons is prohibited. These restrictions apply to all persons on school grounds, including our parking lot, as well as on field trips, outdoor activities, and in school vehicles.

VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASE POLICY

Colonial Hills United Methodist School requires that all children attending our program follow the immunization schedule and guidelines as set forth by the City of San Antonio Health Department and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

All children have special needs at different stages of their development and require effective accommodations to allow them to attain critical milestones in their life journeys. Certain children may have more needs due to their medical, physical as well as psychological uniqueness or disabilities. We do our best, within the limits of our professional abilities, to work with children with special needs due to physical, linguistic, mental, and/ or emotional disabilities. Please consult with a member of the Administration prior to enrollment if your child has special needs.

Despite our best efforts, however, there may be times when participation in our programs, or a group setting in general, will not be in the best interest of your child at the current time. We are dedicated to helping children achieve their full potential. CHUMS teachers have expertise in child development and occasionally identify behavioral or developmental needs in young children that parents may or may not recognize. We work in a shared approach and involve parents in the process of identifying the need and working toward possible solutions.

In these instances, our staff may recommend additional observation, professional diagnosis, therapy, or services for the child or family. We recognize some children may require one-on-one assistance during the day. If you wish to have an occupational, physical, or speech therapist work with your child, at your own expense, we will work with you to formulate a plan that is in the best interest of your child. We make decisions on whether or not to allow these arrangements at school on a case-by-case basis, and a limited number of these individuals are allowed on our campus at any one time.

These situations take up a significant amount of administrative time to assist with coordination, scheduling, and paperwork. In addition, the required individual attention can affect the entire classroom dynamic. Unfortunately, if we determine a situation is beyond our capacity to assist, or is detrimental to the classroom, we will have to require the parents to make other arrangements and withdraw the child from school. If your child is dismissed from the program, we will assist you with resources and referrals to assess and evaluate a program that is better fit for your child's developmental needs.

BASIC FIRST AID

In the course of normal supervised play, children occasionally get injured. In case of a minor injury or accident, our staff will administer basic first aid. Any cuts will be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water; ice will be applied to any bruises, bites, or other injuries. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented onto a Child Incident Report and provided to parents when the child is picked-up at the end of the day.

We may call and ask parents' permission to apply a topical antibiotic or anti-itch ointment as necessary to treat or prevent infection in minor skin wounds or alleviate itching.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

In case of a medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), we will call 911. Our staff has been trained in Pediatric and Adult First Aid and CPR and will administer it as appropriate. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified.

In case of an injury or accident in which an ambulance is not needed, but immediate professional care is required, we will contact the child's parents. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency contacts will be notified. Our staff cannot transport children to a hospital or doctor's office. Injured children shall be transported for medical aid by parents or by calling 911 for an ambulance. The child may be transported to a hospital by ambulance for emergency treatment if necessary.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We have emergency procedures in-place and practice regular fire, severe weather and lockdown drills with staff and children. In case of a fire, there is a central fire alarm that may be activated in the gym and the Education Building. Exit routes are posted with procedures by classroom exit doors. Fire extinguishers are located in the gym, school office, education building and Kindergarten building, and one in the kitchen, which are inspected regularly. Buildings are equipped with both smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. In case of an emergency, our staff will be acting in the best interests of the children. Children's safety is always our first priority. If our campus is unsafe, the evacuation and relocation site for our school is St. Matthew Catholic School, unless directed elsewhere by emergency personnel. In the event of such an emergency, you will be contacted via ProCare at the first opportunity and given information and instructions

DISCIPLINE AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICIES

CHUMS goal is to create an environment that allows each child to develop the appropriate self-control or emotional regulation to assume responsibility for their own behavior, while ensuring the safety of all children. All staff will communicate their behavior expectations to the children in a language they can understand in order to redirect the inappropriate behavior. To support the emotional development of our students CHUMS uses Conscious Discipline.

Conscious Discipline is an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach. It is recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), and received high ratings in 8 of 10 categories in a Harvard analysis of the nation's top 25 social-emotional learning programs. The Harvard study's authors say, "Conscious Discipline provides an array of behavior management strategies and classroom structures that teachers can use to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities."

