

Annie's PLACE

Welcome to Annie's Place!

"Annie's Place's main purpose is to support parents and guardians of Parkland Hospital who are experiencing a health crisis by providing childcare, community, and compassion. **No parent should have to choose between taking care of their own health and having safe and loving care for their children.**"

We are also committed to serving families that have no other option for childcare due to an emergency.

While a child attends our program, we strive to provide a balanced program of early childhood education by utilizing curriculum that provides age-appropriate learning activities and experiences to stimulate the child's growth in all areas.

We look forward to working together to accomplish our mission. Please take time to read and become familiar with the policies and procedures in the handbook.

ANNIE'S PLACE
Mommies In Need

Annie's Place
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Licensing information

Annie's Place offers two programs at our center. The only differences between the two programs are the amount of time a child can attend and what documentation is required at the time of enrollment. Both programs follow the best policies and procedures set forth by the State of Texas and we follow their Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers. A copy of the Minimum Standards is available in the intake office or may be found on the website listed below. The most recent licensing report is posted outside in the foyer.

The exempt program is able to offer patients of Parkland drop-in care for a maximum of 4 ½ per hours per day and no more than 15 hours a week. This program is ideal for parents and guardians not planning to leave the Parkland Hospital complex and needing childcare for a short amount of time for an appointment.

The second program is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services This program is ideal if you need to leave your child for more than 4 ½ hours a day. You are also allowed to leave the campus if needed. We can offer this childcare for a maximum of 15 days per month. Your child's immunization record, health statement, and vision and screening (age 4+) will need to be on file for you to participate in this program.

Both programs can operate at the same time, but your child will be assigned to one specific teacher and not share space with the other program.

Annie's Place offers 2-day seasonal camps that are not licensed but will operate at the same time as our programs. Camps will have a separate registration, space and teachers assigned to them.

Licensing requires that teachers receive 24 hours of continuing education each year. One hour of that training must focus on the prevention and recognition of symptoms of abuse and neglect as well as the responsibility and procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect. It is the responsibility of anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect to report it. Information on reporting is posted in the intake's office in the document titled Keeping Children Safe. The Child Abuse Hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services 8700 North Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, Texas 75247
(214) 951-7902
www.dfps.state.tx.us

The Dallas Children's Advocacy Center offers free training on their website at <https://dcac.learnupon.com/store>. Use discount code **SAVEJANE** for our Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse training and code **GETEDUCATED** for Keeping Your Child Safe in the Real and Digital World.

If you are a parent of an infant or toddler and are interested in taking online parenting classes, AGRILIFE through Texas A&M Commerce offers free classes online for parents or caregivers at <http://infanttoddler.tamu.edu>.

ENROLLMENT AND COST

Enrollment is open to children birth to 6 years with availability for school age children and is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment packet. Parents are required to notify the office should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. We enroll children based on classroom availability by age.

Annie's Place is open Monday - Friday from 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM with early bird and after care available. Parents must have an appointment with us to drop off. Annie's Place is a year-round program. We will be closed for observance of national holidays. Children enrolled in the exempt program are allowed to stay for a maximum of 4 ½ hours, and parents cannot leave the Parkland Hospital campus. Children enrolled in our licensed program are allowed to stay for up to 8 hours or the length of an employee's shift.

Both programs are offered to families at no cost.

If you have an appointment made for your child and you cannot attend for some reason that day, please call us as soon as possible to cancel so we may offer the service to another family that day. If you continue to cancel without notification, we will discontinue offering our service.

We can offer same day drop off appointments based on classroom availability by age and time of day. Please call the front office to check availability before showing up. We cannot accept same day drop off appointments after 2:00 PM.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

All the doors at Annie's Place are locked for security. Parents are asked stay in their cars to drop off their children. When you arrive, call the office number listed outside at the front door and a staff member will come outside to meet you. They will ask the COVID-19 screener questions and take everyone's temperature. We will then help your child out of the car and walk or carry them to the classroom. If your child is in a car seat, we ask that you help them out of it. Any special instructions for the day should be recorded on the log by the parent each time, along with verifying your emergency contact phone number and information about who is picking up the child. Children will only be released to a parent authorized to pick the child up. Staff members will request a photo ID before releasing a child to someone other than the parent. Once the parent or emergency caregiver has been confirmed, a teacher will retrieve the child and bring them to the front. No parents or guardians are allowed past the foyer for the safety and health of our staff and children attending that day. No child will be released to anyone deemed impaired by drugs or alcohol. When the child has been signed out and released to the care of an authorized adult, that adult is then responsible for the child.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Ways to make your departure less difficult for your child.

