

WAYA Preschool 2025-2026



Family Handbook

****WAYA Preschool Policies are reviewed annually and updated if necessary****

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<http://www.waya.org/page/show/2611087-preschool>

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1. Our Philosophy and Goals

WAYA Preschool was established to further WAYA's mission to develop the potential of youth in a fun and safe community environment. Through a play-based curriculum, our teachers provide developmentally appropriate curriculum to enhance social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth in young children. WAYA Preschool uses developmental milestones and best practices to guide the planning and teaching of our Frog street and emergent curriculum. We get to know each child and their family in order to tailor the educational experience to maximize learning. With a professional and dedicated staff, we encourage children to become secure, independent problem solvers.

2. WAYA

West Austin Youth Association (WAYA) is a privately funded, non-profit organization founded in 1981 to provide educational and recreational opportunities for the youth of Austin.

A. Non-Refundable Membership

All WAYA Preschool families must become members of WAYA prior to the first day of school. The cost of the family membership is \$220 for the whole year.

This fee is non-refundable. When you purchase a WAYA Membership you are supporting WAYA with your dollars and your loyalty. WAYA relies on support from the community to ensure that children and their families in the Austin area have a place to gather and learn important life skills through the many programs WAYA offers.

B. Gift Giving Guidelines

- **Give a general donation.** Make a gift to WAYA in honor of your teacher, student, coach, player, or in memory of a loved one. All donations support WAYA's mission to help Austin youth reach their potential in a safe and fun community environment.
- **Become a Family Day sponsor.** Family Day is WAYA Preschool's only fundraiser. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, your support helps to bridge the gap between your child's tuition and the total cost to operate the preschool. This fundraiser is capped off with our Family Day celebration- a day where we welcome our sponsors to a special outdoor event with lots of family-friendly fun, music, food & more.

We are working on plans for our 2026 Family Day and can't wait to share them with you soon! Sponsorship packets will be available in January or for more information, visit waya.org/family-day.

3. Hours of Operation

WAYA Preschool serves children from ages 12 mos-6 years. The regular school day runs from 9am-1pm, with additional options of developmental mornings at 8am and creative afternoons until 2pm. Pre-K children attend from 9am-2pm with an optional early drop-off at 8am.

The school year runs from the end of August until the end of May at which we transition to WAYA Adventure Camp (Summer Camp). Adventure Camp consists of nine, one-week camps, from 9am-1pm from June until August.

4. Curriculum

“Play is not our creative drive; it’s a fundamental mode of learning”- David Elkind (Psychologist/Author)

Researchers have established young children learn by using all of their senses. WAYA Preschool implements a play-based curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for each age group. The Curriculum Director, Preschool Director and Lead Teachers, plan opportunities for children to practice skills and learn through fun themes. hands-on activities enhance growth and development in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive areas. We will use Frog Street Curriculum as our base but will supplement with emergent curriculum to meet the needs of the children

A. Objectives

We use *Thompson's Scope and Sequence* to assist teachers with implementing a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is intentional and effective. The *Scope and Sequence* is organized using Discipline Areas (Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, Fine Motor, Gross Motor, and Music). This is used to determine the yearly/monthly objectives according to age for teachers to ensure children are fully grasping the skills and concepts embedded within each month before moving forward. The yearly or monthly objectives are used to create emergent lesson plans to meet the needs of the children. Please visit our school forms link for developmental objectives by age <https://www.waya.org/page/show/5918385-school-forms>.

In addition, we will be integrating Frog Street and **ProCare's Learning Beyond Paper** an all-digital curriculum specifically designed to meet the unique needs of educating children from infancy through pre-kindergarten and communicate each child's development to parents.

B. Assessments

Teachers complete developmental milestones checklists for all infant, toddler, and preschool children every November and April to track children's development. We use Thompson's Scope and sequence and will be integrating Gold Strategies as an assessment tool. The results about the developmental concerns/delays will be provided with developmental resources and early intervention support options and any recommendations for early intervention support, if necessary, will be shared during parent-teacher conferences and as needed. WAYA will refer families to their pediatrician, a speech therapist, ECI or any additional resources we have available and provide any necessary documentation that has been gathered during assessments. Please visit <https://www.waya.org/preschoolresources> for additional resources.

C. Developmental Mornings/Early stay

WAYA Preschool offers "Developmental Mornings" which permits subscribing families from the Baby Sharks, Sea Turtles, Honey Bees, Monkeys, Frogs, Flamingo's, and Fish rooms to pay a fixed fee per semester to drop off their child one hour "early" (8 a.m.).

Those enrolling in the "Developmental Mornings" must register and pay online for the semester. Spaces are limited and students will be added on a "first come" basis.

Children registered in Developmental Mornings will be dropped off in their designated classrooms for the first 30 minutes and then proceed to the Playground or the Gym where they will be supervised by WAYA Preschool teachers. They will be taken to their assigned classroom at 8:45am. All children's belongings should be dropped off in their classroom. Parents may bring a morning snack to help children with their morning routine.

D. Creative Afternoons/Late stay

WAYA Preschool offers a "Creative Afternoons" which permits subscribing families from the Baby Sharks, Sea Turtles, Honey Bees, Monkey, Frogs, and Flamingo rooms to pay a fixed fee per semester to pick up their child one hour "late" (2 p.m.).

Those enrolling in the "Creative Afternoons" must register and pay online for the semester. Spaces are limited and students will be added on a "first come" basis. Children registered will be brought to their designated classroom, playground or the gym at 1:10pm where they will be supervised by WAYA Preschool teachers. Pick up is in your child's assigned classroom.

Please pick up your child in their designated classroom and inform the front desk if arriving early.