Conscious Discipline encompasses these four components, which are scientifically and practically designed for success:

- **Conscious Discipline Brain State Model**
- **Seven Powers for Conscious Adults**
- **Creating the School Family**
- **Seven Skills of Discipline**

Positive discipline teaches children how to maintain control over their bodies and emotions, and how to problem solve in the event of a conflict. The goal is to encourage children to be more creative, independent, responsible and socially-emotional mature individuals who can make responsible choices. See the Assistant Director for articles, videos, and more workshops on Conscious Discipline.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES

CHUMS behavior guidance techniques follow the rules set forth by Texas Child Care Licensing and our Conscious Discipline curriculum. Disciplinary procedures are loving and positive with the goal being to help each individual child develop self-control and assume responsibility for their actions/choices. The first six weeks of school focus on the implementation of Conscious Discipline. Our teachers will model and set clear expectations for your children which will help to avoid unacceptable behaviors and foster each child's social-emotional development. We may need to redirect children and speak with them about appropriate behavior. When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove a child from the rest of the group. If a behavior persists, we will arrange a conference with the child's parents.

The following principles and techniques will be followed by all staff when interacting with the students:

- Expectations/Modeling and Observations - Ensure clear expectations are set and done so in a way the children will understand. Model the behavior for the students. Setting the expectation BEFORE the behavior is exhibited prevents frustration and persistent unacceptable behavior. Observe the children and redirect or remind as needed.
- Use language that the children can understand.
- Having a wide variety of activities (avoiding boredom) and enough toys (avoiding pressure of sharing limited toys).
- Finding out what came before the unacceptable behavior. Try to encourage the children to solve the problem as much as possible on their own.
- Using praise of specific positive behaviors, "I see that you help your friend...", instead of "Good job".
- When negative behaviors occur, being clear with expectations and deciding on a logical consequence. Ensure both children's feelings and emotions are validated, and help them use their words to come to a resolution. It is important for the teacher to continue to observe to ensure the resolution is carried out.
- Positive redirecting (especially with children under 2).

- Utilizing the Safe Place for strong emotions that need to be processed by the child. It is important for the teacher to model what the safe place is and how to use the breathing tools located in the safe place.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

CHUMS works with families of children who experience difficulty in our program. CHUMS goal is to provide a safe environment for all children. If a child displays ongoing disruptive behavior, CHUMS may take the following actions:

1. The Director will observe the class/situation. The teacher and family will confer, meet, and a behavior management plan will be agreed upon. Positive techniques will always be used.
2. If step two is unsuccessful within the timeframe of the agreed upon management plan, the family will be required to meet with the Director and child's teacher; another attempt will be made to correct the disruptive behavior. The Director, teacher, and family will discuss the next steps if progress does not occur.
3. Suspension/Disenrollment: When the previous procedures have been followed and sufficient progress has not occurred, the child may be disenrolled from the program. The Director will be available to assist the family in providing suggestions for a setting that can better support the needs of the child.

If at any time a child exhibits behavior that is harmful to his or herself or to others, the Director may immediately suspend the child and the parent will be asked to promptly pick up their child. The suspension can be for a specific amount of time or indefinitely, leading to disenrollment.

CHUMS recognizes the need to support the right of each child to play and learn in an inclusive early childhood program to the fullest extent; consistent with the best interests of all involved. Staff will work with families to provide the care and education of each child. If current staff is not sufficient, or the child does not appear to be benefiting from the program, or the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from the program, the family will be notified of the concerns and the child will be disenrolled from our program. The Director will work closely with the family to determine the specific needs of their child, identifying the services or setting most suited to meet those needs, and assist the family in suggesting suitable programs for their child.

BITING

Very young children tend to communicate a lot with their bodies, act quickly, and many times act spontaneously. They are not always able to distinguish between what is perceived as loving and what hurts. Reasons for biting range from exploration to frustration, to teething, to lack of language etc. Biting does not necessarily mean aggression towards other children.

