



Before and after school childcare with curriculum emphasizing the arts, enrichment, and fun!



PARENT HANDBOOK

Academic School Year & Summer



The Kids Community

How to Register:

Register on our Parent Portal on EzChildTrack Website

<https://www.ezchildtrack.com/Parent3/ParentLogin.aspx?c=tkc284>

Annual non-refundable registration fee \$50 per child

Tuition payments are automatically drafted weekly

A 100% payment is due during school vacation weeks, you may register for full day care during this time at an additional fee.

From Child's Physician:

- Documentation of physical examination and immunizations/ sign off that it is on file at your child's school (Cutler, Buker or Winthrop)

Additional paperwork:

- See Welcome Google Doc
- Transportation Plan Form
- Medication Consent Form
- Walking field trip permission forms
- Sunscreen permission form
- Individual Health Care Plans/Medication/Epi Pen/Allergy Protocols
- Copy of IEP
- Medication Consent Form
- Custody Agreement Paperwork



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Welcome

Welcome to The Kids Community program. We look forward to getting to know you and your child (ren); and know you will enjoy the program. This handbook was developed as a reference for you to learn about our policies and procedures and to refer to periodically/as needed.

Mission

The Kids Community, sponsored by The Community House, offers safe and fun childcare options for students from kindergarten through 5th grade. Students will be engaged in a fun, hands-on learning environment where activities in the arts, science, technology, and recreation are offered. Programs offered throughout the year include baking, martial arts, lego club, crafts, sewing, knitting, music and theater arts.

Core Beliefs

The Kids Community School program provides a safe place to learn and play, learning opportunities that meet the unique needs of each student, critical and creative thinking opportunities, and positive interactions among staff, volunteers, and children.

Program Philosophy

The Kids Community fosters a safe, creative, and fun enrichment experience while promoting respect, teamwork, and volunteerism.

Hours of Operation

Monday- Friday (school year)

Before School 6:45am-8:30am

After School 2:57pm-6:00pm

District Early Release Days at 11:15pm-6:00pm

Full day programs, see schedule 8:30am-5:30pm

Full Day Summer Programs

Monday- Friday 8:30am-5:30pm (see summer schedule)

Patton Park and Stage284 After Camp

Monday-Friday (summer) 3:30pm- 5:30pm

Licensing Authority

The Kids Community Program is licensed under the Department of Early Education and Care.

Department of Early Education and Care

360 Merrimack Street, Bldg., 3rd Floor Lawrence, MA 01843

978-681-9684

Staff

The Director, Teachers and Assistant Teachers staff the before & after school program. All staff must pass a Fingerprint/CORI/SORI/DCF background check and have an orientation with the director of the center before working in direct contact with children. The adult to child ratio is 1:13.

Volunteers

Volunteers must pass a Fingerprint/CORI/SORI/DCF background check and have an orientation with the director of the center before working in direct contact with children. Each volunteer will be trained and supervised by a certified teacher within the classroom they are working. Documentation of the days, hours and responsibilities of volunteers will be kept in a binder in the Directors office.

Parent Involvement

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit the program at any time. While there is no set schedule for conferences, a parent/guardian may request one at any time. Pick-up time provides a convenient opportunity for parents/guardians and teachers to exchange information. Parents are encouraged to share relevant concerns with the Teacher and/or Director.

Child's Records

Information contained in a child's record shall be privileged and confidential. The staff will not release any information in a child's record to anyone who does not directly care for the said child without the written consent of the child's parents/guardians. Parents/guardians have the right to add or delete any information, comments, data, or any other relevant information to the child's record.



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Referral Services

The teacher working closest with a child will observe each child if there is an indication that a referral is needed. Any concern about speech, language, hearing, vision, physical, cognitive, social or emotional development will be documented and presented to the Inclusion Specialist and the director. If, after reviewing the documentation and observing the child, the director feels the child is in need of an evaluation or additional services, a conference will be set up with the parents/guardians to discuss the observations, recommend a plan of action or make a referral. A written statement will be given to the parents/guardians with a recommendation for services and a summary of observations. The statement will also include efforts of The Kids Community program to accommodate the child's needs. Before a referral is made, written parental consent will be required. An updated list of community resources is available for the parents/guardians and the staff to use. This list will also be included in the Health Care Policy. If the referral agency determines that the child is not in need of services, we will review the child's progress every three months to determine if another referral is needed. All conferences and referrals will be documented in the child's file.