Pick up is at 2pm, any child not picked up by 2:10pm will be charged a \$1/minute late fee based on the time they are picked up from WAYA.

If your child is enrolled in any other class at WAYA that are scheduled between 1:15pm to 2:15pm, a teacher will walk them to their designated location with parent’s consent.

E. Extra-Curricular Activities

Children enrolled at WAYA preschool have the ability to enroll in additional activities at WAYA. We have a variety of partners that provide classes for children ages 2 to 6 years old for an additional fee.

You may visit the camps and classes link to enroll <https://www.waya.org/campsandclasses>.

5. Admissions

A. Tuition and Fees

Tuition is set up in four equal payments for the school year that begins from the first of June to the end of April. Tuition is due and payable by the date stated on your tuition rate form (also online). A LATE CHARGE OF \$75.00 is due if payments are received after the due date. You will use your Sports engine and your ProCare account to pay tuition and fees. Enrollment may be terminated if payment is not received by the due date. All refunds are by approval only and will be decided by the Executive committee.

*** Music lessons with Mr. Will and Mariposa Spanish are included in all tuition fees.**

*Tuition is not prorated for holidays, teacher professional development, any school holidays, and/or any personal family leave

SCHOOL DAY RATES		
Enrollment Option:	School Year Total:	4 Payments of:
Tuesday / Thursday (9am-1pm)	\$5,400	\$1350
Monday / Wednesday / Friday (9am-1pm)	\$6,400	\$1,600
Monday - Friday (9am-1pm)	\$8,400	\$2,100
Pre - K (Monday - Friday 9am-2pm)	\$9,500	\$2,375

EARLY DROP-OFF & LATE STAY RATES				
Enrollment Option:	Fall Early Drop-Off (8am-9am)	Spring Early Drop-Off (8am-9am)	Fall Late Stay (1pm-2pm)	Spring Late Stay (1pm-2pm)
Tuesday / Thursday	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250
Monday / Wednesday / Friday	\$375	\$375	\$375	\$375

Monday - Friday	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625
Pre - K (Monday - Friday)	\$500	\$500	Pre - K class already goes until 2pm	Pre - K class already goes until 2pm

ADDITIONAL FEES	
Drop-In School Day (9am-1pm)	\$50
Drop-In Early or Late Stay	\$15
WAYA Preschool Waitlist Fee-non-refundable	\$75
WAYA Preschool Deposit -non-refundable <i>*Required for Enrollment & is applied to your 4th payment.</i>	\$250
<i>Enrollment fee based on the days of the week- non-refundable</i>	\$50/\$100/\$150
Enrollment Fee Pre-K-non-refundable	\$250
WAYA Annual Family Membership -non-refundable <i>*Required for Enrollment</i>	\$220

TUITION PAYMENT DUE DATES			
Payment 1: Friday, 6/9/2025	Payment 2: Friday, 10/6/2025	Payment 3: Friday, 1/5/2026	Payment 4: Friday, 4/6/2026
<i>\$75 Late Fee will be applied to any tuition payments made after their due date.</i>			

B. Non-Discrimination/Scholarships

WAYA Preschool does not discriminate. Children and staff of all races, nationalities, religion and sexual orientation are welcome. We support inclusion of all children, regardless of their abilities. WAYA respects cultural diversity and incorporates it into the daily curriculum. WAYA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Limited scholarships are provided to University of Texas Austin students, staff, and families on a sliding scale based on income.

C. Classroom Assignments

Children are initially assigned to a group based on their age. Typically, all children enrolled are advanced to a new class at the beginning of each "school" year in the Fall. Interim class re-assignments may occur at other times when recommended by the Lead Teachers, based on reassessment of developmental progress and availability of space, following a consultation among the parents and the Preschool Director.

D. Enrollment

Children currently enrolled in the program will have first choice during registration to continue their current placement with regard to days of the week. Those wishing to increase days of the week will be given more days on a first come first serve basis.

All children are required to have completed enrollment forms on file in the preschool office by Aug 1 for the new school year. These are available online under school forms.

<https://www.waya.org/page/show/5918385-school-forms>

A full enrollment packet includes:

- Welcome Packet received at Meet the Teacher Day
- Enrollment Agreement and Acknowledgment of Family Handbook
- Waiver and Release for WAYA
- Illness and Exclusion Policy
- Health Statement from Doctor:
 - o This form MUST be signed by a doctor and dated at the bottom of the form, or they can sign their own childcare form that says: “We consider (your child’s name) to be up-to-date on immunizations and able to participate in the child care center program at this time.”
 - o Allergy Form MUST be signed by a doctor (diagnosed allergies only)
 - o We also need a copy of your child’s immunizations- please bring us any updates throughout the year.
- Discipline and Guidance Policy
- Family and Child Contact Information
- Child Information
- 2025-2026 School Calendar
- WAYA Preschool Tuition Rates 2025-2026
- What should I bring?
- Early/Late Stay Registration Fall 2025 /Spring 2026(this is for reference only- please sign up and pay online)

****It is requested that if information changes during the course of a child’s enrollment, parents notify the school immediately. It is particularly important that the school office and your child’s teacher have up-to-date telephone numbers where parents can be reached at all times. Parents may update information via Cognito forms and Pro care accounts.**

E. Non-Refundable Deposit and Enrollment Fee

Registration must include a non-refundable \$250 deposit and varying enrollment fee based on days attended.

F. Withdrawal Policy/ Decreasing Days of Care/Refund Policy

A written 30-day notice must be given if a family decides that their child/ren will no longer attend WAYA Preschool. During the 30-day notice, even if the child is not attending WAYA Preschool, tuition must

be paid for this period. Any refund will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The general rule will be no refunds after the deadline and credits will be upon approval of the Executive committee.