When a bite occurs, the child who bit will be encouraged to use his or her words, not his or her body to communicate. Staff will be particularly concerned with the bitten child and will provide immediate comfort and will always treat both parties with respect. Staff will try to be proactive in preventing future biting instances by observing and supervising the child displaying the biting behavior and by redirecting the child away from situations that might make him or her want to bite. In addition, both sets of parents will be made aware of the

incident and an Accident/Incident report will be completed for both the child who was bitten and the biter. Confidentiality will always be maintained.

When children bite, each situation is unique. Therefore, children who exhibit biting behavior must be managed on an individual basis. If the biting becomes a concern for the staff with three or more biting incidents, the following steps will be followed:

1. The Director will observe the class. Then the staff and the family will meet to develop a written plan.
2. If the above plan is unsuccessful, it is not unusual to ask the family to keep the child home for a determined amount of time until the biting behavior dissipates.
3. In the event the child's biting behavior persists, and all resources for preventing the biting have been exhausted, and staff feel that the biting is jeopardizing the safety of the other children; the Director will work with the family to suggest an alternate program that may better meet the needs of the child, and he or she will be disenrolled from CHUMS

DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICES/DISENROLLMENT

In the event that CHUMS determines that enrollment or continued participation of a specific child and/or family is not appropriate, CHUMS reserves the right to discontinue service. CHUMS reserves the right to disenroll, cancel the enrollment of a child for reasons including, but not limited to, the following: not observing the rules of CHUMS as outlined in the parent handbook, the child has special needs which can not be adequately met with current staffing; physical and or verbal abuse of staff or children by adult or child; safety or well being of staff, children or families is jeopardized; non-payment of fees.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

CHUMS recognizes that child abuse and neglect are serious problems that affect not only a child's education, but also their physical and emotional well-being. All personnel working in a licensed childcare facility must report suspected child abuse or neglect. There is a criminal penalty for violation of this reporting law.

ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

INITIAL AND ANNUAL RE-ENROLLMENT

An Initial Enrollment Fee is due upon enrollment into the school. Each following year, continuing children must pay an annual Enrollment Fee with their completed Enrollment forms These fees are listed on the current Tuition Schedule and are non-refundable.

Each school year the following must be completed and received by the school office prior to enrollment:

- Enrollment application
- Payment of your enrollment fee
- Medical form – signed by the parent and physician
- A copy of current immunizations
- *All students four years of age and older will need vision and hearing screening. This is a state requirement.

*CHUMS does not provide a Hearing and Vision screening for students.

Enrollment is on a first-come, first-serve basis. When a class is filled, a waiting list will be established for the current school year. Parents on the waitlist will be notified if/when an opening becomes available.

Colonial Hills United Methodist School makes every effort to accommodate all children, but our school

reserves the right not to accept a child whose needs require individual attention and/or resources that cannot be provided by our available staff.

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Our current tuition rates can be found on our website, www.chums-sa.com/tuition-and-fees. Monthly tuition is based on the program(s) in which you have elected to enroll your child(ren).

Monthly tuition is **invoiced on the first day of each month** and **payment is due no later than the fourth day of each month**. There will be a late charge of \$35 for any tuition not received by the close of school on the fourth day of the month. If the fourth day of the month falls on a weekend, payment must be received before then. Any family account delinquent past the tenth of the month will result in your child not being able to attend school until payment for the current month has been made in full. Your child will be withdrawn from our program if your account remains delinquent. Re-enrollment is subject to availability after both the outstanding balance and a re-registration fee is paid. A \$40 fee will be charged for any returned check. Any time there is a returned payment, a money order or cashier's check will be required as a replacement. Tuition invoices are generated monthly through ProCare and can be paid through the ProCare app with a credit card, **DEBIT cards are NOT ACCEPTED**, check, cash or via Zelle (chumsschool@gmail.com).

Tuition paid in advance will be refunded **ONLY** if the following criteria are met:

1. The school is given 30 days written notice that you are withdrawing your child.
2. The class is at capacity.
3. We can fill the place vacated by your child.

