

Early Learning Center Parent Handbook

Shearer Hills Baptist Church 12615 San Pedro San Antonio, Texas 78216 (210) 545-2175 www.shearerhillselc.org

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This handbook is intended to familiarize parents with current Shearer Hills - Early Learning Center (SH-ELC) policies, practices and standards. Shearer Hills - Early Learning Center reserves the right to revise its policies, practices and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Parents will be notified of updates to the parent handbook as they occur.

Purpose

Welcome to Shearer Hills - Early Learning Center (SH-ELC). We are happy that you are interested in our program. We strive to be instrumental in the total development of all the children who come to our program. As we teach, love, and work with the children, we realize that parents are the most vital and important teachers in a child's life. We want to work together and communicate with you, as we educate the children and support the parents of our program.

History

On March 12, 1958 a special fellowship from Monte Vista Church started a new work known as Shearer Hills Baptist Church. On May 8, 1960, this Chapel was organized into a Southern Baptist Church. The Mother's Day Out Program was established by the Church membership, as a ministry to church families and the surrounding community. It began in 1980, as a one-day, once a month opportunity for mothers to be able to participate in church activities. In the summer of 1981, the program increased to one-day, each week. In 1984, another day was added making it a two-day program. 1996 was a benchmark year, with the expansion to a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday format, becoming a State licensed center, and changing our name to Shearer Hills Baptist Early Learning Center. In 1999, the church membership voted to purchase new property at 12615 San Pedro. Renovations were done on the building in the next year and completed at the end of 2000. The membership moved the church and began using the facilities in January of 2001. In August 2002, the start time changed to 9:00am.

Mission Statement

Our mission at Shearer Hills – Early Learning Center is to provide every child with exceptional care and enriching hands-on learning experiences.

Philosophy

Our program is designed to provide quality childcare; to provide preschoolers with positive hands-on learning experiences; and to minister to families in our community. Preschoolers learn at their own rate and integrate information as it pertains to their own environment. They learn best by doing and experiencing on their own. Our daily schedule includes a balance of child initiated and teacher directed experiences that enable preschoolers to grow in their understanding of love for themselves, their families, and others in their world; and to grow in the awareness that God loves them; to grow in their ability to solve problems, and develop language skills; and to enjoy creative expression in music, art, and play. Recognizing the uniqueness of each child, our teachers will provide a wide variety of experiences, materials and situations to assist each preschooler as he/she develops cognitively, physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally.

Goals

The SH-ELC program provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials that emphasize concrete experiential learning in order to achieve the following goals.

- •Foster positive self-concept
- Develop social skills
- · Encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- •Encourage language development
- · Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices
- •Enhance physical development and skills
- · Encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts
- •Respect cultural diversity of staff and children

General Center Information

Administration

Director: Tricia Haddad thaddad@shearerhills.org (210) 545-2300

Hours of Operation

SH-ELC is open Tuesday through Thursday from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

Programs

There are 11 childcare classes offered at SH-ELC (ages may vary):

•	RolyPolys	6 weeks to 6 months
•	Glow worms	6 months to 12 months
•	Caterpillars	12 months to 18 months
•	June Bugs	18 months to 2 years
•	Butterflies	18 months to 2 years
•	Lady Bugs	2 years to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
•	Bumblebees	$2\frac{1}{2}$ years to 3 years
•	Grasshoppers	3 years to $3\frac{1}{2}$ years
•	Dragonflies	$3\frac{1}{2}$ years to 4 years
•	Crickets	Pre-K
•	Fireflies	Pre-K

Assistant Director: Julie Cruz

pno@shearerhills.org

(210) 545-2175

Licensing

Parents can see our Child Care License and Health Department Permit displayed on the bulletin board in the SH-ELC Office area. Parents can also see the center's latest Licensing Inspection Report and Health Department Inspection Report at any time. These are displayed on the bulletin board in the SH-ELC Office area as well. Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services require our center to make the Child Care Centers Minimum Standard Rules available for parents to look at. Any parent may ask the Center Director and a copy will be provided at any time. Under the Texas Penal Code, an area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gangfree zone. Our local Licensing Office is: TDPRS # 210-337-3003 or to make a report 210-337-3399. Web Site-www.txchildcaresearch.org. Child Abuse Hotline #1-800-252-5400

Center Staffing

SH-ELC is staffed by a Director and teachers trained in early childhood education. All our teachers are experienced and trained in appropriate practices for childcare workers. They are CPR / First Aid certified, have had FBI fingerprint background checks done and attend a minimum of 30 hours of training each year to stay current. Our Church and Ministerial Staff have a heart for teaching children about God's Love and the word of the Bible, which is one of the reasons our program was established.

Our Early Learning Center Program does not discriminate against any race, creed, religion, and/or sex. This includes student applications and the hiring of staff.

Weather-Related Closings

SH-ELC will remain open during most severe weather. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

In the event that SH-ELC closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

Curriculum

Our curriculum comes from themes based on God, Jesus, Bible, Creation, Family, Others, Self, and Church. The daily program provides a variety of experiences, levels of difficulty and individual pacing for each age level. There is a balance of individual and group activities ranging from: indoor/outdoor, quiet/active, and large muscle/fine motor, that are both child and/or staff initiated. Classrooms are arranged in learning centers (art, blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor and fine motor) and a variety of developmentally appropriate activities, some of which are teacher-directed while others are child-directed. The curriculum is designed to enhance a child's:

- Social-Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
- Language Development

Multimedia

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movies based upon weekly themes. All multimedia must have a rating of "PG" or "E" and must possess an educational theme.