G. Decreasing Days of Care/Refunds

In addition, if a family decreases care for their child (i.e., from M-F to MWF), the tuition for the current schedule must be paid for 30 days. The general rule will be no refunds after the deadline and credits will be upon approval of the Executive committee.

6. Parent Communication, Involvement, Orientation, and Training

Open parent-staff communication is one of the cornerstones of quality care because it enables us to work as partners for the best possible environment for children. WAYA Preschool strives to assist parents in understanding the developmental stages their children experience, enabling them to contribute most effectively to the child's growth and enrichment. Brief conversations with teachers are always welcome, while longer discussions should be arranged by appointment. If you call in advance, you will be assured of having adequate time for discussion with individual teachers or the Preschool Director. Teachers and parents will maintain confidentiality about each child and their family.

Our community resources can be found on our website:

<https://www.waya.org/preschoolresources>

WAYA Preschool uses a variety of methods of communication with parents including: e-mails, website emails and notifications, daily sheets for baby shark room, sea turtles, weekly sheets for honey bees, monkeys, frogs, weekly for Fish, notes, phone calls, bulletin boards, conferences, etc. ProCare, E-mail and website notifications are the most common form of communication WAYA Preschool uses to send out information to families. It is very important that you check your e-mail regularly and thoroughly read the weekly updates sent via e-mail as they hold important information about your child's tuition, school closings, important school updates, and much more.

A. Communication Tools:

1. Daily/Weekly sheets will be sent via ProCare to inform parents of their child's day
2. ProCare (primary use of communication) will be for posting pictures, obtaining/information from the teacher, messages from the preschool director, and weekly newsletters i.e. (Open House, Fall Festival, School closures, text messages will be sent for closures or emergency alerts), Calendars and upcoming events will be posted on the exit door by the Preschool office and sent home in your child's backpack.
3. Teacher/Director Emails, phone calls will be used for one-to-one correspondence about individual circumstances
4. My Emma will be used to inform parents about important events occurring at WAYA i.e. (Family Day, camps etc.)

5. WAYA Preschool honors open communication and staff is always available to meet with parents.
6. You may always update information through ProCare, Cognito Forms or your Sports engine account.

B. Parent Involvement

We encourage families to play an integral role in the education of their child and believe the families influence builds community at WAYA.

There are many ways to be involved with your child's education at WAYA Preschool.

1. Volunteer to read to the class.
2. Volunteer to help with a cooking project.
3. Become part of the WAYA Parent Preschool Committee
4. Attend Holiday and other events at WAYA Preschool
5. Attend WAYA Preschool's Parenting Series
6. Attend a Parent-Teacher conference
7. Become a sponsor at WAYA's Family Day
8. Contact WAYA Preschool Director if you have other ways that you would like to participate!

C. Parent Orientation and Training

1. There will be individual class orientations with classroom teachers in person
2. There will be new parent orientation with the preschool director and assistant director at a scheduled time of tour. There will be two in person opportunities for orientation during our preschool meet ups.

The topics will include:

- A tour of the facility
 - An introduction to staff and a visit with classroom teacher
 - A review of the Parent Handbook
 - A review of arrival and late arrival policies, including the importance of regular arrival time
 - An opportunity for an extended visit in the classroom by both parent and child
- Information on family support resources and community activities located in the preschool office and our website resources: <https://www.waya.org/preschoolresources>
 - Information on child development and developmental milestones
 - A statement regarding limiting technology use while on site
 - Information on the importance of family involvement in my child's development
 - A review of Texas Rising Star quality certification
 - ProCare
 - How to navigate the website
 - Explain developmental mornings/creative afternoon's
 - Health forms and immunizations
 - Open gym/playground/fields

3. Parent training is offered in the Fall and Spring

D. Parent/Teacher Conferences

Participation in parent/teacher conferences is an important activity. This is a time of sharing, which benefits the child, the parent, and the teacher. WAYA Preschool believes in a strong partnership between the home and the Center to assure the best experience for the children. The Lead Teacher will invite you to participate in a parent/teacher conference in the Fall and Spring to discuss your child's developmental progress. Parents may request a parent/teacher conference at any time to discuss your child's experience at WAYA Preschool.

E. Changes in Policies

Parents will be notified of policy changes by ProCare, email, a note, and will be posted on the website.

F. Grievance Procedures

If a problem or concern exists, WAYA Preschool wants it corrected as quickly as possible. This can only be achieved if it is identified immediately. Parents are asked to refrain from discussing their concerns with other parents, and instead follow the grievance procedure below:

1. First, talk to the Lead Teacher in charge at the time the problem arose.
2. If the problem is not resolved, please contact the Preschool Director. A conference may be scheduled with the teacher, parents and Preschool Director.
3. If the problem still persists, another conference will be scheduled to include the Executive Director of WAYA.

We hope you will work with us to alleviate any concerns when they arise.

G. Classroom Parties/Class Giving Guidelines

WAYA preschool limits class parties to promote community and opportunities for families to gather. We provide the following events for families:

Fall fest, Family Feast, Grand-friends day, and parent appreciation days and monthly Preschool playdates

Class funds are collected by the room parents to help celebrate teacher birthdays, holiday gifts, teacher appreciation, and class celebrations for Fall Fest, Family Feast, and end of year celebrations. The amount requested shall not exceed \$50 per teacher and all families should be recognized no matter the amount of contribution. This is strictly voluntary and families may choose to not participate and provide their own gifts. WAYA preschool and the executive board provide holiday and end of year bonuses when funds are available.

H. Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays and holidays are an especially exciting time for young children and WAYA Preschool is pleased to help your child celebrate with classmates and staff, if arrangements are made in advance. Most parents provide a book to read to the class and may donate the book to our Birthday Club. We promote healthy eating and request a non-food item be provided for celebrations. Any food must be prepared in a commercial kitchen and will be sent home for parents to decide if it is appropriate for their child. Parent participation is welcome, but not required. Party planning should attempt to minimize disruption of routine and prevent unwarranted anxiety for the children. Latex balloons are a choking hazard for young children and should not be brought into the center (if you absolutely cannot do without balloons, Mylar balloons are acceptable). Since licensing regulations prohibit any type of open flame in the center, birthday candles are not permitted. If birthday invitations are distributed at the center, all children in the class must be invited.

I. Visiting the Classroom

As a parent or guardian, you are welcome at WAYA Preschool at any time. Please check with the Preschool Director or Lead Teacher if you have questions.

7. Arrivals and Departures

Arrival and Departure will vary by classroom. All children must be signed in/out via ProCare. If a parent does not sign in then a teacher will sign in/out the child for the day.

A. Classroom procedures

- **Baby Sharks/Sea turtles**
 - Your day will be from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
 - The location will be upon entering the facility entrance, you will park and drop off in the classroom.
 - Pick up will be in the classroom.
- **Honeybees/Monkeys**
 - Your day will be from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
 - The location will be upon entering the facility entrance, you will park and drop off in the classroom.
 - Pick up will be in the classroom
- **Flamingos**
 - Your day will be from 9 am to 1:00 pm
 - The location will be upon entering the facility entrance, you will park and drop off in the classroom.
 - Pick up will be in the classroom.
- **Tree Frogs**
 - Your day will be from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
 - The location will be upon entering the facility entrance, you will park and drop off in the classroom.
 - Pick up will be in the classroom.
- **FISH**
 - Your day will be from 9 am to 2:00 pm
 - The location will be upon entering the facility entrance, you will park and drop off in the classroom.
 - Pick up will be at the large playground.

B. Adjusting to School and Separation Anxiety

To help achieve the goal of allowing your child to become independent, emotionally healthy, and well adjusted, we recommend the following practices:

- If possible, children should be walked in and not carried (2 years and up)
- Present your child to the teacher on arrival. The greeting between teacher and child is invaluable. Many things about the child's health and state of mind can be determined in that brief time. The teacher will then help the child join into classroom activities.
- Good-byes at school should be part of a normal, everyday routine that every child goes through. Separation should be sweet and brief, with reassurance about the planned pick-up time.
- **Always** tell your child good-bye before leaving even though he/she has become interested in an activity. Say good-bye and depart quickly, as a lingering departure may be difficult for some children.
- Parents should encourage children to make friends with the teachers and look forward to being at school without feeling guilt or disloyalty to a parent.
- Please refrain from using cell phones during drop-off and pick-up.

If you are dropping off your child after 9:15am, please notify the office for the reason for the late drop off. It is important to drop off your children on time as they need time to transition to the classroom and also participate in all activities. It is disruptive for other children to see parents at later times as it makes them miss their parents and prolongs transition times. Consistent routines prepare children for the transition to kindergarten. We will limit drop off to 10am with a doctor's note. Pick up is at either 1pm or 2pm. Please do not be late as teachers have work-related and personal obligations after pick up time, therefore, your consideration and assistance in this matter is appreciated.

C. Release of Children

Children may not enter or leave the WAYA Preschool unless accompanied by an adult. Upon arrival, please be sure that a staff member acknowledges your child's arrival before you leave. Departing children will only be released to parents or other persons shown on the [Child Release and Emergency Contact](#) form. Any person on the pick-up list that is not known to staff, must show ID. WAYA Preschool is required to maintain daily attendance records. A parent or caregiver must sign your child IN and OUT each day on the Sign In/Out log for the class. The attendance sheet is also used during evacuation drills to ensure that all children who are present are safe and accounted for.

D. Late Pick Up Fee

Our regular hours are 9am-1pm for Baby Sharks (Young 1's), Sea Turtles (Older 1's), Honey Bees (Young 2's), Monkeys (Older 2's) and Frogs/Flamingo's (3-4's). If your child is not picked up by 1:10pm, then a \$1/minute charge will be assessed. Our Creative afternoons and Pre-K program run until 2pm and children must be picked up at 2:10pm. If a child is still at WAYA Preschool at 2:10pm then a \$1/minute charge will be assessed. All late fees are due within 24 hours of occurrence

8. Health and Safety

A. Daily Health Checks

Children are checked upon arrival and throughout the day any visible indications of illness and temperature of above 100.4. If a child appears ill while at WAYA Preschool, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child immediately.

B. Lunch and Snack

The most recent Health Department's Sanitation Inspection Report, located outside the preschool office.

Parents provide a lunch and a snack from home in a labeled lunch box or bag that is easy enough for your child to open and close. Families will be contacted to provide a snack or lunch when one is not provided.

Most uneaten food will be returned to the lunchbox for parents to assess the amount of food needed for their child.

WAYA Preschool does not have a kitchen, therefore, the Health Department does not allow for the preparation of snacks or lunch. We are not able to refrigerate or heat up any foods that children bring for lunch or snack. Please make sure that all foods are ready to eat for ease in serving and include an ice pack for cold items and a thermos for warm items. **All liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach of children.** We try to have extra snack/lunch items that are commercially prepared and available for children in an emergency. Any food provided by WAYA will have limited sugar content and meet the USDA food nutrition guidelines. (Please refrain from bringing Go- Gurt, fruit pouches, and sippy cups without straws). The following resources will be in the parent resources section of our website
<https://www.waya.org/preschoolresources>

Please visit <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/> for healthy guidelines for snack and lunch and we will highlight nutritious lunches on Procure.

