

# Together Growing in Faith Homeschool Co-operative (TGIF)

## Information Packet

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## Mission and General Information

Together Growing in Faith Homeschool Co-operative (TGIF) is a Christ-centered inclusive co-operative available to home schooling families of all Christian denominations.

The purpose of this co-operative is:

- To provide unique, student-centered, activity-based learning opportunities which require group interaction,
- To foster positive Godly relationships among members and provide a support network for moms and dads
- To provide a convenient, efficient forum for sharing parent/student skills, expertise, and resources, and
- To offer programs of excellent quality, using instructors with expertise and experience in specialized fields.

We offer:

- Field Trips
- Special Events
- Support Meetings for Parents
- Specials Day Enrichment Classes
- High School Tutorial Classes for Credit

Course offerings vary from semester to semester and year to year, but have included:

Younger Children Mixed Ages Older Children High School

Spanish Art Debate and Life Skills Drama Production Crafts Chess and Games English Science PE History Government Literature History Ultimate Frisbee History Preschool Science Math Baking and Decorating Music Drama Lego Robotics improve Sports Cooking classes Chorale Science

**For membership information about Together Growing in Faith Homeschool Co-operative (TGIF), visit our website at [www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif](http://www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif) or email [tgifhomeschoolmdreg@gmail.com](mailto:tgifhomeschoolmdreg@gmail.com)**

# **TGIF Program Description**

## **Group Leadership**

The governing body of TGIF is the Board of Representatives with each representative leading a component of our organization. Board representatives meet regularly throughout the year to plan and make decisions on behalf of the group. Members at large are welcome to attend the new business portion of the board meetings or to give input to board members for consideration.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are usually scheduled twice a month throughout the school year. Generally, one trip each month is for younger children and one is for older children.

TGIF sponsored field trips are for TGIF members only.

## **Special Events and Activities**

Special Events and activities are held throughout the year. Each year we offer several exciting opportunities to enrich your educational program. These may include:

Talent Show  
Field Day  
Curriculum Fair  
Theaterworks and BSO Tickets  
Christmas Craft Day  
TGIF Dance  
High School Council

## **Specials Day**

Enrichment classes meet on Fridays. Our program runs for two 10-week semesters and is open to home schooling families who are members of TGIF.

## **High School Tutorial**

High School Tutorial classes are for thirty-two weeks on Fridays during the school year and can be used for high school credit. High School Tutorial families must be members of TGIF but do not have to attend Specials Day. New families who have a student enrolling in highschool classes will remain in their current wait list position for Specials day classes.

## **TGIF Website**

[www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif](http://www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif)

## **TGIF E-mail for Membership Information**

[tgifhomeschoolmdreg@gmail.com](mailto:tgifhomeschoolmdreg@gmail.com)

## **TGIF Membership Requirements**

### **TGIF Family Enrollment**

All families complete a yearly enrollment form online. Re-enrollment for current members ends the first week of June each year. New member enrollments begin in mid-June and will be accepted while spaces still remain in the group. Enrollment closes at the end of June.

### **Additional Paperwork**

#### Background Clearance

We require all TGIF members and teachers to complete a criminal background check. TGIF can give you information on how to complete this clearance through SentryLink. The cost is approximately \$20 and is payable by the member. Any adult that will be teaching or volunteering must pass the background check before attending classes. This is for the protection of our children and Kirkridge ARP Church also requires that all non student adult members have completed background checks.

#### Emergency Forms

TGIF requires a signed Emergency Form for each minor child in the family whether or not they attend specials. Emergency information will be completed when you enroll on our website. The forms are printed and must be signed by the parent or responsible adult.

#### Hold Harmless Agreement

A Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement must be completed and signed by each member family. This form will be required annually and will be kept on file.

#### Statement of Faith

A Signed Statement of Faith (or agreement not to contradict our Statement of Faith) must be signed by each member family. This form will be required upon initial enrollment and will be kept on file.

### **Membership Fee**

The membership fee to join TGIF is determined each year and is due at the time enrollment. There is a \$5 late fee if the payment is not received five days after the due date.