Child Guidance

Classroom management will focus on protecting the children and setting ground rules that will strengthen their self-worth, development, and relationships. Where appropriate, children shall participate in the establishment of such rules, policies, and procedures. For children unable to participate in defining rules, policies and procedures, the staff will be sure to discipline based on the individual needs and development of each individual child, offering choices and providing children an opportunity to verbalize their feelings. Said rules will be reviewed with the children daily in positive and simple terms. Staff will be sure the children have a clear understanding of why such behavior is not acceptable. In the event of a child trying to hurt him/herself, the staff will remove that child from the situation immediately, to a part of the room unoccupied by other children. Consistent problem behavior will be brought to the parent/guardian's attention, as well as the directors. Hopefully with consistency both at home and the after-school program, the situation will be resolved.

The Kids Community program prohibits

- corporal punishment
- confining a child (restraint)
- excessive time-outs
- subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment
- depriving children of meals and snacks or force-feeding children
- disciplining a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing, forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting



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Food

Please provide snack and water. If your child is attending during lunch time, please provide a lunch. The program is Nut and Peanut free. All other allergies will be posted.

Child Abuse and Neglect Statement

The staff at The Kids Community Program, as mandated reporters, will report any in-center, or outside the center, suspicions of abuse or neglect. These procedures will include but are not limited to:

1. All Staff are mandated reporters and shall report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Director or the Department of Children and Families, pursuant of M.G.L.c. 119, 51A. 2. The Director will immediately report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families. 3. The Director shall notify the Department of Early Education and Care immediately after filing a 51A report or learning that a 51A report has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during program related activity. 4. The staff will cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect, including identifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled in the program. Failure to cooperate may be grounds for suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew a license. 5. The Director shall develop and maintain written procedures for addressing any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect, which includes, but is not limited to ensuring that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with children until the Department of Children and Families investigation is complete and such further time, as the Office requires. Definitions published by the Department of Children and Families will be used as guidelines for reporting child abuse and neglect.

Schedule (subject to change)

August through June and June-August summer program

A.M. Before School 6:45-7:45 Arrival, breakfast, free time, reading and/or crafts

8:05 pack up for the buses

P.M. After school program

Winthrop School students meet TKC staff in the cafe and proceed to the TKC after school rooms at Winthrop Site. The buses stop at The Community House from Buker and Cutler School, the kids meet their group leader in the courtyard where they are signed in and then proceed to their assigned room as a group. The children have time for toileting/hand washing, snack, daily enrichment curriculum with hands-on activities within the classroom, playground/outdoor time, special events, reading time, homework time if requested by parent.

Departure Procedures/Policies

There may be times that you are unable to pick up your child from the program. There are times a staff member may ask to see a parent's ID, if the staff member is unfamiliar with you, they are required to ID you. You must tell the Director if another person will be picking up your child, either in writing or verbally, even if we are familiar with this person. Nobody will be allowed to take your child unless you have given permission. The individual picking up must show a photo ID before the child will be released.

We also ask that parents please be mindful of the time it takes to get you and your child out of the building, and that ideally, we ask that all families be out of the building by 6:00pm.

Children may be picked up any time prior to 6:00 p.m.; however, they must be picked up NO LATER than 6:00 p.m. Parents/guardians who are unable to pick up their children on time on a regular basis, may lose services of the program. If you have not picked up your child and we have not heard from you or we cannot reach you by 6:05 p.m., your emergency contact(s) will be called. A late fee will be assessed, and you will receive an invoice. If we have not heard from you or your emergency contact(s) by 6:30 p.m., we will contact the Police Department and have your child transported to the local station. Continual tardiness may result in termination from the program. Please note when program time ends at 5:30pm on full days and during the summer.

Late pick up policy

A fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child for the first 15 minutes. From the sixteenth minute to the thirtieth minute it will be \$2 per minute, per child, and from the thirty-first minute on it will be \$3 per minute, per child for late pick up. The invoice must be paid for within seven days, this fee will be added to your parent portal account.

Parking

There is a parking lot at Patton Park and the Police Station. Street parking is available on Bay Road in of The Community House. Please do not park in the small parking lot next to The Community House unless you need the handicap spaces. Pick up and drop off in small lot is limited to 10 minutes only.