Please visit the following links for age-appropriate meal patterns.

<https://www.freshbaby.com/wp-content/uploads/2022-Pack-A-MyPlate-Lunch.pdf>
<https://www.superkidsnutrition.com/recipes-kids-meal-plans/meal-plans-by-age/>
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/kids-healthy-eating-plate/>
<https://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/>

C. Oral Health

WAYA does not require students to brush their teeth at school but encourage parents to begin oral health care and visits to the dentist. Please visit the links for more information:

1. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/default.aspx>
2. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/oral-health/article/oral-health-resources-families>
3. <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/oral-health/oral-health-resources-for-families/>

D. Food Allergies

Staff is trained and they take precautions about food allergies by referring to the allergy classroom list and adhering to classroom allergy restrictions per class. Staff uses the following website for training and education <https://www.foodallergy.org/resources>.

The following common foods may cause allergic reactions.

Egg, Fish, Milk, Peanuts, Sesame, Shellfish, Soy, Tree Nut, Wheat

Parents of children with food allergies are required to notify the Preschool Director immediately. If your child has an EpiPen we will need a doctor's note that confirms which food items your child is allergic to so we can assure that your child does not have contact with these foods. If your child requires any other medication for such allergies, a medication authorization form must be filled out and will be kept in your child's file. All medication, including EpiPen's, will be kept in the Preschool Office. If you would like for an EpiPen to be kept in the classroom, please provide two. One will be kept in the classroom backpack, that teachers keep with them at all times.

E. Reasons for Illness Exclusion:

- An illness prevents the child from participating in routine activities including outdoor play.
- An illness requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group.
- A child's presence poses an increased risk to others with whom the child may come in contact with

WAYA Preschool cannot admit any child appearing to be sick, without a written statement from a doctor or registered nurse certifying no contagious disease is present. Even with a doctor's note, the ultimate decision to exclude from school is up to the Preschool Director.

Children should be kept at home(24 Hours) when they meet the following exclusion criteria:

- Ear/oral temperature of 100.4° or higher
- Conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), redness of the eye and/or lids, usually with yellow discharge and crusting.
- An unidentifiable rash which has not been diagnosed
- Impetigo: red pimples, which become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area. When blisters break, the surface is raw and weeping. Look for signs in neck creases, groin, underarms, face, hands, or edge of diaper.
- Diarrhea two or more times within 12 hours (watery or greenish BM's that look different and are more frequent than usual and does not stay contained in a diaper)
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours
- A contagious disease, including measles, chicken pox, mumps, roseola, strep throat, etc.

Children may be brought into the center if they have a mild cold or allergy, an allergic rash, diaper rash, prickly heat, a loose bowel movement, dietary or medication diarrhea. Children with a diagnosed bacterial infection may return 72 hours after beginning treatment with antibiotic medication if they are able to participate normally in the program.

While we regret the inconvenience caused by strict adherence to these guidelines, our concern for all the children dictates a very conservative approach when dealing with health matters. Because of conflicting medical opinions about the advisability of readmitting children receiving treatment who still appear ill, the center will err on the side of safety when making such decisions and ask for your tolerance and understanding. Should your child contract a contagious illness, please notify the Preschool Director immediately so other parents can be alerted to the possibility of exposure. Guidelines issued by the Texas Department of Health dictate re-admission criteria. Contact the Preschool office for details.

All families must email/call, or send a message through ProCare to the preschool office and teacher to inform us of any absences within 24 hours. The preschool office will contact families if they have not heard from families within 24 hours of an absence.

F. Immunization Policy

Please be aware that WAYA Preschool requires all enrolled children to be current with vaccinations per AAP guidelines or to be on a pediatrician approved CDC catch-up schedule. To protect the health and well-being of the children in our care, we will offer admission to children who are not current with their immunizations if parents have filed an exemption with the state of Texas on their behalf.

WAYA Preschool is required to have on file a Physician's Medical Report verifying overall good health and required immunizations. Current information on immunization status must be maintained while the child is enrolled. Children that are four and older are required to have annual vision and hearing screenings.

G. Vision and Hearing Screening

The Special Senses and Communications Disorders Act requires all schools to show proof that Vision and Hearing screening has been done on all 4, 5, and 6 yr. old's and must be done three years in a row. It is strongly encouraged that children ages 3½ to 4 years old get screened, but it is not required. Early identification and intervention of even a slight vision or hearing loss are critical for successful learning. WAYA Preschool is required to submit screening results to the state of Texas.

For your convenience, a certified evaluator will perform on site vision and hearing screenings in the fall at WAYA for a nominal fee. You can choose to sign up for these on-site screenings provided for you, or you may submit a vision and hearing screening form that has been completed by your physician.

H. Administering Medication at WAYA Preschool

Parents are encouraged to administer medication outside the Center. At the discretion of the Preschool Director, we can administer regular medication. WAYA Preschool and its staff accept no responsibility or liability for any error or omission regarding administration of medication.

All medication must be furnished in the original prescription container, with an appropriate dispenser, marked with the child's name, date, and directions for use. The medication must be placed in a labeled plastic bag and signed in at the Preschool Office. Parents must fill out an Authorization to Dispense Medication form.

In the event of an injury or medical emergency, trained staff will immediately administer first aid and notify the Preschool Director if further assistance is needed. If we believe the situation may call for parent involvement or professional medical attention, the Center will attempt to contact a parent or other authorized emergency contact. If the condition is serious, the Center will call 911 for an EMT response, and if deemed necessary, they will transport your child to an Emergency Room. Permission is given for this in our Enrollment Agreement.