Infants, Toddlers & Twos Program Information

The following information is specific to the infant, toddler, and two-year-old program rooms:

- Parents must supply diapers, diaper cream, bottles, formula, baby food, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with child's name.
- <u>All infants less than one year will be placed on their back to sleep.</u> A request for alternative sleeping positions must be accompanied by a signed and dated physician's note stating the reason for the request.
- Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day.
- If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breast milk, and when you would like to come in and feed your child.
- Breast milk must be brought in ready-to-use containers and labeled with an expiration date.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Please inform your child's teachers of any new foods that your child has had.

It is very important to the staff at SH-ELC to develop and nurture a relationship with both the child and family. There are many ways we work to build a strong, caring relationship with each family:

Daily Reports

For children enrolled in the infant, toddler, and two-year-old programs, a daily "report" sheet will be completed to tell you about your child's day. This chart contains information about toileting, meals, naps, and activities. Parents of children in the three and four-year-old program rooms may request a daily chart be filled out for their child.

Newsletters

A center-wide monthly newsletter will be emailed to parents. If the Director has your email address on file, a copy of the newsletter will be emailed to you each month. This newsletter provides you with general information about the center and also information about individual classrooms.

Child Adjustment

When your children enter new situations, he/she may feel uneasy. New surroundings, new people, separation from parents, and the number of other children can all be stressful to a child. You can help by having a positive attitude about the experiences that your child will have. Please do not be surprised during the first few days if your child clings to you, and/or cries when you leave him/her. Be sympathetic, understanding, but most of all, be consistent.

The teacher will help move your child into an activity and your presence will be less vital. The teacher is trained to help ease a child's separation from his/her parent. We ask parents not to enter rooms at these times. Many times a child will become involved with other children when parents are not around. Never slip away without telling your child good-bye and reassuring him/her that you will return. Feel free to call (210) 545-2175 to check on your child. Once a child is settled and secure in his/her surroundings, we encourage parents to come visit and participate.

Room Transitions

Your child may transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for a particular classroom. Both your child's current and future teacher is available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher in order to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences present teachers and parents with a unique opportunity to gain insights about the child, the classroom, and the home. Conferences provide an opportunity to share information, discuss educational goals, and to further strengthen the home-school partnership. Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with their child's teacher whenever the need arises.

Questions/Concerns

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, the director, Maria Miller, can be reached at (210) 545-2300 or by e-mail at mmiller@shearerhills.org. The director is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.

Guidance Strategies

One goal of SH-ELC is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be selfdirected and to exhibit self-control. In order to do this, children need the opportunity to build a healthy self-concept. This includes giving children respectful, but honest feedback, acknowledging their accomplishments, helping them cope with their limitations, helping them to realize their own potential, and continual development of strengths.

Young children, due to their developmental age, are not capable of understanding the consequences of many of their behaviors; therefore, they need to be encouraged to make good choices and to be prevented from harming themselves and/or others. This can best be accomplished through close supervision, gentle guidance, and, most importantly, redirection.

Children need to learn to identify and express their feelings. However, often this requires the teacher to verbalize these feelings for them. For example, if we see a child damaging something, he/she needs to help in fixing it or cleaning up. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Brandon very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better." This way, we hope to prevent one child from hurting another and at the same time help that child to learn to identify feelings and verbalize expectations.

Another important disciplinary approach is to remember that small children are very egocentric. They are not yet capable of understanding the concept of sharing and taking turns. Therefore, it is our responsibility to provide guidance through redirection to other activities when conflict situations occur.

Caring for young children requires a lot of patience, as they often need to be reminded about safety rules over and over again. Each ground rule will be stated clearly and precisely to help children follow the rule by showing other acceptable, safe activities. We will most often state directions in a positive manner as young children have a hard time comprehending the words "don't" or "no."

Specific Discipline Strategies Used by SH-ELC Staff:

- Maintaining realistic expectations of children
- Providing clear and simple limits
- Planning an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere
- Keeping children busy to prevent problems from occurring in the first place
- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives
- Encouraging children to work together to solve problems and make cooperative decisions
- Encouraging children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions
- Removing children from the situation until they are calm and able to discuss the problem
- Conflict resolution (for older preschoolers and school-age children)

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior, the following will take place:

- 1. Staff will report problematic behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director(s).
- 2. The Director and/or Assistant will observe the child and meet with the Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
- 3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
- 4. The Director, Assistant Director, Teacher and Co-Teachers, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made.

If at any time the child's behaviors become dangerous to them, other children or staff members, the child will be removed from the program.

Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an ageappropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. There are a variety of strategies we implement at SH-ELC to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a toddler bites:

- The biting child is stopped and told, "Stop biting. Biting hurts" in a firm, calm voice.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child's needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- The biting behavior will be tracked to help determine the peak times for biting. This helps to prevent biting in the first place.
- Crunchy foods, teething rings, and cold washcloths will be provided to soothe a child who is teething.

If all the above strategies fail and the child's biting behavior has not stopped, the following process will take place:

• If a child bites *twice in one day*, that child will be sent home for the rest of the day.

• Once a child has been sent home, a meeting between parents, director, and teacher will be arranged. If a child is sent home for biting *5 times in 4 weeks*, that child will be asked not to return to SH-ELC until the issue has been resolved.

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom and encourages children to develop an appreciation for the world that God created. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors. It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, boots, gloves, etc.). Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name. Please take the weather into account when dressing your child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, he or she may have to remain inside. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

Nap & Rest Time

All children are required to rest for a period of time. Rest time gives preschoolers an opportunity to rest after a busy morning of activities. Cots are provided; children should bring blankets, small pillows, and cuddle toys for this time. These will be sent home weekly to be laundered. As children awake, they read books or play quietly until the end of rest time. No child in our center will be allowed to lie down or sleep with a cup or bottle.

