

# **APPLE TREE CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS GUIDELINES**

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Apple Tree Christian Homeschoolers (Apple Tree) is a Christian homeschooling co-operative that desires to bring glory to God by providing activities, fellowship, and learning opportunities to enhance a family's homeschooling journey.

Apple Tree was created and designed for the benefit of school-aged children, 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Typically, we accept families and all their children if their oldest child is in at least 1<sup>st</sup> grade and the family has homeschooled for at least one year.

We accept families and their children into Apple Tree, not individual children. Some exceptions have been made in the past and each case will be reviewed and decided upon by the Board of Directors (BOD). Depending on the circumstances, we may choose to allow a high school child without a parent's participation. We cannot allow children into Apple Tree who are not part of our own families, unless the BOD has approved this arrangement. No child outside of your immediate family can participate without the approval of the BOD and the payment of the insurance fee.

## **CURRICULUM**

Apple Tree fills in some of the gaps in home schooling and can assist, enhance, or lighten your teaching role at home. We have a scope and sequence for 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades so that you can see what we cover through the years.

If you choose to plan your curriculum in conjunction with the Apple Tree Scope and Sequence, please ask your child's teacher for a copy of their lesson plans (these are generally planned at orientation and finalized by the first week we meet in September.)

Any movie or documentary beyond a "G" rating that a teacher wants to show in their classroom needs approval from all the parents of the students in that class before the movie is shown. We expect teachers to preview all material (even "G" rated movies/documentaries) before showing it to their students. Also, when an opportunity arises to bring in a speaker to enhance a unit you are teaching, please remember that whatever the speaker is sharing with students should not be in contradiction to our doctrinal statement or our guidelines.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors plans, coordinates, oversees, schedules, and together share the varied aspects and responsibilities of Apple Tree Christian Homeschoolers Inc. They also support committee coordinators in charge of special events. They are willing to be a listening ear to any member in need. If you have an idea, need, or concern you'd like to share with the Board, you are ALWAYS invited to communicate with them, and they will take it under advisement. Members are welcome to address the board in person at the beginning of a board meeting (held on the first Wednesday of the month) by first making a request to do so.

### **Financial Team**

Keeps complete financial records and is accountable to the Board of Directors. They write reimbursement checks on the week after obtaining receipts, pay Apple Tree bills, and keep the classroom accounts up to date. Apple Tree's budget records are available for your review in a binder located in the Parent Room.

### **Class Coordinator**

Each class has a Classroom Coordinator who will spend their day with their assigned class, delegate responsibility for recognizing students' birthdays, planning special activities (e.g., Valentine's Party), communicating any important information to Homeschool Life and/or students' parents, creating a class chore chart, etc. Classroom Coordinators are directly responsible to see that the discipline policy is carried out and to involve the student's parent if necessary. They oversee the scheduling of the units on the Scope & Sequence and are responsible for tracking classroom expenses and staying within their class budget. *Classroom Coordinators DO NOT do ALL the teaching or work, but instead the teaching teams share tasks as needed.* Classroom Coordinators and their teaching teams will NOT plan activities and field trips that will take their class away from P.E., Art, or Music, as those classes are an integral part of the total Apple Tree curriculum. If an extraordinary opportunity presents itself for a class, the Class Coordinator will present it to the Board of Directors and will also need to seek the approval of the P.E., Art, and Music teachers.

### **Committee Coordinator**

A Committee Coordinator is responsible for calling meetings for the members of their committee, reviewing tasks needing to be completed and delegating those tasks among the committee members. This person will also track committee expenses and stay within their committee's budget, order supplies if needed, and report any updates to the Committee's board member before the first Wednesday of each month so an update can be given at the board meeting.

## **FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Set-Up/Clean-Up Teams**

Each family will be assigned either a weekly set-up or weekly clean-up chore.

If your family is assigned a set-up chore, please arrive with enough time to complete your chore so that you can make it to the opening meeting at 9:00.