### **Service to the Group and Member Job**

All TGIF members are required to serve the group in at least one of the positions listed on the website under Member Duties. *Specials Day parents have additional duties related to their involvement in that cooperative.* TGIF High School Tutorial families who will only be taking tutorial classes will not have a member job but they are encouraged to help plan a high school event during the year. TGIF high school parents are required to aid in study hall during the non-special day Fridays.

If a member fails to complete a member job, the family will be reverted to new member status and will not be able to register for Specials Day classes until new families register.

# **Specials Day and High School Tutorial General Information**

## **Teachers**

Homeschooling parents are the primary teachers of their children. TGIF's Specials Day Program is designed as a learning cooperative for families with children of all ages. The High School Tutorial has children ranging from upper middle school through high school. Some teachers are hired from the community while others are TGIF parents.

## **Location**

Kirkridge ARP Church 2236 Old Fort Schoolhouse RD, Manchester, MD 21102

## **Calendar**

Specials Day consists of two 10-week semesters in which a variety of classes will be offered on Fridays for children in Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The calendar for Specials Day is divided into a fall and a spring semester.

The TGIF High School Tutorial meets for thirty-two weeks on Fridays throughout the year. Please view the current calendar on our website at [www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif](http://www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif).

## **Catalog of Courses, Registration, and Fees**

The catalog for Specials Day with descriptions of classes, costs, and teacher biographies will be posted on the website usually three weeks before classes begin. Registrations for classes will be accepted online according to the schedule posted on the calendar. The fees for each class are listed in the catalog. Each family registered for Specials Day will pay a registration fee to cover facility expenses. Registration fees are non-refundable. Due dates for registration and class fees will be listed on the confirmation registration email. Information on where to send payments will also be indicated on the confirmation email. Unless you are a teacher all children must be registered for classes while your family is at TGIF. If you are a teacher you must have any child not registered for a class with you while at TGIF

The High School Tutorial Catalog of Classes will be posted on the website in April each year. Registrations for classes will be accepted online when the catalog becomes available. The fees for the classes are listed in the catalog. Each family registered for the High School Tutorial will pay a registration fee to cover the facility expenses. This is in addition to the Specials Day registration fee if your family is participating in both programs. June 15th is the very last day to drop classes without monetary penalties.

## **Cancellations of Classes**

Specials Day classes may be canceled if the class minimums are not met. Families will be contacted so they can choose another class during that time period.

For the High School Tutorial, if the minimum class size is not met, the class may be canceled or a higher class fee may be suggested to interested families.

Class cancellations due to unusual circumstances (bad weather, large funerals at the church, etc.) will be avoided whenever possible but may occasionally happen. In such instances, there will generally be no make-up classes and no refunds. High School Tutorial students will likely receive make-up instructions from their teachers.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Parent Obligations**

One of the fundamental principles of home education is the primary role of parental authority for the education and welfare of their children. Parents are responsible to comply with the Maryland home school law, to oversee the student's work and behavior, to ensure the safety of their children, to make payments on time, to be informed, to volunteer their time for the benefit of the group, and to model Godly behavior. TGIF events and classes are designed as cooperative efforts, to provide low-cost, efficient, quality programs for families who educate their children at home. The benefits of this program are derived from **mutual cooperation**; parents who do not fulfill their obligation for service will not be permitted to participate in TGIF activities.

Parents are expected to show respect to the teachers. If there is a conflict between a teacher and a member, the teacher or member with the complaint will notify the board. The board will then take steps to rectify the situation according to Article VII of the bylaws – Conflict Resolution.

### **Member Behavior Expectations and Responsibilities for Both Programs •**

Act in a well-behaved and respectful manner toward all adults, instructors, and peers. • \*

Come to class prepared.

- Complete assignments on time.
- Take care of church property and equipment.
- Dress neatly and modestly (see detailed dress code below).
- Follow our Public Displays of Affection Policy (see detailed PDA policy below) •

Limit cell phone use to between classes or lunch.

