

Dear Preschool Families,

Family involvement plays a *vital* role at Growing Tree Preschool. We feel there are great benefits to having parents (and others) involved in a child's education. We value and appreciate the partnerships we have with parents, grandparents, and others. We desire for these relationships to continue.

As of July 1, 2015, Pennsylvania state law requires volunteers who are responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children to obtain clearances in order to volunteer.

Because of the varied experiences and opportunities for volunteerism, we are asking **all potential regular volunteers (moms, dads, grandparents, caregivers)** to complete background checks to be submitted to the Growing Tree Preschool office, 126 Social Island Road, Chambersburg, PA 17202. You may also email a digital copy to growingtree@shalomca.com or gtpsecretary@shalomca.com.

There are three types of required background checks: PA Child Abuse History Certification, Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Report, and FBI Fingerprint Background Check. **The Child Abuse History and Criminal History are required for everyone who volunteers.** They are free for volunteers 1 time every 5 years. If a volunteer lives outside of Pennsylvania or has not lived in Pennsylvania for 10 consecutive years, they will also need to complete the FBI Fingerprint Background Check. The FBI Fingerprinting has a \$22.60 fee. If getting the required clearance places you under a financial strain, you may request reimbursement. Volunteers who do not need the FBI Fingerprinting will be required to sign a waiver indicating that they have lived in PA for 10 consecutive years and have not committed crimes elsewhere.

Instructions to access and complete the background checks are available at <http://shalomca.com/academics/growing-tree-preschool/> at the bottom of the page. These give internet addresses and instructions for completion. After receiving results for all of the required clearances, please submit the originals to the GTP office (along with the waiver form).

The state defines a volunteer as an adult holding an unpaid position as a volunteer with a child care service, a school or a program, activity or service responsible for the child's welfare or having direct contact with children. For the 2018-2019 school year, we will request clearances from our volunteers who are in the school on a regular basis and/or who have some responsibility for the welfare of students. Spectators at events such as the Race for Education and school programs would not need to have background checks completed.

If you have had background checks in the past, please feel free to submit the **originals** to us. We will make copies and return the originals (**we are required to see the originals**). Background checks will need to be obtained every five (5) years.

Thank you for investing in Growing Tree Preschool. Your contributions impact our program in positive ways. We recognize that obtaining background clearances is an inconvenience; however, we appreciate your time and efforts and continued involvement. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me: growingtree@shalomca.com or (717) 375-2223 x260.

Sincerely,
Lisa Eby, Director