If your family has a clean-up chore, please remember that clean-up begins *after* the closing meeting.

If you are unable to attend Apple Tree for the day, it is your responsibility to contact your "chore back-up" family (as well as your assigned board member and classroom coordinator).

### **Arrival – Please arrive with your family by 8:45 a.m.**

Students should be supervised by you until opening is over.

### **Opening**

Opening begins PROMPTLY at 9 a.m. Everyone is expected to be on time and to be a part of opening each week. Parents are responsible for having all family members present in the sanctuary on time.

During the 15 minutes at opening we open in prayer, say The Pledge of Allegiance, sing worship, and make announcements.

Students Nursery through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will sit quietly with their parents.

High school students may choose to sit together quietly and in a respectful manner.

### **Closing**

Classroom cleanup should include the following:

Wipe down tables with cleaning items provided.

Clean off dry erase boards and chalkboards

Vacuum/sweep floors

Properly dispose of classroom garbage and place a new bag in the can.

Return classroom supply boxes to their proper place.

Any other duties specific to your classroom as assigned by your Classroom Coordinator

Teachers should take students to the sanctuary so we can BEGIN closing promptly at 1:45.

Please sit with your class during closing. After announcements we will close in prayer.

Students should bring their backpacks and any personal belongings with them to closing.

ALL parents and ALL students must be at closing.

Chores start AFTER closing, not before.

### **Special Events**

Each family is expected to participate in and attend all the special events including the special fall fairs, Christmas Program, Spring Program, and the High School play. Seventh through twelfth graders are required to attend their classmates' Graduation. Field trips that happen outside of normal Apple Tree hours are optional.

Seventh through twelfth grade students are required to participate in their class plays.

### **Use of the Facility**

Report any problems with your classroom, bathrooms, or the building as soon as discovered to the building liaison.

We praise God for providing a place where we can meet! We want to honor God by treating this building with respect and leave it in better-than-we-found-it condition.

Children should never go in the offices or be in the office area.

Please be quiet in the hallways. There are people working inside this building, and we want to be respectful of their work environment.

Students are not allowed to chew gum.

No sitting on the tables.

### **Dress Code** (Romans 13:14, 1 Sam, 16:7, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Galatians 5:13, Matthew 5:16)

Both students and parents are expected to dress modestly, clean and God-honoring. This applies to Apple Tree Wednesdays and all its sponsored events/field trips.

Tops should not be tight, clingy, low-cut, or revealing in any way, and should completely cover the torso (no bare midriffs or chest/cleavage showing.) Tops with spaghetti straps should be worn under another shirt or sweater.

Beginning with 5th/6th grade and up through to the adults, tights, leggings, jeggings, and yoga pants must be worn with a top that completely covers the back-end. Any rips or slits in pants

must be below fingertip length. *To clarify, this means ONLY nursery through 4th graders may dress in tights, leggings, jeggings, or yoga pants without a shirt covering their back end.*

No undergarments showing (boxers, briefs, bras, etc.)

Dresses and skirts should be at least knee-length, and shorts should be at least mid-thigh.

Please dress according to the activities of the day, including going outside for P.E. and appropriate shoes for P.E. Any student not wearing appropriate shoes may be asked to sit out.

For special programs, unless instructed by their music teachers to do otherwise, boys should wear collared shirts and dress pants. Girls should wear skirts/dresses that are at least knee-length or dress pants and blouses.

It is required that your appearance reflects the gender that God assigned you at birth.

We ask that all members refrain from wearing articles of clothing that promote ungodly behaviors, lifestyles, agendas, etc.

If you are uncertain whether an article of clothing is appropriate, please err on the side of modesty.

## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Orange Binder**

The Orange Binder is located in the parent room. In it you will find a copy of our guidelines, scope & sequence, calendar, and other general information about Apple Tree. Please be sure to check it regularly. You can also find the classroom teaching schedules in the binder.