## **Member Dress Code**

- Clothing will be neat, clean, and modest.
- Shorts, skorts, skirts, ripped jeans and dresses must cover the body to mid-thigh.
- No exposed midriffs and no spaghetti strap shirts, halter tops, or bare-back shirts. Straps of sleeveless shirts must be 3 finger widths.
- No Heelys or cleats inside the buildings.
- No underwear should be visible at any time.
- No inappropriate or suggestive wording on clothing.

## **Consequences for Dress Code Noncompliance**

- An email reminder of the dress code will be sent at the beginning of the semester. • First offense: Verbal warning and change clothes or go home. Parent and Child are notified by two board members.
- Second offense: Suspension of the family.
- Third offense: Removal of the family from TGIF without refund.

## **High School Tutorial Student Expectations**

- Students are expected to spend time daily studying and completing homework and/or tests at home.
- Students are expected to complete assignments thoroughly and on time. If a class is missed, it is the student's responsibility to obtain the missed material.
- Students are expected to be on time for class.
- Students are expected to be respectful of teachers, students, other adults, and those working in the building.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves as mature, well-behaved, well-mannered, Godly young adults.
- Students are expected to be familiar with the current membership policies and bylaws.
- All biographies, speeches, and songs for Graduation will be subject to approval by the TGIF board.
- All emails between teachers to students and students to teacher must include the parent.

## **Public Displays of Affection (PDA)**

- No kissing.
- No holding or hugging from behind.
- No sitting on each other's laps.
- Handholding and brief hugs are acceptable between classes only.



## **Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior**

Consequences are intended to maintain a positive and safe environment for everyone and to provide a training period for children who are willing to learn appropriate social skills. Disrespectful, demeaning, or hostile behavior will not be tolerated. Class time is too precious for any instructor to deal continually with repeated class disruption. We will follow a Biblical example of correction, training, and development. When a situation occurs the teacher will work with student and parent to rectify the issue. If problems continue any in the party may contact the board. The board will then implement the following guidelines. If the problem continues the parent will be contacted. These guidelines will be implemented by the board members when a situation arises:

- First Offense – the child will be placed on probation. To continue in class, the parent must attend class with the child. The parent will model appropriate behavior and provide training for the child until the teacher is satisfied with the behavior improvements. Parents are responsible for finding a substitute for their assigned volunteer duties if necessary.
- Second Offense – the child will be given a one week suspension. Further training requires removal from class. To return to the classroom, a student must demonstrate a willing attitude to improve their behavior.
- Third Offense – the child will be removed permanently from the class. Refunds will not be given for behavior problems. A child may return to classes in another semester when behavior has improved.

\*Depending upon the severity of the infraction the board may implement any level of consequences at anytime.

## **Schedule Changes**

Changes to the Specials Day schedule will only be accepted one week before classes begin. In special cases, you may contact the Specials Day Representative.

## **Refund Policy**

Refunds will be granted in full one week before classes begin. Once classes start, no refunds are given for dropped classes. If a class is canceled, you will be notified by the Specials Day Representative and have the opportunity to sign up for another class. Class fees will be adjusted.

No refunds are given if your child wants to switch to a new class after Specials has started. Contact the Specials Day Representatives to let them know your child would like to change classes. The Specials Day Representative will contact the teacher and will let you know if it is possible to attend a different class. You may have to pay the teacher directly when your child attends the new class for the first time.

For the High School Tutorial, if a class is dropped before July 1st, a 100% refund of class fees will be made. (Note: Enrollment and lab fees are nonrefundable.) After July 1st, however, no refunds will be given for dropped classes.

If you have financial concerns reach out to Terry Delph email [terrytrio2@aol.com](mailto:terrytrio2@aol.com) phone 410-259-5687

## **Safety Precautions**

The following procedures are intended to assist parents in the monitoring of their children and to provide a pleasant working environment for everyone.