I. Health benefits for families

All families benefit from health, vision, and dental plans.

Please visit the link for more information:

<https://www.texaschildrenshealthplan.org/what-we-offer>

<https://unitedwayaustin.org/connectatx/>

9. Accommodations

WAYA supports families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, special needs/differing abilities, and or cultural backgrounds. Please let us know if you require additional accommodations and we will accommodate if possible. We understand that there may be circumstances when a parent may request that the school provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student's medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability. WAYA will provide language translations for, literature and parent resources. We will provide a designated space for intervention sessions and therapies when needed.

We believe in partnering with parents to help their child meet their full potential. We will observe the child over a 3-week period with an accommodation observation form and meet with parents to collaborate with strategies for success in a group setting.

We will allow the parent and teacher 3 weeks to communicate their observations of the child. After the 3-week period, the teacher and Director will have a conference with the parents to discuss the next steps in their child's growth and development.

NOTE: The school or staff may not be equipped to accommodate the needs of the child at this time. Please refer to our website under resources to find more information about behavior.

In general, it is our school's policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student's minor needs. In circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in a significant disruption to the teacher's ability to instruct other students, will not require a threat of harm to the safety of other students or employees, will not require a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission, and will not impose responsibilities on school employees for which they are not trained. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our school and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation. Request and Documentation: For any type of accommodation (including administration of medication at school), the parent must contact the Director. They will then advise the parent of the type of medical documentation needed, which generally will state the student's diagnosis, how the condition limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed from a licensed practitioner.

10. Discipline and Guidance Policy/ Camera Policy

WAYA Preschool has a philosophy of positive guidance, incorporating creative teaching and involvement to help children develop self-discipline and inner control over their actions. It is based on mutual respect and an understanding of children's needs and development. Positive guidance uses redirection, verbalization of misunderstandings, consistency, acceptance of feelings, firmness, and fairness. Children are encouraged to express their feelings verbally as well as to discuss and resolve conflicts. In certain situations, a brief "quiet time" is used to allow a child to calm down and recover self-control before resuming group activities. Please see our resources link for intervention:

<https://www.waya.org/preschoolresources>

and our options for intervention for guidance and help with children's developmental concerns.

Cameras/digital devices will be provided by WAYA to be able to take pictures of children to document development, post pictures for parents, and have a picture of each child in our database.

There are cameras located in the hallways, gyms, and outdoors for observance only. Any concerns will be directed to the Executive Director and parents may request to view any footage involving an incident of concern pertaining to their specific child.

A. Challenging Behaviors

WAYA believes family involvement is a critical component in the establishment of successful home-school relationships. WAYA encourages collaboration on strategies to address challenging behaviors. WAYA provides families with various opportunities to actively participate in the early learning program and sets the foundation for strong family involvement. Discussions are framed around the objective of health and safety of children and staff.

WAYA believes parents are joint decision-makers and problem solvers for managing challenging behaviors of children.

When a child demonstrates inappropriate or disruptive behavior, it becomes necessary for staff to intervene. The following actions will be taken in addressing challenging behaviors at WAYA to ensure the safety of everyone.

- The child will be told that his or her behavior is inappropriate.
- The teacher will first talk to the child about the behavior and try to guide the child into using more appropriate ways to communicate.
- The child will be redirected and, if necessary, given a short time away from the rest of the class in the event that safety is a concern.
- The teacher and/or director have ongoing conversations with families to express concerns
- Families are informed of their child's progress via ProCare, verbally or meetings

Evaluation process for continued challenging behaviors

- We will observe the child over a 6-week period with a behavior observation form and meet with parents to collaborate with strategies for success in a group setting.
- We will allow the parent and teacher 6 weeks to communicate their observations of the child.
- After the 6-week period, the teacher and Director will have a conference with the parents to discuss the next steps in their child's growth and development.

NOTE: The school or staff may not be equipped to accommodate the needs of the child at this time. Please refer to our website under resources to find more information about behavior.

In general, it is our school's policy to collaborate with parent's when dealing with challenging behavior or adjustments for a student's minor needs. WAYA encourages collaboration on strategies to address challenging behaviors. In circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in a significant disruption to the teacher's ability to instruct other students, will not require a threat of harm to the safety of other students or employees, will not require a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission, and will not impose responsibilities on school employees for which they are not trained. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our school and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all collaborative requests. To the extent we agree to provide collaborative solutions, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the solution.

Request and documentation for any type of challenging behavior solutions the parent must contact the Director and include the child's teacher. They will then advise the parent of the type of collaborative solution documentation needed, which generally will state the student's behavior, how the behavior limits the student, the recommended solutions, and the length of time that the request(s) will be needed from a licensed practitioner.

B. Release for Communications with Physician/Therapist:

Sometimes, the documentation received from the physician/therapist may raise questions or be unclear as to the recommendations. For that reason, the parent(s) must sign a Release of Information form, permitting the school to contact the medical professional, when necessary. In addition, if there is any cost associated with the physician's cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such process. We encourage physician's/therapist to come to the school to observe and participate in the accommodations necessary at school.

C. Assessment Request:

Once the parent's request and medical documentation has been received by the school, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parents to clarify information and to discuss whether the school will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent's cost) any special equipment needed, training for the school's staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the school may advise the parent that the school will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs to be tested or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the school believe are beyond the scope of the school's responsibility, the school may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

Limitations on Requests: Please understand that the school is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. In addition, the school reserves the right to deny a request for accommodation or to modify any consent to previously granted accommodation requests.

D. Children with Safety Needs:

If your child requires additional physical help to be successful in a group setting, we advise parents to collaborate with their pediatrician and the Director to determine if the school environment is suitable for the needs of the child. If an additional therapist/or medical professional is required, the person must be background checked and referred by your child's pediatrician.