### **Teaching Assignment**

Each teaching parent will be assigned to a teaching team. If, after a few weeks, you feel you have been placed in a responsibility that you really are not suited for, please talk to a Board Member.

### **Nursery**

During lunch, parents are to go to the nursery to feed their own children.

Whenever possible, change your own child's diaper. The parents working in the nursery will come to get you when needed.

If you must leave the premises for more than 30 minutes, you must take your nursery-aged child(ren) with you.

### **Attendance**

If you cannot make it to Apple Tree due to illness, make all efforts to contact your assigned Board Member, Classroom Coordinator and your Chore Back-Up Family by 8:00 a.m. to let them know you will be absent.

Please do not schedule non-emergency appointments of any kind for Wednesdays.

Each day that Apple Tree is in session you are expected to be there for the entire day.

When planning any family vacations, please do your best to not miss any regular Apple Tree days or important Apple Tree events.

### **Early Departures/Late Arrivals**

Apple Tree understands and encourages our families to make decisions that are best for their students. In high school, this often means taking college-level courses or participating on some level in the public school system. This often necessitates an early departure or late arrival by either students and/or parents. If you find this will be the case with your family, please notify a Board Member as soon as you're able regarding your situation so that it can be evaluated. We prefer that parents remain at Apple Tree for the entire day even if their high school student needs to leave. However, each family will be granted permission for early departure/late arrival on an individual basis, based on their needs, *as well as those of Apple Tree*.

### **Contagious Illness**

In the event a family member who attends Apple Tree becomes sick with a contagious illness (e.g., strep throat, lice, confirmed case of flu, etc.), please notify the Apple Tree Coordinator as soon as possible. A notice will then be sent out to anyone that might be affected, such as classmates and teachers, so they can be aware of and be looking for symptoms in their own family, as well as pray for you! Your name will be kept anonymous in this notification. Please keep your family home from Apple Tree while infected with any contagious illness, which may include fever, severe cough, or yellow or green mucus. In the event of lice, please make sure that it is completely out of your household before returning to Apple Tree to prevent further spreading among our group.

### **Lunch/Food/Snacks**

Students may not leave the premises for lunch. This includes high school students. Please pack a separate cold lunch, snack, drink, and water bottle for each of your children. Please put your child's name on their lunch box. Due to food allergies, the sharing of lunches is discouraged. Parents with nursery children must go feed them at lunchtime. No microwave is available for student lunches. Students are not allowed in the kitchen without their parent.

### **Photocopies**

We might have a photocopier for our use. If not, making photocopies for your teaching units is your responsibility. Please try to plan a week ahead. No personal copying. If you expect reimbursement for outside copying, board approval is required before copies are made. In addition, a receipt must be submitted, and the original Board member who approved your outside copies must sign the reimbursement request.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Phone Usage**

While cell phone usage is not encouraged at Apple Tree, cell phones and other electronic devices may be used only after the permission of classroom teachers during approved times.

### **Recess**

Stay in the designated area(s) during recess

Do not climb the trees or fences on the property.  
Do your very best to include everyone in the class.  
No skateboards, longboards, scooters, etc, during Apple Tree.

### **Personal Behavior**

Be kind, obedient, and respectful of others.  
Children are expected to participate and stay with their classes at all times.  
To be excused from P.E. a parent must speak to the PE teacher. If your child needs to sit out during P.E., they need to sit on the sidelines in the gym or go stay with their parent during their designated P.E. time.  
All language should be God-honoring and encouraging.  
Consider it a privilege to be part of Apple Tree; respectfully do what is asked of you.  
No toys should be brought out during class time except during show & tell.  
No inappropriate behavior like wrestling, headlocks, pants pulling, bra-snapping, etc.  
Absolutely no physical fighting or bullying.