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Meals & Snacks
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Eating together provides opportunities for children to develop their social and language skills. For our youngest, the process of eating helps to develop their fine motor skills and is a sensory experience as well. At SH-ELC, children are provided a snack.

Children will be encouraged to sample all foods that are offered but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant). For certain dietary restrictions, you may be asked to provide food from home for your child.

Food from Home

Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing any homemade snacks. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and Texas Department of Education is available from the Director.

Play Clothes

Send your child to SH-ELC in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an integral part of our planned curriculum. We expect that you will send your child dressed for both indoor and outdoor activities.

Please send your child in clothes that are easily manageable when toileting. All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family.

Tote bags or backpack

Each child must bring a tote bag or backpack with his/her name clearly marked on the front. Your child's teacher will request that you bring at least one (1) complete change of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear), must be kept in the bag at all times for all age groups, in case of emergency. All articles of removable clothing (jackets, sweaters, hats, etc.) should be marked clearly with the child's name. <u>Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing</u>. Labeling your child's clothing would help prevent the loss of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

Jewelry

The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend that infants wear any jewelry. Jewelry can be a strangulation and choking hazards, especially when sleeping or if the infant were to break the necklace and swallow the beads. We ask that your child not wear jewelry while at the center.

Items from Home

Personal items from home may help your child feel more comfortable or secure at school from time to time. We ask that all items brought to SH-ELC from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival. <u>Please clearly</u> <u>label all belongings brought from home</u>. Please leave toys at home; it is often difficult for young children to share their special "treasures" with classmates, and it is sad when they are broken or lost. However, we encourage children to bring books, pictures, or other items, which have educational value, especially those things related to the current theme.

Lost & Found

Labeling all your child's belongings (clothing, coats, sweaters, gloves, hats, lunch boxes, tote bags, etc.) is a great asset in loss prevention. If you find an item not belonging to your child, please send it back to your child's class. If you are missing an item belonging to your child, check with your child's teacher first. You can also check with the Director as well. The lost and found is located at the front desk. Lost and found articles will be cleared out periodically during the year and unclaimed items will be put into our "In case of emergencies" closet or given to charity.

Weapon Play & Competition

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Early Learning Center. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others. Your help in this area is especially appreciated.

Toy guns or weapons, gum, candy or money are NOT allowed in our classrooms at any time

On each child's Parent Policy Checklist is a section that gives the Center a parent's permission to allow their child to participate in outdoor water play activities. We have a water table on the playground that children play with at various times during the regular school year (in warmer weather). There are other times (mostly in summer sessions) that we allow the children more access to the water. These times may (or may not) include water sprinklers and water squirters. Please apply sunscreen at home as well as bug spray, as we cannot.

Field Trips & Transportation

During the summer session, school age children will go on field trips. Field trips are a creative way to enrich a theme and expand the learning environment. Parents will be notified at least one week before the planned field trip and must complete a field trip permission form for each field trip. Parents will not be allowed on field trips. If you do not wish for your child to attend a particular field trip, please find alternative childcare arrangements for that day, as we will not have staff available to stay behind with children.

Rules Related to Transportation

- Children under the age of six riding in a car or passenger van must be properly buckled in a federally approved car seat or booster seat. Parents may be asked to provide a booster seat for their child. Older children and adults must be properly buckled in a seatbelt.
- Children enter and leave the vehicle curbside unless the vehicle is in a protected area ordriveway.
- When children leave the vehicle, the vehicle shall be inspected to ensure no children are left in the vehicle.

Transportation will be provided by a staff member who is certified in first aid, CPR and Transporting Children Safely in Child Care. The children will ride in a registered vehicle. Car seats must be provided by parents if they are needed. Written emergency plans are in the emergency backpacks, which are present on all field trips.

Drop Off & Pick Up

Our Program begins at 9:00 a.m. An adult must ensure that a staff person is aware of the child's arrival as well as his/her departure by accompanying each child to his/her classroom. The adult accompanying a child must record child's arrival and departure time and initial on the sign-in/out sheet provided. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of sixteen.

Children should be dropped off before 10:00 a.m. Scheduled appointments (i.e. doctors, dentist etc.) are the only exception. We ask parents to call and we will still expect the child. Schedules are important to children, as this is their way of telling time. When children miss activities that the other children have finished, they feel left out.

The policy for release of children is as follows:

- 1. A child is released only to a parent or an adult designated by the parent in writing on the emergency card or letter.
- 2. If a person authorized to pick up a child is unknown to the staff, the teacher will require picture identification in order to record the driver's license number (to be kept for 24 hours), before releasing the child.
- 3. If a parent calls to authorize the emergency release of a child, the center will verify that the caller is actually the parent by calling the parent back at work or home.

Since the teachers have additional responsibilities at the end of each day, it is very important that your child be picked up on time. Children become anxious and worried when they are not picked up promptly. The time immediately following the close of the center is used to put away materials and equipment, assess the day's events, and to modify the curriculum plans for the next day. Being prompt is expected and greatly appreciated.

Illness Families are asked not to bring a child to school when signs of illness or infections are present. If your child is not well enough to play outdoors or not well enough to comfortably participate in activities, we ask that you please keep your child home until he or she feels better. Please **contact SH-ELC at (210)-545-2175 whenever your child is ill**. If your child becomes ill or is unable to participate in activities, you will be called and asked to pick up your child. The following table outlines our attendance policy for several common illnesses. For a more complete list, please see the Director or Assistant Director.