E. Biting Policy

Biting is a normal behavior or phase for many young children. Children often bite when they are teething, overtired, frustrated, or mad (particularly when they lack the ability to use their words to communicate). Biting is one of the most difficult behaviors to deal with in young children. Furthermore, biting is hard to stop in the moment because it can happen in an instant, even when a teacher is monitoring closely.

WAYA Preschool staff members take action to reduce the number of biting incidents. Our curriculum and environment promote a healthy, safe place for children to interact and learn. Teachers are watchful for those children who lack the language skills to communicate and may use biting as a way to show their

frustration. When a child is bitten, that child is immediately comforted and the bite is washed, ice applied and a Band-Aid if needed. The classroom teacher will talk to the biter in a firm and loving voice, modeling the following words: “It is not okay to bite our friends” and “Biting

hurts”. If possible, the teacher will try to encourage the child who was bitten to express his/her feelings as well: “It hurts” or “Please don’t bite me”. The biter will also be encouraged to help the friend he/she hurt by helping apply ice, giving hugs, holding hands, or whatever the child who was bitten may need to feel better. We do this because we feel it is important to teach empathy at an early age. WAYA Preschool reserves the right of privacy and parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents of the biter are informed and will work together with the administration and the Lead Teacher to prevent further incidents. We recognize the emotions that may arise once your child has been bitten, however, we also recognize that biting is a normal component of child development. The Preschool works diligently to provide a safe and loving environment for your child.

11. Licensing, Inspections, and Accreditation

A. Child-Care Licensing Minimum Standards

Parents are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the Director to show you the most recent copy of:

- The Minimum Standards for this Licensed Child-Care Center. (Also available on the web at www.dfps.state.tx.us or at your local licensing office)
- The most recent Department of Family and Protective Services Inspection/Investigation Report. (Compliance information is also available on the web at www.dfps.state.tx.us or at your local licensing office) Located on parent board outside the preschool office)
- **Documentation of liability insurance that complies with Human Resources Code, Section 42.0491. 8**
- **The most recent Fire Marshal’s Inspection Report, located on the parent board outside the Preschool office.**
- **The most recent Health Department’s Sanitation Inspection Report, located outside the preschool office.**
- The Child Care Center’s Operational Policies.

Local Licensing Office: 512-834-3426

PRS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400, PRS Website: www.tdprs.state.tx.us

B. Texas Rising Star Provider Accreditation

WAYA Preschool was awarded a 4-star rating in October 2022.

This award recognizes our teachers’ diligent work to provide high quality services to the children at our facility. The accreditation process covered many areas such as staff training, group sizes, curriculum evaluation which includes early literacy & physical environment, health& safety procedures, and caregiver/child interactions. Workforce Solutions provides quarterly assessments/evaluations to help our teachers maintain our

high-quality status. More information may be obtained by visiting:
<https://texasrisingstar.org/>

12. General Information

A. Clothing Guidelines

Children should dress appropriately for active play, messy art, water and sand experiences, and for the weather. Children who are prone to bathroom accidents should always have a complete change of season- appropriate clothing at school. Children are encouraged not to wear boots, open-toed shoes or flip flops to school. Boots inhibit movement and climbing, and open-toed shoes and clogs are discouraged because they restrict the child's ability to play actively on the playground and increase the risk of tripping and injury.

B. Physical Activity

WAYA preschool provides a 45 minute outside time and 20 minutes of time in the gym. Children need active play to develop their mind and body. In addition to activity at school, we provide many sport-oriented activities after school to engage you child in active lifestyle. This link from the CDC provides more information about physical activity for children.

<https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/health-benefits/children.html>

C. Field Trips

We provide in house "field trips", during which we have special guests come and present fun activities and put on interactive shows for the kids. On occasion, the Pre-K classroom may meet as a class for an outing, but a parent must be present for each child and no children may be transported by WAYA staff.

D. Screen Time

Screen time is not allowed during school hours. A request for screentime is approved by the Preschool Director and teacher if there is an educational purpose. Parents may visit the following website for screentime resources

1. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Where-We-Stand-TV-Viewing-Time.aspx>

2. <https://learningworksforkids.com/play-diet/>

3. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/screen-time/art-20047952>

4. https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx

Commented [PD1]:

We request parents refrain from using cell phones during drop off/pick up to improve the communication between teachers and the parents and the parents and the child.

E. Notice of Pest Control

As part of our commitment to provide your child with a safe and pest-free learning environment, WAYA may periodically use ABC Pest and Lawn to apply pesticides to help manage insects, weeds or pathogens. Pesticide applications are part of our integrated pest management (IPM) program, which relies largely on non-chemical forms of pest control. Pesticide applications on WAYA's property are made only by trained and licensed technicians. Should you have questions about WAYA's pest management program or wish to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, you may contact the Preschool Director.

F. Child Abuse and Neglect

WAYA Preschool is required by law to report any apparent incidence of child abuse or neglect defined as "non-accidental infliction or threat of infliction of physical, emotional, or mental harm to a child."

"Any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report to any local or state law enforcement agency, and in addition, reports shall be made to (1) the Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services; or (2) the agency designated by the court to be responsible for the protection of children."

All WAYA Preschool staff are trained annually for Child Abuse and Neglect including warning signs, and what resources are available for parents to prevent abuse and neglect. This website has information available for parents:

<https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx>

G. Cell Phone Usage

Drop off and pick up times are best used to communicate important information regarding your child's health and well-being. Therefore, we ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone during drop off and pick up in the building. Due to the safety of the children, cell phone use is strictly prohibited when you are operating your vehicle on WAYA's property (including parking lots).