Students are not allowed to bring the following items to Apple Tree or any of its outside events or field trips: Pocket knives or weapons of any kind, matches, explosives, lighters, fireworks, etc. The use of tobacco, illegal drugs, marijuana, or alcohol at any time is strictly prohibited. It is our hope that students have been taught and understand the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and illegal drug usage. We make every effort for Apple Tree to be a place that is safe for families. Therefore, if an Apple Tree student is found to be using any of the above, he or she will be suspended from participation in our group and its events and will be considered for readmittance only after meeting before the Board of Directors with their parents.

### **Romantic Relationships**

We are striving to raise our young men and women to be pure in heart and mind. While at Apple Tree or at any of its sponsored functions or field trips, we do not allow lap sitting, hand-holding, kissing, etc., whether both students are involved in Apple Tree or not.  
Sometimes what is inappropriate is hard to distinguish for our students. Therefore, parents, please consider it to be your responsibility to talk with any students (and their parents, if necessary) if unacceptable behavior is noticed.  
At Apple Tree, we encourage friendships that are not exclusionary. We also realize that this is an excellent place for our teens to interact and fellowship with the opposite sex. With this in mind, we encourage friendships without romance.  
Let's work together at Apple Tree to provide a Godly example for social development as we help our children to "treat younger men (boys) as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women (girls) as sisters with absolute purity" (1 Timothy 5:1b-2)  
Flirtatious behavior toward the same sex will not be tolerated.

### **VISITORS**

Prospective families who are interested in joining Apple Tree are encouraged to visit. Visits are "by appointment only" beginning in January and continuing through April.  
Apple Tree alumni are welcome to visit the high school class *during their lunchtime only*.  
Non-Apple Tree kids are not allowed to visit without prior permission from the BOD.

## **USAGE OF FAMILIES' HOME ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS, AND EMAIL ADDRESSES**

The use of an Apple Tree family's address, phone numbers or email for purposes other than a.) Apple Tree business; or b.) prayer requests, is not allowed.

Homeschooling information (e.g., legislation, book sales, seminars, conferences, sports programs, etc.) can be posted to our facebook page, Homeschool Life website or by leaving information in the parent room. Please remember to pick it up at the end of the day.

If you would like to ask members if they'd like to receive information for something that may be of interest to them (e.g., fundraising events, a speaker your church is hosting, an item for sale, etc.), you may do so by leaving information in the parent room, but please remember to pick it up at the end of the day. Interested families can then request further information by contacting you. If you are in doubt about whether to send information out, first contact a Board Member.

## **DISCIPLINARY MATTERS**

Refer to the separate discipline policy.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

### **Apple Tree's Policy on Biblical Conflict Resolution**

We encourage our members to try to resolve conflict and offenses as quickly as possible. Please do not let bitterness, anger, or hurt take root in your heart and mind. We must refrain from criticism, grumbling and complaining, and gossip. These are Satan's way of taking glory from God. Instead, let us honor and glorify God by "keeping our tongues from evil and our lips from speaking lies" (Ps. 34:13) and allowing "our speech to be always filled with grace" (Col. 4:6.)

In any group there will be disagreements; there is no expectation that Apple Tree will be free from disagreements. However, it is God's desire for there to be continued Christian fellowship with all persons in this group. As it states in God's Word: "All this is from God who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18.) In conflict, our goal is reconciliation.

Therefore, conflict resolution within Apple Tree will be handled to the best of our ability in accordance with Matt. 18:15-17. This means that, should a point of conflict arise within our organization between two persons or the Board of Directors acting on behalf of the group, they should first "go and show him his fault in private" (Matt. 18:15), and they should do so in love. If the conflict is not resolved by this action, the interested party should privately approach a member of the BOD, and they will assist in fulfilling the mandate of verse 16: "If he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every fact may be confirmed."

Since Apple Tree is an organization and not a church, we feel we cannot completely fulfill verse 17. However, if the conflict is still not resolved by the above steps, or if the member(s) refuses to meet to discuss and resolve the issue(s), the Apple Tree BOD reserves the right, on behalf of the group, to suspend the entire offending family(s) from participation at Apple Tree and its events.