Illness	WHAT YOU SEE	WHAT To Do	WHEN CHILD CAN RETURN TO CHILDCARE
5 th Disease	Fever, headache, and very red cheeks. Lace- like rash on chest, stomach, arms and legs that lasts 3 days to 3 weeks. Rash may disappear then reappear.	Contact physician and ask about over- the- counter (OTC) pain/fever medication. Give plenty of fluids. Prevent scratching.	When fever is absent for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
Chicken Pox (Varicella)	Itchy, blistery rash, and mild fever. Blisters usually occur in bumps on stomach, chest and back. After several days, blisters scab over.	Contact physician. Calamine lotion or baking soda in bath can soothe itching. Prevent scratching.	When all blisters are crusted and there are no oozing scabs.
Cold Sores & Mouth Sores	Fever and small, painful fluid-filled or red blisters on mouth, gums, or lips.	Sores should be kept as dry and covered as possible. Do not allow children to share toys.	Child does not need to miss childcare unless drooling.
Ear, Nose and Chest Infections	May include mild symptoms such as cough, runny nose, watery eyes, sore throat, chills and tiredness associated with the common cold, croup, pneumonia, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), bronchitis, and ear infections.	Contact physician and ask about OTC pain/fever medication. Wash hands often.	If fever is not present and child can fully participate in activities, child does not need to miss childcare.
Diarrhea	Child's bowel movements are more frequent, loose and watery than usual. Stool may contain blood.	Make sure child gets plenty of rest and drinks plenty of clear fluids. If symptoms continue, fever occurs, or blood appears in stool, contact physician. Wash hands frequently.	When diarrhea is gone and child feels better.
Fever	Oral temperature 101 degrees (or greater), armpit or ear temperature 100 degrees (or greater)	Contact physician if child is uncomfortable, has change in behavior, or if other symptoms of illness are present. If child under 8 weeks of age has an armpit temp of 100 degrees, contact physician.	24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication.
Flu (Influenza)	Fever, chills, sore throat, cough, headache, muscle aches, and/or extreme sleepiness. Children with the flu may have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea but never without respiratory symptoms.	Contact physician and ask about OTC pain/fever and antiviral medication. Make sure child gets plenty of rest.	When vomiting/diarrhea is gone and child feels better. Fever must be absent a minimum of 24 hours without fever reducing medications.
🕇 Hepatitis A	Stomach pain, sick feeling, fever, and diarrhea. Skin and whites of eyes may have yellow tint.	Contact physician IMMEDIATELY.	One week after symptoms appear.
Impetigo	Skin sore with a yellow, honey colored scab. It may ooze and drain. Most sores are on face, around the nose and mouth.	Contact physician, who may prescribe medication or directions on caring for scabs. Wash hands frequently.	24 hours after medication is first given.
Lice	Lice (bugs) and eggs (nits) in hair near scalp, especially on top of head, behind ears, and neck. Frequent scratching.	Use shampoo and cream rinse daily for 14 days. Comb hair with a fine-toothed comb while cream rinse is in hair.	After the first shampoo treatment and no live bugs are present.
Meningitis (Viral or Bacterial)	Fever, headache and stiff neck are common symptoms in anyone over 2 years old. Newborns and infants may appear overly sleepy, or inactive, be irritable, vomit or eats poorly.	Contact physician IMMEDIATELY. Viral meningitis is only spread by contact with an infected person's stool. Bacterial can be spread through the air, so close contacts may be given medication to prevent illness.	Children with bacterial meningitis may return to childcare 24 hours after medication is first given. Children with viral meningitis when child is feeling better and fever is gone.
🗙 Mumps	Fever and swollen/sore glands in neck. May have cough and runny nose.	Contact physician and ask about OTC pain/fever medication. Give plenty of fluids.	5 days after symptoms first appear, or when symptoms are gone (whichever is longer).

Pink eye (Purulent conjunctivitis)	Eyes are red/pink with creamy or yellow discharge; eyelids may be matted after sleep. Eyelids and area around eyes may be swollen or irritated, and painful. Fever may be present.		24 hours after medication is first administered or all symptoms are gone.
Rash illness	Usually red, splotchy areas on the skin, sometimes with bumps that may or may not be whitish in color. Child may have fever or behavioral change.	Contact physician if child develops fever and/or experiences behavioral change.	When fever is gone, and behavior has returned to normal.
Ringworm	Ring shaped, scaly spot on skin or head. May leave a lighter spot on skin or a flaky patch of baldness on head. May have a raised donut- shaped appearance.	Contact physician. Ringworm is spread by skin- to-skin contact. Cover the area with a bandage and prevent sharing of personal items like blankets and clothes.	Child may return to care as long as infected area is completely covered.
Scabies	Severe scratching that may be worse at night. Small red bumps on the skin or between fingers, on wrists/elbows, in armpits, or on waistline.	Contact physician.	24 hours after treatment has begun.
Strep throat	Sore throat, hard to swallow, fever, enlarged glands and extreme fatigue.	Contact physician. Give medication for amount of time prescribed.	24 hours after medication is first administered.
Vomiting	Common causes of vomiting are illness and upset stomach.	Contact physician if fever is present. Contact physician immediately if child cannot keep fluids down for more than 24 hours.	When all symptoms are gone.
Whooping cough (Pertussis)		Contact physician. Give medication for amount of time prescribed. Physician may prescribe medication to close contacts to prevent spread.	After 5 days of medication or 21 days of cough if no medication is given.

★ = Communicable disease

Families should immediately notify the child's teacher if their child becomes ill with a communicable disease. A letter will be sent home to the students in the classroom to report that a communicable disease has been present.