H. Breastfeeding

Mothers have a right to breastfeed or provide breast milk while their child is in care. WAYA will provide a comfortable place upstairs for mothers who want to breastfeed on site. Please see the Preschool office for more information on where to go to breastfeed. Additional resources for breast feeding are provided below and will be in the parent resources section of our website.

<https://www.austintexas.gov/content/moms-place>

<https://www.breastfeedingaustin.com/>

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/women-infants-and-children-wic>

<https://www.texas111.org/group-austin/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/index.htm>

<https://www.babylist.com/hello-baby/best-online-breastfeeding-resources>

<https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/nutrition-life-stage/breastfeeding>

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/learning-breastfeed/finding-breastfeeding-support-and-information>

I. Toilet Training

WAYA Preschool only requires that children be toilet trained before entering our Pre-K classroom. We believe that every child is unique and will learn how to toilet train in their own time and should not be pressured. It is very important for parents and teachers to work together so the child is set up for success and their toilet learning is consistent both at home and at school.

A. Physical signs

- Is coordinated enough to walk, and even run, steadily.
- Urinates a fair amount at one time.
- Has regular, well-formed bowel movements at relatively predictable times.
- Has "dry" periods of at least two hours or during naps, which shows that his/her bladder muscles are developed enough to hold urine.

B. Behavioral signs

- Can sit down quietly in one position for two to five minutes.
- Can pull pants up and down.
- Dislikes the feeling of wearing a wet or dirty diaper.
- Shows interest in others' bathroom habits (wants to watch you go to the bathroom or wear underwear).
- Gives a physical or verbal sign when they're having a bowel movement such as grunting, squatting, or telling you.
- Demonstrates a desire for independence.
- Takes pride in accomplishments.
- Isn't resistant to learning to use the toilet.
- Is in a generally cooperative stage, not a negative or contrary one.
- Understands the physical signals that mean they have to go and can tell you before it happens or even hold it until they have time to get to the potty.
- Can follow simple instructions, such as "go get the toy."
- Has words for urine and stool.

If you feel that your child shows many of the above signs of readiness, WAYA Preschool asks that you please attempt toilet training at home and your child be successful for **two weeks** before trying at school. We want your child to be successful and getting lots of practice at home first will help set them up for success at school.

J. Classroom Pets

Caring for a small pet, such as a fish or guinea pig, can provide young children with the opportunity to learn more about animals firsthand. As educators, we know that young children are engaged and learn best by doing. We can teach children about animals through books and pictures; however, they will learn even more when they can actually interact with one. For preschool programs, having a classroom pet provides a wonderful opportunity for learning about nature, science and living things.

In accordance with licensing regulations, children and staff will practice good hygiene and hand washing when handling pets and pet supplies. Staff will maintain a safe and clean environment for both the animals and the children.

K. Gang Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a child care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal activities are subject to harsher penalties (stated here as required by the Department of Family and Protective Services).

L. Staff/Parent Child Care Arrangements

We are aware that from time to time, our parents may approach our staff to work for them as babysitters. Please be advised of the babysitting policy regarding WAYA Preschool employees. All parents/staff must fill a release form when hiring WAYA staff to care for children before/after WAYA Preschool hours.

WAYA/WAYA Preschool will not be liable for any damage or injury that may result if a Preschool family employs WAYA Preschool staff to perform child care services.

Please also note that if a staff member is caring for your child after school hours, they will need to be outside on the playground or in the gym if they are staying at WAYA.

Our staff is not available to babysit during WAYA Preschool operating hours.

M. Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, WAYA Preschool will follow the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) school closings. Please refer to the local news stations or AISD's website for closing information. In the event of an AISD school delay, WAYA Preschool will have a 10 am start time. If AISD releases students early due to inclement weather, WAYA will also release students accordingly. If AISD is closed for inclement

weather then WAYA Preschool will also be closed. WAYA Preschool will notify you as soon as possible via email/Procure in the event of inclement weather. If AISD is not in session the Executive Director and Preschool Director will consult with local authorities to make a decision and notify via Procure and on our website.

N. Emergency Preparedness Plan

Please be sure you have reviewed WAYA Preschool's Emergency Preparedness Plan, which is found online. https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/1997-2724112/WAYA_Preschool_Emergency_P

This plan includes what WAYA Preschool plans to do in the event of a fire, severe weather, or potentially violent situation, COVID -19 policies, etc.

WAYA Preschool's off-site evacuation location is:
O. Henry Middle School
2610 W 10th St, Austin, TX, 78703, (512) 414-3229

In the event of an off-site evacuation, lockdown, or other emergency situation, parents will be notified by phone from WAYA staff and in a message from Procure if possible. The phone number used to call you will be the one you provide on your child's Child Release and Emergency Contact Form. Therefore, please be sure to immediately notify the Preschool office if any of your contact information changes by updating via Procure, Cognito form or email.

WAYA Preschool Handbook and Policies Acknowledgement Form

The parent handbook has been prepared for your information and understanding of the policies, procedures and practices of WAYA and WAYA Preschool. Please make sure to read it carefully and take this hard copy. Upon completion of your review of this handbook, sign the statement below and return it to the Preschool Director on or before your first day of your child's enrollment or an employee's first day of employment.

I, _____,
(Print name)

have received and read a copy of the WAYA Preschool Parent Handbook and Policies which outlines the expectations of WAYA Preschool, as well as my responsibilities as an employee.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of this handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in this handbook. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation, which may arise during my employment, but is a guideline to policies, practices, and expectations of WAYA Preschool.

I understand that West Austin Youth Association (WAYA) Preschool is not a contract of employment.

Parent /Employee Signature

Date