It is common for some children to exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. This is normal behavior in a child's emotional development. Some helpful tips in easing the transition can be found online on our Annie's Place website or at the front desk. Please say goodbye to your child at the door and do not enter the hallway to the classrooms. The longer the

parent of an anxious child delays their departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. The teachers will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. If a child continues to cry and cannot be consoled after a reasonable amount of time, we will call you. Usually, after a few visits, the children learn that you will come back and that this is a fun time where they can play, learn and make friends.

HEALTH

Illness

Annie's Place requires that parents not send a child to our program if the child shows any signs of illness. This is not only for the protection of the child, but also for the protection of the other children and teachers. 24 to 48 hours before a scheduled day at the center, a phone call will be made to the parent asking a series of health screening questions. If deemed healthy, the appointment will be confirmed. When you arrive, a center manager will greet you outside and check for fever using a digital thermometer. Anyone in the family who has a temperature of 100°F or higher will not be allowed in the building that day. Parents are required to wear a mask inside. One will be provided if you do not have one. Once you are inside, we will observe your children for any signs of illness and ask if you have any concerns that day. Some children may need to return home with the parent. No child will be accepted in the classroom with fever or appearance of illness. If a child becomes ill during the day or has diarrhea, vomiting, persistent cough, rash, or fever of 100°F or above, the teacher will contact the office and the parent or emergency contact will be called to pick the child up. Annie's Place uses the following guidelines in addition to COVID-19 health screening (see next section) to determine when a child should not be brought to class:

- Fever of 100°F or above currently or within the past 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing drugs
- Vomiting or diarrhea (within the last 24 hours) (Uncontrolled diarrhea is when a diapered child's stool is not contained in the diaper and/or it exceeds two or more stools above the normal for that child; and when a toilet-trained child's diarrhea is causing soiled pants and clothing.)
- Any symptoms of childhood diseases, such as scarlet fever, fifth disease, measles, chicken pox, strep throat, flu, etc. – or any infectious, contagious diseases
- Chicken Pox – all sores must be completely scabbed over and dry underneath
- Common cold – from onset through one week
- Sore throat, croup
- Any skin infection – boils, ringworm, impetigo, thrush, hand-foot-mouth disease or unexplained rash
- Pinkeye or other eye infections (The child must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Open skin lesions
- Cloudy, or green, runny noses, persistent cough
- Head lice (must be nit free)

Children cannot be kept in their classroom while their class is on the playground. If a child is too sick to go to the playground, then he/she should be kept at home.

Annie's Place personnel are **NOT** allowed to administer medications or breathing treatments to children. However, in a medical emergency medication will be administered to prevent the death or serious bodily injury of the child. The medication will be administered as prescribed, directed or intended. Teachers will not apply sunscreen or mosquito spray. Please apply before school if you choose to.

If a child develops an infectious disease following attendance at Annie's Place, the parents are asked to notify our office. Teachers and parents of children who have been exposed will be notified by the Annie's Place office. The name of the child with the illness will not be released. A child who has been sick may return to class when he/she has been free of symptoms of illness for 24 hours or when a health care professional's statement that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition is provided to the Annie's Place office.

COVID-19 Health Screenings

The following individuals must be screened every day before entering the building.

- Annie's Place employees
- Persons with legal authority to enter, including law enforcement officers, Licensing staff, and Department of Family and Protective Services Staff
- Children enrolled at Annie's Place that day
- Parents who have children enrolled and present that day. (Parents will only enter the lobby after answering the health questionnaire, getting a temperature check and wearing a mask.)

Health screening includes the following and any individual will be denied entry if he/she has experienced any new or worsening of the following COVID-19 symptoms within the last 14 days:

- Diagnosed with COVID-19
- In **contact** with someone recently diagnosed with COVID-19
- Exposed to anyone who had **contact** with someone recently diagnosed with COVID-19
- A participant in international travel to a country requiring a 14-day self-quarantine as designated by the CDC

Contact: interactions within six (6) feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes.

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature over 100°F
- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking
- Muscle pain/aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea

In addition to the initial temperature check and screening, the Annie's Place reserves the right to take any child's temperature at any time for any reason.