Absent Policy:

You must email TKC staff if your child is going to be absent. We do not communicate with the schools or Patton park camp (during summer months) about absences so you must tell TKC staff so we all know your child is safe and where they should be after school and after camp. Absent Email goes to all staff TKCSchedule@communityhouse.org



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Snow Emergencies

The Kids Community Program will be closed on the same days that the Hamilton Wenham Public Schools cancel or delay school due to snow or inclement weather. Please watch the local news for announcements of Hamilton Wenham school closings and delays. When Hamilton Wenham Public Schools have consecutive snow days we will always be closed on day one, and will do our best to open when it is safe to do so. If there is snow or inclement weather during a week the public schools are on vacation and we are open, please check the website and your email for closing details. There are no refunds for snow days.

Closing due to an emergency

If the program needs to close early or for complete days due to an unforeseen emergency, you will be texted, called, emailed and a message will be left on the Program Director's Voicemail. If circumstances require an immediate evacuation from the building (fire, toxic fumes, etc.) the children will be evacuated to the Hamilton Public Safety Building and parents will be notified by phone to pick up their child. At any time, the center is forced to close we require that parents pay their normal contracted tuition rates. If the emergency happens in the morning before opening time, we will do our best to call inform you of the situation or a sign may be posted on the doors.

Change in Schedule and Withdrawal Policy

A FOUR WEEK WRITTEN NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OR REDUCTION IN SCHEDULE IS REQUIRED. Payment is due during the withdrawal period regardless of your child's attendance. Children who are re-enrolled will be charged the enrollment fee. Families desiring an increase in the number of days their child attends must notify the director in writing.

Closing following Massachusetts state guidelines and The Department of Early Education and Care

The Kids Community will be closed if Massachusetts Governor and/or The Department of Early Education and Care mandates a closure. Tuition credits, refunds, suspensions will be reviewed at the time of closure. The Program Director will update families on when and if tuition payments are due during the closure.

Transportation

The Kids Community Program is responsible pick up at Winthrop School, that group then transfers to their designated rooms within the school. The TKC staff meet at the bus stop at The Community House. The parent/guardian is responsible for their child's arrival transportation in the morning and departure transportation in the evening. A relative or friend of the family must be at least 16 years of age to pick up an after-school child. Note: A child nine years of age or older may walk home if parent authorization and consent is on file.

Firearms and Weapons Policy

Purpose: To ensure the safety and well-being of all children, families, and staff, The Community House maintains a strict no-weapons policy in accordance with state and local laws.

Policy Statement: The possession, carrying, or storage of firearms, ammunition, or any other weapon—whether concealed or visible—is strictly prohibited on the premises of The Community House site and Winthrop site before and after school. This includes:

- Inside the building or any area used by the program;
- Outdoor play areas, parking lots, and surrounding grounds such; and
- During all program activities, including drop-off, pick-up, field trips, and special events.

Applicability: This policy applies to **all individuals** on the premises, including but not limited to:

- Parents, guardians, and family members;
- Employees, volunteers, and contractors;
- Visitors and delivery personnel.

Exceptions may only be made for **law enforcement officers** who are authorized by law and acting in their official capacity.

Enforcement: Any individual found in violation of this policy will be asked to remove the firearm or weapon from the premises immediately. Continued noncompliance may result in denial of access to the facility and, if applicable, notification of law enforcement.

Communication of Policy: This policy will be:

- Included in the parent/guardian handbook and staff handbook;
- Reviewed annually with staff and families via parent handbook

Rationale: This policy supports a safe, nurturing, and non-threatening environment for all children, families, and staff, consistent with our program's commitment to child safety.

Grounds for Dismissal or Suspension of Child and /or Family

The Kids Community Program reserves the right to ask for the withdrawal/suspension of a child or family from the program if conditions do not prove satisfactory for both or either party. The Kids Community Program Director will work with families first by meeting with the parents to discuss the child's behavior. We will discuss what strategies the teachers have offered in the program and ask the family to do the same at home. Staff will also offer any 'handouts' they may have received from trainings. If termination is unavoidable, we will work with families to prepare

the child for his/her last day. Such conditions include but are not limited to: 1. Aggressive behavior, such as excessive biting, kicking, spitting etc. which may harm themselves, staff, or other children. Every effort will be made to rectify the situation before termination. 2. Delinquent payment of services rendered. 3. Non-compliance to the policies and procedures of the Program, as stated in the Parent Handbook. 4. Differences in the educational philosophies between the parents and staff/director, which cannot be resolved.

Bullying Policy

It is The Kids Community programs policy that teachers are responsible for intervening when signs of bullying are apparent. It is a combined effort with families and children to report any instances of alleged bullying to the Director. For example, children should report any type of bullying to the after- school program staff, parents should report to the Director as well as the after-school program staff.

