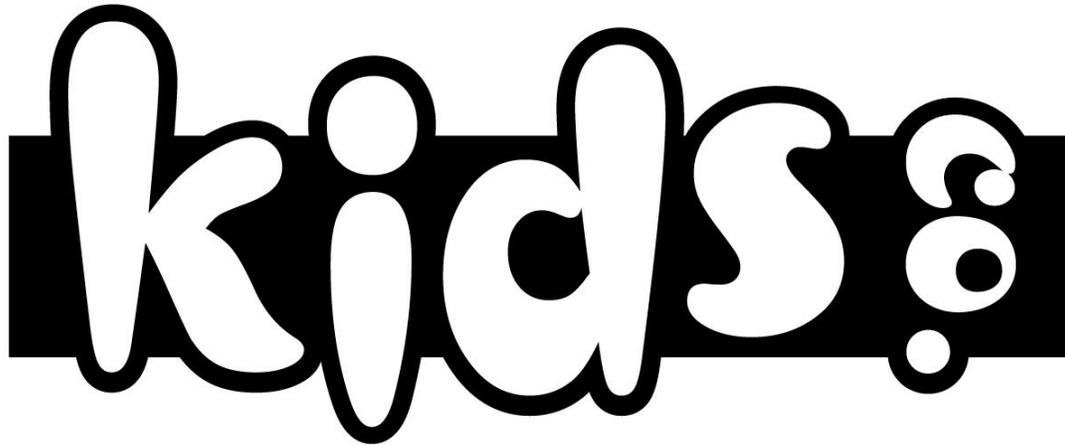


# FAMILY HANDBOOK



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Kids Co. creates safe spaces that inspire wonder, curiosity, and play for your kids.

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The translation of this document into Spanish was made possible by the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund



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The Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund  
*Providing the opportunity for a sustainable and healthy community for all.*

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To help eliminate any confusion, Evergreen Children’s Association and Kids Co. are one in the same. The legal name of the organization is **Evergreen Children’s Association** and our commonly used/trade name is **Kids Co.**

## WELCOME TO KIDS CO.

Kids Co. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves the community by providing high quality child care. Kids Co. centers are located throughout Seattle and on Mercer Island. Kids Co. is a grassroots organization founded in 1989, for the sole purpose of providing high quality, developmentally appropriate early learning and after-school programs. All of our programs are licensed and meet quality standards as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Council on Accreditation (COA), the School-age Program Quality Assessment (SPQA) or the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC).

Kids Co. centers provide licensed child care for preschool through school-age children. The principle goal of our centers is to provide a safe, well supervised, clean and caring environment for your children. We offer opportunities for planned and free play activities that promote the cognitive, social and emotional development of children. We are knowledgeable about what children need for optimum growth at their particular level of development and we seek to provide it. As your child's care givers, we role model and teach loving, caring ways to relate to others. We demonstrate fairness and the importance of listening to what someone else has to say. As your child develops both friendships and new skills, we will provide safe choices which allow them, insofar as it is possible, to experience the natural consequences of their decisions.

In our effort to learn about and respectfully acknowledge differences amongst our children, staff, parents and community, Kids Co. strives to foster the highest levels of multi-cultural understanding through ongoing education. As teachers of young children, we accept our responsibility to role model compassion, patience, critical thinking and decision making in order to achieve mutual respect and understanding for the people we serve. A major component of our efforts is taking a pro-active approach to incorporating anti-bias theory and practices throughout our programming. We place particular emphasis on the following four goals: 1) nurture each child's construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity and group identity; 2) promote each child's comfortable, empathic interaction with people from diverse backgrounds; 3) foster each child's critical thinking about bias; and 4) cultivate each child's ability to stand up for her/himself and for others in the face of bias.

All parents/guardians are expected to read the **Kids Co.'s Family Handbook**. It is the primary communication method for articulating Kids Co.'s philosophy, policies, and procedures. Our Kids Co. website is regularly updated with new and important information. Our web address is: [www.kidscompany.org](http://www.kidscompany.org).

## DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND VOLUNTEERING

Creating welcoming, supportive, family-trusted environments for every one of these children is our singular focus. We believe high quality child care is achieved through a commitment to three organizational strategic priorities and we direct all charitable gifts to:

- **Priority One:** Make an uncompromising commitment to the ongoing implementation of best practices in child care throughout our operation.
- **Priority two:** Recruit and retain exceptional child care professionals for the children and families we serve.
- **Priority three:** Provide uninterrupted care in the form of tuition assistance to families experiencing financial hardship.

**Add a Smidge:** Many families choose to support Kids Co.'s work with children above and beyond the tuition they pay. One easy way many parents do this is to add a small donation to their monthly payments. Parents are also included in the list of those receiving direct mail appeals.