Medications

Prescription and Non-prescription medication (over-the-counter medications) must be given to a staff member in the original container. Prescribed and non-prescribed will be administered only if it is in the original container and only according to label directions. If the label states, "not for children under 2 (or 6) years, consult physician", the medication cannot be given without a physician's signature.

SH-ELC staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained in the office. Unused medications will be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at SH-ELC. When medication is given, the Assistant Director will document the medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given.

To ensure the safety of children in all classes, never leave medication in child's bags, lunch box or classroom. Medications are to be turned into the SH-ELC Office.

Physical and Immunization Records

Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at time of enrollment. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received, based on Health Department recommended schedule and kept up to date in child's admission file. http://www.sanantonio.gov/health/ is the web address for the San Antonio Health Department where you can find their schedule and a list of clinics. At this time, faculty is not required to submit their vaccination records. Updated immunization records and physicals may be turned into the SH-ELC front office.

<u>Allergies</u>

Please keep your child's teachers aware of any allergies to certain foods. Some classes may be asked to not bring certain foods (i.e. peanut butter) if a child is severely allergic. If a child has a food allergy, please send a note from your physician of what the allergy is, what reaction your child may have if exposed to the food, and what medication is needed if there is a reaction. At our center, if a child has a reaction to a food, the teachers will notify the director. The director will administer medication and contact 911 as needed.

Pets & Visiting Animals

On occasions, the teachers might bring a critter to the classroom and if children are allowed to pet them, they will be

required to wash their hands when finished. This will only be done under teacher supervision, and parents will be notified in advance that an animal will be in the classroom. Because of Licensing Rules, we cannot have animals such as dogs and cats in our center.

Diapered Children

Parents with diapered children are required to bring an ample supply of disposable diapers for each day their child is in care. Each child's name or initials are put on their diapers. Wipes are provided by the center.

Child Abuse & Neglect

We are required by Law to protect young children, which require us to report suspicions of abuse. Because of our continuing concern about the welfare of children, the following information is provided. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the Center Director. It is important for even suspected abuse or neglect to be reported so that a specialist can intervene before more harm is done.

There are three kinds of child abuse:

- 1. **Physical abuse** inflicting bodily injury on a child (beating, burning, etc.)
- 2. Sexual abuse using a child in or exposing her/him to sexual activities, with or without the child's consent.
- 3. **Emotional abuse** demanding that the child do more than she/he is able to do, severely criticizing or humiliating her/him for not living up to a demand or placing upon the child such unclear requirements that the child cannot understand what he/she is supposed to do.

There are at least two kinds of child neglect:

- 1. **Physical neglect** failure to provide enough food, clothing, and shelter or medical care, failure to provide adequate education, guidance or supervision.
- 2. Emotional neglect failure to give a child the love and affection he/she needs.

Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, including:

- A) Required annual training for employees;
- B) Methods for increasing employee and parent awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;
- C) Methods for increasing employee and parent awareness of prevention techniques for child abuse and neglect;
- D) Strategies for coordination between the center and appropriate community organizations; and
- E) Actions that the parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should take to obtain assistance and intervention.

Hand Washing

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcares such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival and departure. Other times your child will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center
- After each diaper change
- After using the toilet
- Before and after mealtimes
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground

Children should wash for at least 20 seconds, or the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" or the "ABCs". Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

Fire & Severe Weather

In the event of a fire, teachers will guide their class to the proper fire exit and designated exterior meeting place. Children who require assistance will be helped, and those who do not walk will be evacuated by their teachers in designated evacuation cribs. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone as soon as children are safely secured and will be given information on the status of the emergency pick up procedures. Only the people listed as authorized to pick up, will be allowed to do so after showing photo ID.

In the event of a tornado or severe storm warnings, teachers will guide their class to the closest area designated as an inclement weather meeting place in a sitting position with their arms covering their heads. Children who require assistance will be helped, and those who do not walk will be evacuated by their teachers in designated evacuation cribs. The campus will then be closed and not reopened until advised by the Director or person in charge that the bad weather has passed.

Bomb Threat, Intruder or Other Emergency Procedures

In the event of a bomb threat, intruder or other evacuation emergencies, the facility will be placed in lock-down until the proper authorities declare the campus is secure. The staff will escort the children to the closest room, lock the door, cover the windows, and wait for further directions. If the threat of a bomb, or other threat, should be made, the Director or person in charge will immediately notify authorities by calling 911 and respond to the situation according.

ELC Staff Emergency Procedures

Copied from the employee handbook pgs. 15-17

EMERGENCY BUILDING EXIT OR RELOCATION PROCEDURE

- Each classroom must have an evacuation and relocation plan posted by the exit. Each teacher must know their exit route to take children from building.
- □ All staff must know the SH-ELC procedures for exiting the building and moving to a safe place. In case of Fire; staff are to take children on ropes when exiting the building. Staff must take children out to far end of parking lot. In case of Severe Weather: Staff will take children on ropes to main central hallway and have children sit along the walls. Staff must be prepared to follow through these procedures during monthly drills.
- □ All staff must know location and operation of closest Fire Extinguisher to their classroom.

EMERGENCY FIRE PROCEDURE

- If you detect a fire, pull the nearest fire alarm signal (small red box mounted on the wall near the exits).
- If it is a small fire, attempt to extinguish the fire using the nearest fire extinguisher. (IF YOU ARE ON DUTY IN A CLASSROOM at the time of a fire, follow the instructions below and evacuate the children first.)
- Exit the building and proceed to the designated meeting place.
- Call 911 as soon as you have reached the meeting place.
 - o Provide the center's name and location: Shearer Hills Early Learning Center, 12615 San Pedro
 - Describe the location of the fire.