This includes but is not limited to cyber bullying, bullying, intimidation and retaliation. We will follow the 'Grounds for Dismissal or Suspension of Child and /or Family' policy if the bullying does not stop.



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Health Care Policy

Please keep your child at home or you will be notified by telephone to pick your child up if him /her:

- Has a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Is vomiting
- Has greenish discharge from the nose or eyes
- Has had 3 diarrheas (unless caused by an antibiotic) – or 2 bouts in 1 hour
- Has a rash
- Has lice
- Has any symptom of a communicable disease
- Is complaining of not feeling well for any of the above stated illnesses, please allow a period of 24 symptom free hours. YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ALLOWED BACK INTO THE CENTER BEFORE THE 24 HOURS HAS EXPIRED, the child should be able to keep up with the program's normal schedule upon return.

A complete copy of the Health Care Policy is available if needed.

Absent Policy

If your child will not be attending The Kids Community program due to being sick, having an appointment, etc. the parent/guardian MUST email The Kids Community Program to let the staff know your child will be absent. If we do not hear from the parent we will call the designated phone number provided on the registration form. Email TKCschedule@communityhouse.org

Early Education and Care Regulations

An authorized member of the staff may administer prescription or non-prescription medication to a child only with the written parental and physician's authorization. Forms will be provided for this purpose. The label on the prescribed medication, indicating the name, dosage, name of the child and the physician's name will be suitable for the physician's signature. The first dose of a medication cannot be administered at the program. For non-prescription medication, a yearly consent which has been authorized by both the parent and the child's physician will be accepted. The consent will be valid for no more than one year from the date signed. Parents will also be required to fill out a weekly consent form every time non-prescription medication is to be given. Parents will be notified before such medication is administered. The center will keep written records of the administration of any medication given to each child in the child's file. Any unused medication will be returned to the parent. Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet in the Directors office. Medication that needs to be refrigerated should be provided in a cooler bag with an ice pack and given directly to a staff member upon arrival; it will be kept in a locked box in the refrigerator.

Procedures for Emergencies

Every effort will be made to contact you, the parent/guardian, in the event of an emergency requiring medical attention for your child. Please fill out the authorization and consent form completely so in case of an emergency where you cannot be reached, someone else close to the child can be reached and can be with the child to comfort and reassure until the parent/guardian can be reached. In the case of an emergency, an authorized staff member will administer necessary First Aid to the child. If the child needs to be hospitalized, an ambulance will transport the child to the nearest hospital (Beverly Hospital). An authorized staff member will accompany the child, with the child's entire file, including his/her signed authorization and consent forms and any information in regard to allergies immunizations and emergency contacts. This said staff member will stay at the hospital until the situation of the child is under control. In case of an emergency during a field trip, an authorized staff member will administer First Aid immediately until the ambulance arrives. The child will be transported to the nearest hospital for necessary treatment, accompanied by said staff member, parents will be notified immediately. If a parent is not available, the next individual on the emergency contact sheet will be called.

Procedures for Evacuation of Center in an Emergency Evacuation Drills

The Kids Community Program will hold practice evacuation drills every month. Specific instructions for evacuation will be posted in each classroom. Daily attendance records of children will be maintained and used in the case of an evacuation, to be sure all children are accounted for along with head counts before and after evacuation. If we need to evacuate to an indoor facility, we will go to the Hamilton Police Department. Documentation of the date, time, and route used number of children and effectiveness of each drill will be maintained by the director.



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Appropriate Clothing

Please be aware that we will be going outside on days that allow so please be sure that your child is wearing weather appropriate clothing as well as appropriate footwear for walks to the park. During the cold weather months children should have a coat/jacket, hat, mittens and/or gloves as well as boots if it is snowing. Sneakers and rubber soled shoes are the safest type of footwear for children and are required for after school activities. Children may not wear clothing such as shirts, hats or pants that have offensive language or artwork. If your child has said clothing on a day, they attend the program parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately.

Homework Policy

Parents must request homework time during after school. Please note that we cannot ensure that a child completes his/her homework or force a child to do it if they choose not to. Staff can set aside time for those who have homework to get it out but is unable to offer one-on-one tutoring and support. Parents are encouraged to talk to staff with any questions regarding this policy.



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Parent Handbook Agreement

Child's name _____ Date of Birth ____/____/____

I have read The Kids Community Parent Handbook concerning policies and procedures. I agree to the terms of this Handbook. I will keep this Handbook for a reference.

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____