LATE PICK UP FEES

If you expect to be late picking up your child, call the school immediately. We understand that things happen, and pick-up plans can be derailed. We also understand that prompt pickup allows afternoon lessons to progress and teachers to leave as scheduled at the close of the school day. As such, please make note of the following charges assessed for students picked up late. These fees will be applied regardless of notification to the preschool regarding you being late. Exact time is determined by the clock in the office.

- **Half-day Students: Students staying a half-day must be picked up promptly at 12:10 PM.**
After a five-minute grace period, students not collected by 12:15 will be assessed a charge of \$5.00 per five minutes late.
- **Full-day Students: Students staying a full-day must be picked up promptly at 2:30 PM.**
After a five-minute grace period, students not collected by 2:35 PM will be assessed a charge of \$5.00 per five minutes late. If you are late, your child/children will be ready for pickup in the school office, and not their assigned classroom.
- **Late Bird Students: Students staying for Late Bird must be picked up promptly at 3:30 PM**
After a five-minute grace period, students not collected by 3:35 PM will be assessed a charge of \$5.00 per five minutes late. If you are late, your child/children will be ready for pickup in the school office, and not their assigned classroom

Please note if you are late more than three times during the program year, the charge will be increased to \$10.00 per every 5 minutes late, and again increased after six late pickups to \$15.00 per every 5 minutes late.

If your child is left at school longer than 30 minutes past the school's scheduled closing time without contact

to the school and the school has exhausted all emergency options from your emergency card, then the San Antonio Police Department will be contacted. At that time, your child will be the responsibility of the San Antonio Police Department. You will still be responsible for any Late Fees incurred.

ABSENTEE POLICY

Full payment of tuition is required every month, whether or not the child attends school the full month. There is no absentee credit when school is missed because of holidays, vacations, illness, isolation, quarantine, or for any other reason.

DECISION TO WITHDRAW

CHUMS must be given a 30-day written notice should you plan to withdraw your child(ren) from our program at any time during the school year. Tuition will continue to be due for this notice period, and you will be responsible for the full month's tuition for any partial months of attendance.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Student class assignments are made after thoughtful consideration for each child individually and as a class member. We are unable to guarantee individual teacher requests. We encourage parents to carefully select their child's schedule at enrollment each year. We typically cannot accommodate schedule changes in our program.

SCHOOL-INITIATED WITHDRAWAL POLICY

The school reserves the right to have any child removed from school at any time without previous notice or a corrective program being required. Any tuition or deposit refund is at the sole discretion of the school.

GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

SECURITY

We take security concerns very seriously. We regularly monitor situations that would affect the safety and security of our children and make plans accordingly. We will keep parents up-to-date when specific situations arise. We have evacuation and emergency response plans in place to best protect our children and staff. We conduct regular fire, severe weather, and lockdown drills. Our buildings are locked during school hours. For building access for our Early and Late Bird parents you will be provided a code that may be entered into a keypad to gain entry. PIN codes are not to be shared, and must not be used by anyone other than the designated person. For security reasons we ask that you not hold the door open for other individuals. If you have questions about these and other security systems in place, please talk to the School Director.

PLAYGROUND ACTIVITIES AND SAFETY

Children learn through active use of their senses and many great opportunities for learning occur outdoors. The playground is an educational environment and an extension of the classroom. Outdoor play allows children to learn about their physical capabilities and the world around them. Social skills are also developed by organized and informal play. Children will be reminded to use equipment as it is intended to be used and will never be allowed to engage in hazardous play of any kind. Redirection, distraction, praise and other techniques of positive discipline will be used when necessary to discourage unsafe play.

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

The placement of children into classrooms for the following school year is a process that is taken seriously by teachers and administrators. We want all children to be matched with teachers and classmates who will bring out the very best in them. All placements are determined by the Administration and decisions are final.

DIAPERING

Diapering applies to students enrolled in our Little CHUMS program only.