IF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS WHILE YOU ARE ON DUTY IN A CLASSROOM:

- Assist in the evacuation of the children from your classroom.
- Collect the classroom emergency backpack, and attendance clipboard.
 - Staff member closest to the outdoor exit is responsible for leading children out that exit and to the designated meeting place: **posted below**. Once outside, meet up with other classes by the fence and move away from the building to the fence on the other side of the parking lot. *Every classroom must stay together as a group*.
 - o Staff member farthest from the outdoor exit is responsible for ensuring everyone has evacuated the classroom.
- The last staff member to exit the classroom must turn off all lights and close all doors.
- The Director and/or Assistant Director will verify, as soon as possible, that all children are accounted for.
- Primary Site:

• Bexar County Precinct 3 Constables Office

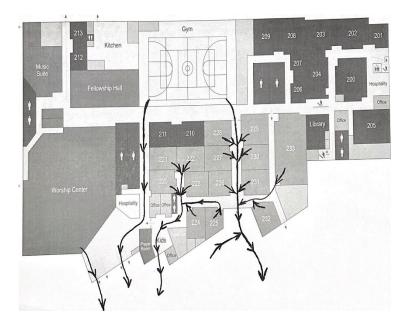
- 320 Interpark Blvd. San Antonio, TX 78216 Phone # 210-335-4750
- - --
- Secondary Site:
 - Panera Bread
 - 13025 San Pedro San Antonio, TX 78216 Phone #210-404-2300

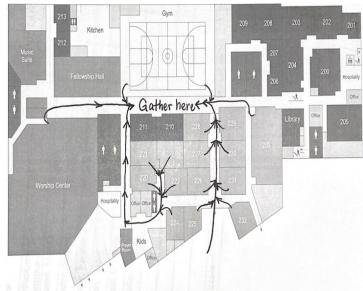
SEVERE WEATHER DRILLPROCEDURE

- All classes are to assist in the evacuation of the children from your classroom.
- Collect the classroom emergency backpack, and attendance clipboard.
 - Staff member closest to the hallway exit is responsible for leading children out that exit and to the designated shelter area: **Main Central Hallway** of the building. *Every classroom must stay together as a group*.
 - Staff member farthest from the interior exit is responsible for ensuring everyone has evacuated the classroom.
- Once assembled in the designated shelter area, Teachers are responsible for having the children sit quietly on the floor, with backs against the wall until further instructions are given.
- The Director and/or Assistant Director will verify, as soon as possible, with Teachers that all children are accounted for.
- <u>All children and staff must remain on the floor in the designated shelter area and wait to receive an "all clear"</u> <u>from the Director and/or Assistant Director.</u>
- During a severe weather, the Director and/or Assistant Director will be responsible for monitoring weather information by radio and will keep staff members informed of emergency weather changes.

Relocation

Severe Weather





EMERGENCY WHISTLES

1 blow = Weather drill 2 blows = Lock down drill 3 blows = Fire drill

LOCK DOWN DRILL

The following procedures will be followed when deemed necessary by Church Staff member. There must not be any exceptions to these steps.

- 1. A whistle blown two long blasts will signal all classrooms to begin lock down procedures.
- 2. Teachers should immediately close the door or doors going into their classroom. (Doors should remain locked but open while caring for children/preschoolers.)
- 3. Teachers will not open doors until given permission by a Church Staff member; including but not limited to Maria Miller, Julie Cruz, and Hazel Baurnfind. Do not open the door for anyone until you have permission.
- 4. If you are on the playground when the signal is given, take the children to 232 and secure the door.
- 5. If you are in the restroom off the main hallway or next to the infant room, take any children to the closest classroom
- 6. If you are in the Gym, take your children into the Equipment Room and secure the door.
- 7. There will be two cards available in a pocket attached to the door. You are to take the appropriate card and display it in the window of the door:

GREEN – All children assigned to this room are present. RED – We are missing one or more children and list their names.

If you have extra children in your room, list their names on the green card.

8. When the "All Clear" signal (one long whistle blast) is given, teachers will at that time have permission to open the classroom doors.

GENERAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

- A First Aid kit is located on the wall near the playground and in the kitchen. The Assistant Director will restock items monthly; however, staff members are responsible for reporting when additional items are needed before that time.
- Blood borne pathogens kits are available near the playground and in the kitchen.
- <u>All incidents or accidents (including biting) are reported to the parents, Director and/or Assistant Director using the</u> <u>Incident/Accident Report form.</u> A completed form must be signed by a parent on the day of the incident. A copy must be given to the parent and the signed original given to the Director to be filed in the child's enrollment folder. In some cases, (i.e., there is a large cut, bruises or a bite mark visible on the child's body) staff members are required to call parents before pick up to inform them of the incident.
- Parents are discouraged from trying to pick up their child during an emergency. However, if a parent arrives during such a situation, the child must be released to the parent.
- In the event of an emergency, it is important to remain calm.
- As a staff member, your first responsibility is ensuring the safety of the children in your care.

Program Policies

Address, Telephone, or Employment Changes

Any changes in address, telephone number, email address, work location and or phone number should be reported promptly in writing to our Early Learning Center Office. Telephone numbers of emergency contacts or individuals authorized to pick up the child should also be kept current.

Visitors in Center

Parents are welcome visitors at SH-ELC. We ask that you keep in mind your child's separation abilities when considering a visit to the center at times other than drop-off and pick-up. We invite parents to come eat lunch occasionally with your child, or to share a special talent with the children.