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

Immunization records

Each child attending our licensed program is required to have a current immunization record on file in our office. Each time your child receives an immunization, please bring a copy for our files as required by state licensing regulations. If you have chosen not to have your child immunized, you are required to have an immunization waiver form on file in compliance with licensing requirements. A copy from your previous childcare center is appropriate if it has been within the year.

Physician's statement

Each child attending our licensed program must also have on file a Physician's Statement from their doctor, stating that the child has been examined and may participate in our program. A copy from your previous childcare center is appropriate if it has been within the year.

Allergies

Parents must notify us in writing on the Enrollment Form of any allergies their child has and/or any pertinent information related to that and any changes that occur during the year. Any child that has been diagnosed with a food allergy must provide a Food Allergy Emergency Plan prepared by their health care provider at the time of admission if they are enrolled in the licensed program. The form may be obtained from your health care provider or from our enrollment process. The form must be signed and dated by both the health care provider and the parent. Copies of the Emergency Plan will be kept in each child's file and posted in the child's classroom. Any medications specified in the Emergency Plan, such as an Epi pen, will be labelled and kept in the Nutrition room. In addition to the Food Allergy Emergency Plan for children with a diagnosed food allergy, teachers are given a list of any other children in their class with allergies, along with any special instructions for nutrition that day.

Hearing and Vision Screening

As a licensed facility, we are required to provide documentation of vision and hearing screening for all children in our program who are 4 years old by September 1st of the current school year. Documentation of screening will be reported to the Department of State Health Services as required and must also be kept in each child's file. Children typically receive the screening at their 4-year-old visit to the pediatrician. Parents must provide a copy of the screening results to our office for our records if their child attends the licensed program.

Medical emergencies

In cases of medical emergencies, 911 will be called. First aid will be administered, and the parent(s) of the child will be contacted immediately using home, cell, work, and emergency numbers listed on enrollment forms or sign in/out log.

In less serious cases, the parent will be notified when the child is picked up and the teacher will give the parent an OUCH report or incident report as appropriate, explaining what happened and what steps were taken.

Communicable diseases

If your child contracts a communicable disease, please share the diagnosis with the Director. The parents of other children in the class will be notified that their child may have been exposed. Children's names will not be shared.

Behavioral and developmental issues

In the event of significant behavioral issues, a conference with parents, teachers, play therapist and/or director may be scheduled. A plan to promote appropriate behavior and strategies to implement change will be put in place. If the behavior concern(s) continue after implementation of the plan, a child may be asked to leave our program. It is our intent to work together with families to promote a positive experience for their child. However, we do realize that there may be circumstances that keep a child from being capable of fully participating in a group setting and recognize that Annie's Place may not be equipped to deal with all circumstances underlying certain behavioral issues. In some cases, a referral for professional help may be indicated. If you are concerned about the physical or cognitive development of your child, please discuss this with the Director.

The program reserves the right to dismiss any child if, after entering, he/she is unable to participate in group experiences.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

In order to ensure the safety of our children during an emergency, Annie's Place has an Emergency Preparedness Plan that addresses staff responsibility and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation, relocation, and sheltering/lock-down. As required by state licensing, fire drills will be conducted monthly, and severe weather drills and lock-down drills will be conducted 4 times during the year. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. During fire drills, all classes evacuate the building in less than 3 minutes. Evacuation destinations are specified in the Emergency Preparedness Plan in the event that we have to relocate. During weather drills all children are taken to the STAFF BATHROOM until an all-clear signal is given. In the event of an actual emergency situation, information will be communicated to parents utilizing the Annie's Place texting system regarding when and where to pick up their children. The Emergency Preparedness Plan is available for review in the Director's office or intake room. Our staff is well trained to protect your child in emergency situations.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parents of infants and toddlers will receive a written report each day with information about eating, napping and diaper changes. All parents will receive communication from their child's teachers via various methods. Calendars highlighting the units being studied by each class are available at the front desk or on our Annie's Place app. Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes that occur during the year. Teachers do not use their cell phones during the school day, so any teacher communication should be through our office phone number 214-266-8064. The Annie's Place office can also communicate with parents via the Annie's Place texting system to notify you of important events such as severe weather procedures or other important events. You can also find more information on our website.