In following with state-mandated licensing procedures, when changing diapers, our teachers must always:

- Use a specific mat or area designated for diaper changes
- Wear gloves
- Use disposable wipes and discard after cleaning the child's diaper
- Dispose of the dirty diaper in individual plastic bags
- Use a sanitizing solution to sterilize the diaper changing area after each use
- Wash the children's hands after each change

POTTY TRAINING

Our Little CHUMS program works with parents to assist in potty-training. When parents feel their child is ready for potty training, we ask that parents begin this process at home. We will follow through and encourage the child while in our care (the child must be showing signs of readiness). Teachers will remain in communication with parents throughout the process to ensure consistency from home to school. The child must be kept in underwear throughout the school day unless the child needs to wear a diaper during naptime. Switching back-and-forth between diapers and underwear can be confusing and may delay the process

Parents need to ensure that we have extra underwear, multiple changes of clothing, and a spare pair of shoes each day during potty-training. We ask that the child be dressed in "child friendly" clothing. The best items for children to wear are shorts and pants with elastic waistbands. Please avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, "onesies" and overalls, as these are difficult for children to remove quickly.

Our **Pre-K3 and Pre-K4** classrooms do not offer a diaper-changing area and therefore, **children in this age group and up may not wear diapers at school. A child must be fully potty-trained to enroll into our CHUMS Pre-K3, Pre-K 4 and Kindergarten programs.** Children in this program must be able to use the toilet independently and should be able to manage most personal hygiene needs themselves. Only occasional assistance will be provided by a teacher when needed. If we find that after admission into the CHUMS program the child has frequent accidents, and is therefore not fully potty-trained, the child cannot attend school until they demonstrate an ability to use the toilet independently. Tuition will continue to be due in these circumstances. **DO NOT send your child in pull-ups. If your child is sent in a pull-up to school, we will call you and you will be required to either pick up your child or bring the appropriate undergarments.**

FUNDRAISERS

Fundraisers may be held during the year that are directed toward the purchase of something on the "wish list" of staff and children, or for a specific improvement or addition. Participation in fundraisers is encouraged, but entirely optional.

ITEM REQUIRED TO BE IN YOUR CHILDS TOTE BAG

Please ensure the following items are always in your child's tote bag:

- Full change of clothes in a labeled Ziploc bag. Please change out clothing according to the seasons.
- Water Bottle

- Lunch
- Late Bird Snack (if enrolled in Late Bird)
- 5 diapers at all times (Little CHUMS only)
- Toddler sleeping mat (Little CHUMS only)
- Lovey and or pacifier for nap time (Little CHUMS only)

NAPTIME: Little CHUMS Toddler Program (18 to 35 months)

Parents are required to bring a toddler sleeping mat/sleeping bag. Please no sheets. Children will rest on a mat from approximately 12:00 to 2:00 PM. The staff will send home the sleep mat weekly so it may be laundered and as needed. Please make sure all items sent from home are labeled with the child's name.

DRESS

Your child should come to school in "play clothes." Paints and other materials that the children will be actively exploring may leave stains on their clothing, and we recommend the pre-treating of any paint and white glue spots before regular washing. CHUMS t-shirts or school colors (red, blue, white) are worn every Friday, beginning September 6th for "Spirit Day". These may be purchased during Meet the Teacher or in our school office.

Avoid fancy smooth-soled shoes, Crocs, or flip flops that might slip when climbing. Athletic shoes with Velcro are highly recommended. Footwear that is too loose, or falls off easily, prevents children from exploring and trying new things in the school environment. At the very least, a strap around the back of the ankle will give the child more stability. Cowboy boots are allowable during our school's Western Week, but please bring the appropriate shoes for Motor Skills.

Please make sure all items sent from home are labeled with the child's name.

SPIRIT DAYS

Spirit day will be every Friday. The spirit of our CHUMS community is a big part of the school experience, and we rock our CHUMS gear proudly on Fridays! We encourage all students to wear either a CHUMS Spirit t-shirt, or school-colors, on Fridays to celebrate our school spirit. Our first spirit day will be on Friday Sept 6, 2024.

CELL PHONES

Please do not use your cell phone while inside the school. Staff and children need your full attention as you arrive at school and when you pick-up your child. Children are not permitted to bring a cell phone to school.