Celebration of Birthdays

It is the policy at SH-ELC to ensure birthday celebrations are a positive experience for every child. We only serve nutritious snacks; therefore, we ask parents to keep this in mind when considering a snack for their child's birthday. Our snack list under the Daily Nutrition section is a good basis for ideas on what you bring. To avoid "hurt feelings"; we have adopted the following guidelines:

Parent-sponsored birthday parties in the classrooms are not allowed. We will make your child's birthday, or the day closest to his/her birthday, special with a snack time celebration. The class will sing "Happy Birthday" to your child and a special birthday crown or sticker will be made for your child to wear. You are allowed to bring a special snack for the whole class. Parents are welcome to join the class at this time.

If you have a separate birthday party for your child, we ask that you distribute invitations only if each child in the class is invited. They should be mailed otherwise.

A suggestion for celebrating your child's birthday could be to make a book or DVD donation to our program. Your child's name and birth date will be recorded on the item so he/she may get recognition each time it is read or seen. If you have other ideas check with the Director.

<u>Hearing – Vision – Speech - Screening</u>

All children who turn four years of age by September 1st of each school year are required by the State Health Department to have a hearing and vision screening done by a licensed physician, a qualified professional or certified screener. Please turn in results by the end of the fall semester to the SH-ELC office.

Accidents - Emergencies

The staff maintains current certification in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. Should emergency action be needed, staff will provide immediate care, and call EMS, the parent and the child's physician. Staff will attempt to contact parents when your child receives any minor injury that requires more than tender loving care. A written report stating the nature of the incident, and the first aid given, will require a parent's signature, and a copy will be sent home for parents.

In the event our facility must be evacuated due to an environmental emergency (building hazard, toxic fumes or chemical release), children will walk or be taken in a stroller to Bexar County Precinct, 320 Interpark Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78216, Phone (210) 335-4750 or Panera Bread, 13025 San Pedro Ave, San Antonio, TX 78216, Phone (210) 404-2300. Attendance sheets as well as emergency backpacks will be taken to the safe sight by the teachers. The attendance sheets will be used for name-to-face checks to ensure all children are in care. The director or assistant director will take the emergency cards to the safe sight. Parents will be notified through staff mobile phones to pick up their children as soon as possible. Local authorities and Texas Department of Family Services will be contacted as well through staff mobile phones.

Daily Operations

We operate Tuesday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Our Early Learning Center follows the school calendar for the North East Independent School District.

Fall Semester: September to December Spring Semester: January to May Summer Sessions: June, July, and August

Early Birds: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 7:30-9:00 a.m. year-round. **After School Care:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 3:00-5:30 p.m. year-round.

Enrollment Procedures

An annual registration fee, (see current Center flyer) reserves a place for your child in our program from September through May. A summer registration fee is also required for June through August. Registration fees are not refundable. We also have a "supply" fee that is paid each semester. Upon registration, each family will receive an enrollment packet, with our Center's Parent Handbook. Parents are to provide the child's up-to-date immunization record and sign these forms stating that they have read and agree to abide by the policies set forth. These forms must be returned on or before your child's first day of attendance. Registration forms will be kept on file in the Early Learning Center office. The Monthly Tuition Fees are due on the 1st of the month and maintains your child's "Registered position in our center". Parents not having the tuition in by the 10th of the month will be charged a \$10 late fee and your child is subject to exclusion from their class until fees are paid.

In order for the child to remain on the roster, the full monthly tuition is required even if the child only attends a few days or weeks during a specific month. For example, the full monthly tuition is required even during the months that we have a planned holiday or if the family has a planned vacation. The drop-in rate is only offered for additional days that the child is not already registered for.

Summer Enrollment:

During the registration process for our summer session, we require that parents commit to the months that their children will come in the summer. The summer registration cards will have a section for parents to select June, July, and/or August. SH-ELC families will be charged for the selected months even if the children do not come.

Termination of Enrollment

In extreme situations, the Director may terminate enrollment of a child at any time if it is determined that the program is unable to meet the needs of the child or the family. Parents are encouraged to speak with the Center Director when they have concerns about our program, staff or classes. Individual staff persons will not be allowed to discuss the actions of a child with anyone other than their parents. Every effort will be made to resolve any problems within our program.

Absences

If your child is not able to attend our Early Learning Center for any reason, please notify the office. There are no make-up days for absences in our program. Important information or messages concerning your child can be left by calling (210) 545-2175.

Drop-In Policy

As a convenience to our Church and SH-ELC families, we also have Drop-In care, based on space availability. Parents need to check with the SH-ELC office (210) 545-2175 the day before care is needed, to make reservations.

*See current fee statement for Drop-In rates.

Our policy at SH-ELC is that each child will be allowed, six drop-in days per semester, based on availability. Emergency information card and up to date immunization records are required for Drop-In care.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Parents will be charged **\$10.00** if children are picked up after 3:05 PM. If children are picked up after 3:30 PM, a **\$20** After School Care drop-in fee will be charged. If children are picked up after 5:30 PM for After School Care, a **\$20** late fee will be charged. Teachers will record late fees for processing.

Holidays & Closures

Holidays

Early Learning Center is closed for the following weeks:

Spring Break (3 days) June (1st week) Independence Day (3 days) August (last week) Thanksgiving (3 days) Christmas (3 days) New Year's Day (3 days)

Early Dismissal

We will dismiss the children at noon on the day of our Harvest Celebration, Fiesta Celebration, and Graduation ceremony (receive specific dates from the Director).

Closures

If additional closures are needed, parents will be given ample notice of the exact days these closures will occur.

Holiday Themes:

Halloween: Our Center views this time of year by the season, topics are "Harvest Time" and "Apples and Pumpkins".