- Children who are not scheduled to participate in a class may not be left unattended. Children not attending class or a scheduled lunch break must have parent supervision. High school students are encouraged to help during their free period as a teacher's aide. High school students are not allowed to sit in vehicles without a parent.
- Running and rough playing are not permitted in the classrooms, hallways, or Fellowship Hall. Only quiet activities are allowed.
- No child under the age of 11 is to be unattended throughout the day.
  - If your child (of any age) has a free period, they must be under the supervision of their parent.

## **Church Facility**

The use of the church facility is a privilege. Specials Day is not a church-sponsored activity. All program business shall be communicated only through TGIF board members. If you are in need of something

during the day of Specials, please find a board member to help and they will contact the Kirkridge ARP staff if needed. Please remember that we are guests in the facility and that we should conduct ourselves accordingly. Disrespectful and destructive behavior will not be tolerated.

## **Food and Drinks**

Food and drink may be consumed outside but please limit food and drinks to the Fellowship Hall or Room 9 during lunch hours. A 25-minute lunch break is scheduled every week. Pizza lunch can be purchased or members may bring a bag lunch.

Classes that are serving snacks as part of the curriculum should make sure to clean up any spills, etc. in the classroom before the end of the class period. If trash cans are overflowing, please remove the trash bag and set it beside the trash can. Place a new bag in the trash can. The trash bags can be found in the supply closet.

## **Visitor Policy**

Please contact a board member if you would like to bring a visitor to Specials. Visitors will be required to sign in and wear a name tag for the day. If the nonmember is a minor a parent or guardian will need to complete our Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement and Emergency Forms for their children if the parent is not in attendance. Non-TGIF children must be accompanied at all times by the TGIF member who is assuming responsibility for them for the day. Adults visiting for the purpose of learning about the group should try to attend a tour when offered.

## **Specials Day Teacher's Policy**

First time members or non-members who would like to be considered as teachers should contact our Specials Day Representative for more information. Proposals for Specials Day classes may be submitted to the Specials Day Representative twice a year, usually in June/July and December/January. Proposals for High School Tutorial Classes will be accepted by our High School Tutorial Representative usually beginning in March.

## **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures**

1. Enter through the front door of the building and sign in.
2. Parents should check the information table throughout the day.
3. Once signed in, parents should escort their children to their first class.
4. Children in consecutive classes will be escorted to their next class by the teacher's aide.
5. Parents should pick up their children at the classroom at the end of their final class.
6. Parents will sign children out at the end of their last class.

## **Teaching and Aiding by Students:**

High school students who have attended Specials Day for at least one year may request to teach classes. The first time a high schooler teaches, the student's parent must serve as the classroom aide or the student and parent must arrange in advance with another parent who knows the high school teacher for that parent to aide. All subsequent classes taught by high school students will also have a TGIF parent as an aide.

Middle School students who would like to teach a class may offer a class with their parent listed as the teacher; the parent will serve as the official teacher and the middle schooler may assist. In addition, the class will require another TGIF parent to serve as an aide.

High school students who have attended Specials Day classes may request to serve as aides.

## **Personal Belongings**

Coats, lunches, backpacks, etc. should be kept with the student throughout the day. Please do not bring valuables and only bring books and materials that are needed for class. Items left behind at the end of the day will be placed in our lost and found box and stored in our supply cabinet. If they are not claimed in two weeks, they will be donated to charity.

## **Cancellations Due to Bad Weather**

If Carroll County Schools are two hours late, Specials Day will most likely begin on time. Please check your email for updates.

If Carroll County Schools are closed due to weather, classes are canceled.

If Carroll County Schools close early due to weather, afternoon classes will be canceled.

## **Staying in Touch**

Information is provided for all families in various ways. It is your responsibility to read the information made available and to keep informed. Please check your email regularly and visit our website at [www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif](http://www.homeschool-life.com/md/tgif). Also, read the notices on the information table in Room 108 at Specials Day and attend any member meetings that may be scheduled during the year. Email is our most used form of communication so please get in the habit of checking it regularly. When planning field trips please have interested members respond directly to you not through the website forum.

# **TGIF Security Procedures for Keeping Our Children Safe**

## **Communications**

All TGIF communication between TGIF teachers and parents with students must include the student's parent. This includes email, text messaging, and any other communication.