FIELD TRIPS

Students in the Pre-K4 and Kindergarten classes may take exciting and educational field trips. You will be adequately notified before each trip. Field trips are part of the curriculum and are **for enrolled students only**. We encourage parents to attend and volunteer on our school field trips.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are always welcome visitors at CHUMS. Various special events are held on the school campus, and parents are encouraged to attend. Parent volunteers also plan class parties, drive on field trips, assist the classroom teacher when needed, work on school fundraisers, and volunteer for other activities. Opportunities will be sent to you by your child's classroom teacher, room parent, or the school office.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special occasions at CHUMS. You may bring a birthday treat for snack time. Please discuss the details with your child's teacher. Suggested treats are **store bought** small muffins, cookies, or lightly iced mini-cupcakes. Please no latex balloons or special entertainment during school hours. Birthday recognition during class time is meant to be low-key. If birthday party invitations are distributed at school, **ALL** children in the class must receive one.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

The students may have several holiday parties/special snacks a year that may or may not require parent involvement. These holidays include Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the End of Year. The parents may provide party refreshments, games and crafts, or other activities. Party favors are optional. Due to choking hazards, we request that you do not bring latex balloons. The classroom teacher or room parent will furnish a sign-up sheet and party guidelines. The teacher will also plan activities for other holiday celebrations.

Please remember these parties are planned for the students in the classroom. Please do not bring siblings to class parties as it takes your attention away from your involvement and there may be items that are not age appropriate for that child in the classroom. We appreciate your support and understanding.

ROTATING SNACKS

Parents take turns in each class to provide the midmorning snack. Please consult the "CHUMS Snack Suggestions" list below for ideas. When providing snacks two food groups must be represented. **NO** tree-nuts, peanuts, popcorn, hard candy, or anything that could cause choking are allowed at school. Water is available throughout the day. The daily snack is posted outside each classroom daily and is kept on file. **If your child attends our Late Bird program, please ensure they have a separate labeled snack to enjoy during Late Bird (2:35 pm - 3:30 pm)**

We want to promote healthy eating habits. Please ensure the snacks you bring represent two of the following food groups below

SNACK SUGGESTIONS:

BREADS: (read labels carefully)

Crackers
Tortillas
Bread Sticks
Cornbread
Pretzels
Muffins
Dry Cereals
Sandwiches (no peanut butter)
Bagels
Pita Pockets
Graham Crackers
Teddy Grahams
Rice cakes

DAIRY PRODUCTS:

FRUITS: (must be washed)

Bananas
Grapes - **must** be sliced
Apples – sliced
Raisins
Pears – sliced
Oranges – peeled
Cantaloupe – sliced or cubed
Fruit Kabobs
Canned and dried Fruit
Avocado and guacamole
Clementines
Berries
Kiwi-sliced
Plums, peaches, nectarines – sliced

Tangerines

Cheese cubes/slices/string
Yogurt
Cream Cheese Spread
Milk

Honeydew - sliced or cubed
Watermelon - sliced

PROTEIN

Hard-boiled eggs
Ham/turkey lunch meat
Turkey/Chicken wraps
Tacos (bean/cheese/egg)
Beef Jerky
Turkey/Chicken Wraps
Sunflower spread

VEGETABLES (must be washed and sliced)

Celery
Carrots (cut into matchsticks)
Cucumbers
Sweet Peppers
Broccoli
Edamame
Cherry tomatoes (sliced)
Cauliflower
Sugar Snap Peas

- *Plan for the snack to represent two food groups (for example: cheese and crackers)
- *Please remember, no peanuts or nuts, no popcorn, and no hard candies are allowed at school.
- *Due to choking hazards, grapes and tomatoes must be sliced lengthwise; hot dogs must be sliced lengthwise and in half, carrots must be cut into matchstick slices.
- *Water will be served as the drink

POLICY ON CHILD SAFETY

At CHUMS, we believe children will do well if they can. If a child is having difficulty, it is up to parents, teachers, and professionals to determine the cause of the upset and seek appropriate help. Modeling expected behavior, redirecting children to an acceptable activity, and setting clear limits are methods of positive guidance techniques used at CHUMS. Children are given opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Children are taught to express their feelings in a socially accepted manner. In cases of extreme inappropriate behavior or continuous behavior problems, parents will be notified. Cooperative plans for resolution will be developed. Colonial Hills United Methodist School believes in a positive atmosphere for learning.