Thanksgiving: Our focus at this time of year is to make children aware of the things they can be thankful for such as food, families, and friends. We also talk about thanking God for loving us and taking care of us.

Christmas: As Jesus' birthday approaches, we help preschoolers know about the birth of this special baby. Special activities are done in each area of the classroom, one is singing songs like "Happy Birthday to Jesus", and "Christmas is Such a Happy Time".

Easter: Preschoolers have limited knowledge and experiences about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Preschoolers need concrete, firsthand experiences in order to have understanding. With this in mind, our focus at Easter is about new life, and springtime. Spring is a time when many new things grow in the world. God made the world. God made people. We can provide firsthand experiences with living things God created.

Fiesta: Our Center takes this opportunity to celebrate how special our children are to God and SH-ELC. Fiesta, for SH-ELC, is our time to thank families for participating with us in ministry to children.

<u>Weather</u>

Weather related cancellations would also be based on the North East School District. Listen to local TV and radio stations for school closing on inclement weather days. If the center is closed due to reasons outside of our control (i.e. bad weather, no electricity, no water, etc.), there will be no make-up days or refunds. Our decisions about closing for bad weather will be based on those of NEISD (i.e. if NEISD closes their schools then we will also close).

Parent - Teacher - Communication

Parent Communication

We believe the most effective communications are those directly from parent to teacher, or teacher to parent. Communication is the heart of a stimulating, safe, caring program for young children. Events that occur in your child's home environment greatly affect his/her behavior. We appreciate communication to our staff concerning any unusual happening or event: such as changes in living situations, illness, death, extra activities, sleep patterns, etc.

The Director will send out monthly newsletters and the teachers will provide written daily reports for ages birth through 2 and weekly reports for children ages 3 through Pre-K. Our teachers strive to provide quality care for each child, and for this reason, is not able to have extended conversations with parents while caring for children. Time can be arranged with our teachers or director to discuss any concern you may have. Our Early Learning Center Staff desires to minister and provide for your family.

Teacher Communication

Teachers will post daily schedules, weekly themes, daily activities, and special activity plans in the general vicinity of their doors. Please check there for information on what your child's class is doing at that time. Teachers will occasionally send home notes concerning special activities they may need your help with, and your cooperation will be appreciated.

Program Communication

This Handbook is our way of letting parents know how we follow regulations that are set by the *Texas* **Department of Family and Protective Services**. Some of the policies are set by the Ministry of this Church based on what is best for the Church as a whole. If there is a change in Licensing regulations or Church policies that require a change in this handbook, you will be notified in writing by a "Parent Memorandum".

A Center Newsletter will be sent home or emailed throughout the year. We highly encourage parents to read the newsletter as it contains news pertinent to what is going on in individual classrooms as well as special activities or upcoming dates to know about. We feel that it is very important for each parent to stay informed. Please check your child's totes/bags, and lunch boxes daily, as children's Daily Reports, Newsletters, Parent Memorandums and Special Events will be sent home to you in this way.

Referral – Community Resources

To effectively serve our children and families, our Early Learning Center Director is knowledgeable about the use of other professionals in the community both as a supplement to the program's resources and as a referral source for parents.

Save & Send

When you clean your house, remember that we can use: used toys and books in good condition, dramatic play props (phones, dress-up, costumes, hats, jewelry, purses, etc.), good kitchen equipment, collage materials, (spools, yarn, buttons, ribbons, etc.), yogurt containers, paper towel rolls, non-glass baby food jars, greeting cards, picture calendars, magazines with good full page photographs, such as "Texas Parks and Wildlife" or "Good Housekeeping", etc. Other items may be required during the year by your child's teacher for certain projects. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

Church Affiliation – Funding

The Church Pastor and the Children's Minister govern the program. The Center Director oversees daily activities. Registration fees, supply fees and monthly tuition, financially support the program's daily operation.

Church Building & Grounds

Smoking is prohibited inside our building. Consumption or possession of alcohol or any illegal or controlled substance is prohibited on Church premises. Firearms or any other weapons are prohibited on Church premises. We also ask parents to keep in mind that we do not allow children to use or create weapons for play in any of our classrooms. Please do not allow your children to bring weapons of any kind to our program.

<u>Classroom / Playground Sanitation</u>

The classrooms and bathrooms are cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis by a church custodian. Bleach is the only solution proven to kill all germs and viruses. Toys in the nursery are washed daily with a diluted bleach solution. Washable toys, pillows, etc. are washed on site each week. Diaper changing facilities in rooms are sanitized after each child. Lunch tables are sanitized before and after each meal.

A licensed exterminating company treats the building and grounds with pesticides for common household pests on a monthly basis. The treatment is always done at times other than Early Learning Center hours.

Church Library

Shearer Hills Baptist Church has two libraries: adult and children. We encourage parents to let their children look around and checkout the various books and movies. Parents can check out books on child rearing, child development, and early childhood education. We have a large selection of fiction and non-fiction books. Our Pre-Kinder classroom visits the Children's Library often. The Children's Library is located adjacent to our preschool classrooms.

Parking Area

There is "New Parent" parking on the front row of our parking area that is available for SH-ELC parents to park when dropping children off. If you park in the red "Fire Zone" or the "Handicapped" areas, you do so at your own risk, and are subject to receiving a parking ticket. If you enter our parking lot up the ramp from the lower parking lot, Do Not Block that driveway, and please remember to stop. Parents and children may be crossing over. Please do not leave sleeping babies in your car while you drop off your older child. Please lock cars to prevent any theft.

We know that as parents, you have to make the choices that are best for your child and family. Thank you for choosing Shearer Hills Baptist-Early Learning Center.

Maria Miller Early Learning Center – Director