STAFF

All of our Annie's Place teachers have a minimum of a high school education or the equivalent. Some of them have bachelor's degrees; some have teacher certification and/or advanced degrees. Many of our teachers have associate degrees and/or multiple years of experience working with children. Our staff is well trained and prepared to care for and teach your children. All teachers are screened through both criminal background and reference checks prior to employment. New teachers must have 24 hours of pre-service training and all teachers must have 24 hours of training annually, which include policies and procedures for preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children. In addition to the 24 hours, all teachers receive CPR and first aid training. Annie's Place teachers are not required to get vaccinations, but we encourage them to follow their doctor's recommendations.

Criminal background checks

All volunteers and staff are required to undergo a criminal background check as required by state licensing.

PARKING AND BUILDING SECURITY

Parking

Annie's Place employees are the only persons allowed to park at the center. Parents will use the 2 designated spots in the front circle drive for drop off and pick up only. You are asked to park in the parking garages for your appointments. If you take a cab or rideshare, there is a shuttle located 50 yards from our front door that you make take to your appointment. **Never** leave a child unattended in a car in the parking lot. **Never** leave purses or other valuables in your car. Be observant of your surroundings and mindful of the safety of the children.

Security

The preschool is a secure area and only people who have authorized business in the area should have access. Secure hallway doors should be kept closed at all times. Please ring our buzzer and someone from the office will respond. The presence of any unauthorized person at the program will be reported immediately to the Parkland Police Department. Our center has security cameras in each room, hallways, and front/back entrances. These are used for safety and parents do not have access to footage.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Annie's Place adheres to the guidelines of HIPPA. It is contrary to the interest of the Annie's Place and those we serve to give out information regarding children and their families. Such information should be held in strict confidence and should not be discussed outside Annie's Place. Within Annie's Place, such information should be discussed only when it benefits the child/parents.

CURRICULUM

We view a child's growth and development as a process, not an event. Therefore, we use a well-thought-out curriculum which provides a range of activities designed to meet the developmental needs of each child. Since children learn best through hands-on activities, lessons are built

around play and experiential learning. Each unit in the curriculum includes age-appropriate activities for each learning center (art, blocks, books and listening, home-living, music, nature and science, and puzzles/manipulatives) that help develop the unit purpose. Activities are also suggested for indoor time, snack time, and rest time. Individual, small group and, for the older preschoolers, large-group suggestions are included in each unit. Teachers choose the activities and experiences that best meet the needs of their individual children and their class as a whole. While Annie's Place follows a curriculum, we will not be providing any assessments to track a child's progress or providing parent/teacher conferences unless requested by the parent or guardian. Please visit <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/texas-prekindergarten-guidelines> for more information about Texas Prekindergarten guidelines.

NAP TIME

Children of all ages that attend our licensed program will have a rest time included, as this is a requirement of our state licensing. Children do not have to sleep, but they must lie down quietly on their rest mat to start. Infants will each have their own crib. Older toddlers and up will nap on cots or have a choice to have a quiet place to rest. Children who attend our exempt program are provided an opportunity to rest if they choose to. Parents of infants 12 months old and younger will receive a copy of our **Safe Sleep Policy for Infants** to review and sign. This policy specifies items and practices that may be deemed unsafe for infants in this setting.

TEACHER - CHILD RATIOS

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Infants 0-11 months | 4 children with 1 teacher |
| 12-17 months | 5 children with 1 teacher |
| 18-23 months | 7 children with 1 teacher |
| 2 years | 8 children with 1 teacher |
| 3 years and up | 10 children with 1 teacher |

DISCIPLINE

We believe that discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child;
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding;
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Teachers use only positive methods of discipline that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include the following:

- Praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
- Reminding a child of behavioral expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Using brief, supervised separation or time out from the group appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following type of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed;
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long period of time for the child's age, including requiring a child to remain in a restrictive device.

WHAT TO BRING IF YOUR CHILD IS ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM

Infants/Toddlers: If your child is on a specific formula and prefers a certain type of bottle, please provide enough for the allotted time. We have freezers and refrigerators to store any breast milk if needed. Please **LABEL EVERYTHING**. Otherwise, we have formula and bottles available for use.

A private room for mothers who wish to breastfeed their child during the school day is available just outside the nutrition room. A foot stool and water are available upon request.

Annie's Place will provide diapers, wipes and a change of clothes if needed that day.