Our school strives to provide a stimulating, age-appropriate environment that supports the social emotional needs of young learners. The school incorporates the classroom management techniques of Dr. Becky Bailey and Conscious Discipline. The Conscious Discipline curriculum promotes social emotional health in our children. Conscious Discipline empowers us to be conscious of brain-body states in ourselves and our children. It then provides us with practical skills we need to manage our thoughts, feelings, and actions.

If a child is upset or angry, our staff is trained to help them work through their brain states, back to a feeling of safety. We practice different breathing techniques daily, when the children are happy, so that when they are in their "brain stem", they have the tools to work their way back out. We will often utilize our Safe Place center where children and teachers can go to change their inner state from upset to composed in order to optimize learning. It is the centerpiece of our self-regulation program.

Should behavior ever become more of a concern, whether it be disruptive, aggressive, or anger, your child's teacher will notify the School Director and will arrange a time to discuss this with you. A consistent home/school plan will be put in place in working with your child. The child will be given clear expectations for their behavior and an appropriate consequence. Teachers will document the child's behavior as well as any

triggers that may be involved. Should the behavior become a pattern lasting more than two weeks or one that requires more resources than our school has available, the School Director will call the parents to pick up the child immediately. If the behavior continues, a child will be asked to take a break from school while the parents work on it at home. In the event that serious behavior problems cannot be resolved, the student will be dismissed from CHUMS.

REQUIREMENTS REGARDING GANG-FREE ZONES

For Child Care Centers

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This new statute requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed childcare centers. The following is a tip sheet to assist in complying with the new law. This information may be posted at your childcare operation or copies may be provided to parents.

What is a gang-free zone?

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your childcare center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends?

The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. The local municipal or county engineer may produce and update maps for the purposes of prosecution. Parents may contact their local municipality or courthouse for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

What is the purpose of gang-free zones?

Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my day care center?

A childcare center must inform parents or guardians of children attending the center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

When do I have to comply with the new requirements?

The law is already in effect, so providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately. Licensing staff will offer technical assistance to facilitate compliance until rules are proposed and adopted, which is estimated to occur in March 2010. In the meantime, providers should update their operational policies and procedures to include providing the information mandated by this law to the parents or guardians of the children in care.

For further information please contact your licensing representative or your local licensing office.

Child Care Licensing/jr DFPA 8/31/09

Provider's Guide to Parent's Rights

Senate Bill 1098 from the 88th Legislative Regular Session added Section 42.04271 to the Human Resources Code and states that a parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:

- Enter and examine the child-care facility during its hours of operation and without advance notice;
- File a complaint against the child care facility;
- Review the child care facility's publicly accessible records;
- Review the child-care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;
- Receive inspection reports and information about how to access the child care facility's online compliance history;
- Have the facility comply with a court order that prevents another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the child;
- Be given the contact information for the child care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that:
 - Video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
 - The parent or guardian does not retain any part of the video depicting a child that is not their own; and
 - The parent or guardian of any other child in the video receives prior notice from the facility;
- Obtain a copy of the facility's policies and procedures handbook;
- Review the facility's staff training records and any in-house training curriculum; and
- Exercise these rights without receiving retaliatory action by the facility.

Required Notifications

- The child care facility must provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any other child captured in a video before allowing a parent to inspect a recording.
- The child care facility must provide a parent or guardian with a written copy of the rights no later than the child's first day at the facility.

Helpful Tips

Since a parent may perceive an action taken by a child care facility as retaliatory, keep in mind:

- Documentation is essential in supporting your actions; and
- Follow the suspension and expulsion policy outlined in your operational policies and update your policy, if needed.