## **Parent Responsibility**

Please make sure to sign your children in when you arrive and to cross their name off the sign in sheet when you leave for the day. If your children do not have a class at a given hour, they must remain with you or another responsible adult. Teen children also must be supervised by a parent when they are not in class. Teen children must be in assigned classes or have communicated with parents and board member their location and activities.

## **Aide Responsibility**

- Class folders will be in assigned classrooms. Please take attendance. If there are any children absent, compare that with the sign in sheet. If a student is signed in but is not in class, start proceedings to locate the child.
  - Check the child's schedule in the Information Binder in Room 108. Go to the last class to see if the child is still there.
  - Find a board member or another member to help you locate the child by searching bathrooms, etc.
  - If the child cannot be located, go to the Emergency Forms Binder and contact the parent.

Please help the teacher as needed, be active, refrain from being on your phone during class and help the students and teacher clean up after class.

- Escort students in grades pre-K to age ten from class to class or to the bathroom.
- Lunch aides will be given a detailed explanation of lunchroom procedures before aiding at lunch for the semester.
- Aides for classes immediately after lunch (12:30pm) should meet their class in the fellowship hall and escort the students from the lunch room to their classroom. This is for any classes with children ages three to ten years old.

## **Substitutes**

If you are not in an emergency situation, please find your own aide substitute. Substitutes must be other TGIF members or your spouse (who has had a background clearance). Find a substitute by asking the parents of students in the class or by sending an email request to the group. Once you have found a substitute, please let the Member and Aide Duty Representative know who will be taking your place. If it is a last minute emergency or you cannot find a substitute, please let the Member and Aide Duty Representative know.

## **Special Needs and First Aid**

Since we are a non-profit homeschool co-operative run by parents, we do not have any special accommodations for Special Needs Students. Although most of our teachers are not trained in how to handle special needs, we do encourage you to speak to your child's teachers to inform them of any issues they need to be aware of. Teachers are not required to make special accommodations but we are happy to help your child have the best experience they can at Specials Day. An open line of communication is very important between the parent, teacher, and Specials Day Representative.

We do require parents of Special Needs children and parents of children with severe allergies to stay on the premises in case any issues would arise. If you have a child that you must accompany to classes, please let the Member and Aide Duty Representative know and she will try to work with you for aiding purposes.

There is a first aid kit located in the lobby for minor ailments. For major emergencies, call 911.

## **Emergency Evacuation of the Building**

During an emergency evacuation, teacher's aides should take the class folder, line the students up at the door, remain at the front of the line, and escort the children out the nearest exit to the open field or parking lot. Teachers will follow the last child out of the room, turn off the light, and close the door. Once in the field and parking lot, aides should take attendance again.

Any board member or adult member in the lobby should pick up the attendance sheets, Emergency Forms Binder, and Specials Day Information Binder and proceed to the field.

Parents who do not have other responsibilities are asked to assist with the children in the nursery if possible.

We try to have a fire drill (emergency evacuation drill) at least once every semester.

## **Lunch Room Policies**

- Children will be escorted by the aides to the lunch room. All children ages eleven and up may proceed to the lunchroom on their own.
- Children and parents should clean up after themselves by throwing away all trash and putting away their chairs. Older teens are asked to help put away the lunch tables.
- Children aged three to ten should line up by their class sign at 12:25pm to be escorted by the classroom aide. Children aged eleven and up may proceed to their class at the 12:55pm dismissal.
- Children aged ten and younger and families will eat in the Fellowship Hall.
- Children aged 11 and up may go to Room 9 for lunch. It is not required so if your child would like to go to the Fellowship Hall, that is fine also.
- No family or child should eat in any of the classrooms unless they speak to a board member first.
- No pic-nicking in the halls. During nice weather, children are allowed to go outside to eat but should be close to the building so the aide can see them.

Parents of children ages 10 and under need to have their children in sight during lunch or they must have an agreement with another adult to supervise their children. All children 10 and under must be accompanied to the restroom by an adult during lunch.