18 months and above:

Children are asked **not** to bring toys from home to reduce the chance that they get lost. Annie's Place will provide all food, diapers and supplies needed for the day. We suggest not bringing anything from home to reduce the chance of items getting lost.

Snacks and lunches

Annie's Place will provide up to 2 snacks and 1 meal, equal to ½ of their daily food needs. Depending on when and how long your child is in attendance that day, depends on what they are offered. We will not serve any food identified on a child's food allergy emergency plan in the classroom.

How to dress your child

Children are engaged in various activities during the day, some of which can be messy. Please make sure your child is dressed in comfortable, "it's okay to get dirty" clothing.

PARENTAL CONCERNS

Parents are welcome to discuss policies and procedures, including minimum standards and most recent licensing reports, with the Director either in the office or by phone at (214) 266-8066 during operating hours. You are also encouraged to discuss any concerns about your child as soon as those concerns arise. Parents may visit Annie's Place at any time during hours of

operation to observe their child, the center's operation and program activities, without securing prior approval. We require you go through the health screening check and follow the guidelines in place for a healthy and safe visit.

PLAY THERAPY

Annie's Place has a play therapy program on-site. As a member of the Annie's Place staff, our play therapist can be in the classrooms making observations, playing, and interacting with the children. Parents are always welcome to reach out to the staff about any questions about the program.

Sara Weeks, MS, NCC, LPC-Associate under the supervision of Dr. Terri Gonzales-Ball, LPC-S, RPT-S is a trained mental health counselor and play therapist. Sara is at Annie's place on Mondays and Fridays (8:30-4:30). Sara is available to observe any behaviors that may be trauma responses to parent's medical conditions or being in a new place with new people. If an incident should arise in which a child needs time to calm down away from other children for any reason (e.g. trouble separating from parent, aggression in the classroom, emotional volatility, sadness, etc.), she may help de-escalate situations in the classroom or bring your child to her specially designed play therapy room. Her goal is to help your child express their multitude of feelings they may be experiencing.

Additionally, Play Therapy services are available on a regularly scheduled basis. Play Therapy is an evidence based mental health intervention for children ages 3 to 12 years old. Specifically, Child Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) is the most researched mental health approach for children demonstrating benefits for a variety of presenting concerns, including but not limited to behavior problems, adjustments in the family, ADHD, anxiety, depression, trauma, divorce, and abuse. Sara offers appointments for children on Mondays and Fridays to help children consistently process their emotions surrounding the shifts within your family. If you have any emotional, behavioral, relational, or academic concerns for your child, **Mommies in Need provides Play Therapy free of charge**. There is some additional paperwork that you will need to fill out to schedule regular visits. Finally, if you are struggling with speaking with your child about your diagnosis, Sara can create a plan with you for how to approach this discussion and support you in talking to your child about your diagnosis.

To learn more about Play therapy or get your child involved, please contact Sara Weeks at (214)266-8065 or sweeks@mommiesinneed.org.

OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Annie's Place does not provide transportation or field trips.

No hot drinks are allowed in the classrooms at any time of the day.

Animals are not routinely present at Annie's Place. If an animal is brought to a class for a specific lesson, parents will be notified, and all steps will be taken to ensure safe and sanitary conditions.

Age-appropriate water play and activities will be supervised to ensure safety and sanitation.

Annie's Place does not provide insect repellent and sunscreen.

Child daycare operations are public accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title III. If you believe that such an operation may be practicing discrimination in violation of Title III, you may call the ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Annie's Place is a gang-free zone. Gang related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of Annie's Place is a violation of the State Penal Code and is therefore subject to increased penalty under Texas law-72.028 72.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

Annie's Place follows the safe sleep guidelines for infants 12 months old or younger as outlined in Subchapter H of the Minimum Standards (Basic Requirements for Infants) that address sleep requirements and restrictions, including sleep positioning, and crib requirements and restrictions, including mattresses, bedding, blankets, toys, and restrictive devices. Annie's Place keeps a Safe Sleep Form for each infant 12 months old or younger.

When children have been signed out of Annie's Place and therefore are no longer in the care of our teachers, parents are asked to monitor their child's behavior when they are on the property.

Annie's Place is not specially trained to install car seats. We will help you get in touch with a certified Child Passenger Safety technician.

PARENT POLICY AGREEMENT

Each parent must electronically sign on the Enrollment Form a statement indicating they have received a copy of our Parent Handbook, which includes this discipline and guidance policy.