Clearly, the decision to make a gift is a personal choice and we want you to know there is no expectation. However, we also know that if we do not create opportunities for families to make a charitable gift to Kids Co. the priorities identified above will have less of a far-reaching impact. The contributions we receive from parents are a significant validation of the care we give the most precious people in their lives--their children!

Kids Co. also seeks the philanthropic support of community stakeholders, corporations, and foundations—people with a vested interest in the ensuring high quality care beyond school time for all of our community's children.

**A Gift of Time:** Volunteering at the center where your child or children are enrolled is another great way to connect with Kids Co. Parents have chipped in to volunteer in many imaginative, helpful ways. We have had parents read to kids—*some in a foreign language*—help make repairs and paint, and introduce children to new

foods and cultures. If you have a desire to support Kids Co. in this way, speak with the program manager at your center.

**Learn More:** Kids Co. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit registered with the State of Washington and is governed by a board of directors committed to advancing the organization's mission to "provide and advocate for quality child care that enriches and nurtures all children, supporting their success in school and in life." For current information about Kids Co.'s development initiatives or to obtain a copy of our most recent annual report, visit [www.kidscompany.org/sharing](http://www.kidscompany.org/sharing). An organizational profile and recent 990 is also posted on GuideStar ([www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)), under Kids Co.'s legal name, Evergreen Children's Association.

**ADMISSION**

We serve children between the ages of 3 years to 12 years (ages served vary at each center; please refer to the site directory) in a group care setting. The size of the group and the ratio of staff to children is based on the age of the children, state licensing rules, and industry practices. All children must be toilet trained prior to starting at Kids Co. unless the child requires an accommodation due to a medical condition. Families are asked to provide complete information about attending children, including any specific needs or limitations of the participating child and any other information needed to provide quality child care during enrollment at Kids Co.

***All families will be admitted and no family will be discriminated against on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, political ideology, race, color, religion, national origin, age, Vietnam era or disabled veteran status, marital status, ancestry, military status, genetic information or the presence of any physical, mental or sensory disability or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law.***

**ADA.** Kids Co. complies with the guidelines for the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and makes every reasonable effort to accommodate persons with disabilities. Upon notice of an applicant diagnosed with medical or developmental condition or disability Kids Co will conduct an individualized assessment of the child's needs and the program's ability to make the necessary modifications. A medical or developmental condition or disability that requires Kids Co. to fundamentally alter its program or that presents a direct threat to the enrolling child or other children may impact the admission decision. If an enrolling family fails to disclose medical or developmental conditions that impact the provision of child care, Kids Co. will be unable to conduct an individualized assessment and will proceed with enrollment and application of policies and procedures to address conduct and care of attending children, assuming there is no need for accommodation.

While each individual child will have his or her own particular needs, some examples of reasonable accommodation include but are not limited to: behavior management agreements prior to or upon enrollment or following enrollment; removal of physical barriers; or providing staff with additional training or information. We encourage parents to provide the program manager with all important information about your child's individual needs. Such information will be treated with care and used only for the purpose of providing appropriate care to your child.

Examples of accommodations that Kids Co. may not be able to provide includes very small group or one-on-one care for your child or any circumstance that creates a direct threat of harm to your child or other children, such as biting or other violent conduct.

Keep in mind that Kids Co. staffs are not special education teachers and that our centers focus on group care that limits the ability to effectively care for some children. Special accommodation made by public school systems, which have additional resources, may not be appropriate or feasible in private licensed child care programs such as Kids Co.

Kids Co. staff can be helpful in developing positive strategies for school-age children who have a disability and/or exhibit challenging behaviors while attending Kids Co. In the event that Student Intervention Team (SIT) meetings become part of your child's plan for school, we recommend that parents invite Kids Co. staff to attend and participate in Student Intervention Team (SIT) meetings. This is one way that we can bridge your child's school day with the child care part of their day.

Parents/guardians have free access to all areas of the center at all times. We encourage you to visit us before admission in order for you and your child to become familiar with the facility, the staff and the other children. This also gives us the opportunity to discuss your child specifically

**RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** Children and staff at Kids Co. have the right to a safe, nurturing, respectful environment. They have the right to personal opinions, beliefs and the ability to express their ideas. Children and staff have the responsibility to create an atmosphere of respect and safety for all by following the community guidelines as established and communicating with others when issues arise.

**COMMUNICATION**

Kids Co. recognizes that there is no one best way for our staff and your family to stay in touch, however, we require that all families keep us up to date on your contact information including a valid email address (when available). More and more, Kids Co. offers families opportunities to participate in electronic communications such as e-mail newsletters, curriculum calendars, notices about hazardous weather, and much more. Without your current email address, we can't get this valuable information to you! Additionally, if you OPT OUT of receiving Kids Co. email communications, we respect your decision to do so however, opting out permanently removes your email address from our email communication system. Be advised that opting out means our system deletes that email from all lists and you will no longer receive any emails including important weather related notices, program updates, etc. Kids Co. will never share your email address with anyone without your permission.

**ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

1. Complete the **enrollment and registration packet**, which includes all the necessary forms including the immunization form required by Washington State.
2. Pay the annual, non-refundable registration (**\$50.00 for each new child, \$25.00 for each returning child**).
3. Pay the **\$100.00 deposit** for each child enrolled. This deposit will be refunded upon receipt of a **30 day written notice** of withdrawal (see withdrawal policy).
4. If your child attends a Kids Co. Preschool Program, you must pay a **one-time fee of \$30** for a mat/cot and sheet for naptime.

Enrollment is on a continuous basis. For school-age children, enrollment is continuous from one school year to the next. There are separate enrollment forms for summer. For preschool children, enrollment is continuous until they enter the school-age program or withdraw from the program. Changes to your child's schedule or complete withdrawal are subject to the policies outlined in **this handbook**. On an annual basis, we will ask you to review the contact and health information on file to make sure it is current.

Any change of programs or schedule requires written notice on the 1st of the month with changes effective on the 1st of the following month.

All information given in our enrollment and registration packet is kept strictly confidential but may be used by Kids Co. for fund raising purposes. Information in your child's file will not be shared with anyone other than program staff, our state licensors, and City of Seattle education specialists. We do not give out phone numbers or contact information to other parents, staff or other individual without specific consent. Prior to releasing information, we will determine if the reason to release information is valid, utilizing legal counsel as needed. We will obtain informed, written authorization, will give a copy of the signed authorization to the parent or legal guardian, and will maintain a copy in the child's file.

Kids Co. reserves the right to discontinue a child's enrollment for any reason at any time. Reasons for termination include but are not limited to the following:

1. Non-payment of tuition fees by due dates. (If this happens future enrollment will not be allowed.)
2. If a child's needs/behaviors cannot be reasonably accommodated in a group care setting. Physical or emotional problems, which require supervision beyond our normal teacher/child ratio. Parents must specify on the enrollment form any behavioral, physical or emotional problems or special needs that their child may have and are expected to provide written documentation of observed and/or diagnosed physical, behavioral or emotional disability.
3. Failure by the parent or child to comply with the policies and procedures established by Kids Co.
4. Failure to notify the center, in advance, of non-scheduled absences.
5. False information or not fully disclosing important information regarding your child (i.e. health issues, developmental issues, emotional or behavioral concerns, IEP's, etc.).

A child may temporarily be suspended from the center as a result of behavior problems. If a child is suspended from their regular school attendance, Kids Co. is unable to accept that child during the days of suspension.

## Kids Co. Family Handbook

In the interest of making sure your child is picked up only by authorized individuals and to ensure Kids Co. has accurate emergency contact information, Parents/guardians are expected to provide the name and phone number of at least two other people who are authorized to pick up your child or be contacted in case of an emergency.

Children are discouraged from bringing any toys from home. In the event they do, Kids Co. cannot accept responsibility for those items. Toy weapons of any kind are prohibited.

Kids Co. makes every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment. However, there are inherent risks associated with participation in child care program activities including physical injury, and/or other consequences. Kids Co. assumes no responsibility or liability for injuries/illnesses of your child. Kids Co., officers, agents, employees, and volunteers are held harmless from any and all liability or claims which may arise out of your child's participation in Kids Co. programs.

Kids Co., its staff and board make no warranty and can accept no responsibility or liability for the actions of any of its employees, agents or other related individuals outside of the regular hours of operation of the centers or when, in the case of employees or agents, they are not actively and exclusively working for Kids Co.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

A minimum of **30 days written notification** must be given for withdrawal from the program. Tuition will accrue for 30 days from the date written notice is received. If 30 days written notice is given then your deposit will be applied to the balance due on tuition for 30 days. If **less than 30 days written notice** is given, tuition will accrue for 30 days after your child's last date of attendance and your deposit will be forfeited.

### **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

**Hours of Operation** - 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Care options vary by site; please see your program manager for details. Any changes in your choice of programs or your child's schedule requires written notice on the 1st of the month with changes effective on the 1st of the following month. For example, if you would like your child to switch from attending M-F to M,W,F in October, the change of schedule form must be received by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Additions to your child's schedule may be added earlier if space allows. Change in Schedule forms are available from the program manager or other staff.

### **CHANGE OF DAYS OR TIMES CANNOT BE GUARANTEED BUT WILL BE MADE ON A SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS.**

Extra coverage is provided for early school dismissal days where applicable. In addition, winter, mid-winter and spring break programs (also called day camps) are provided. Use of these programs will be charged as extra hours for what you sign up for. Summer program information for school-age summer day camp will be available in late winter/early spring.

Parents/Guardians should inform the center in advance of the approximate time of arrival and departure for their child. Please let us know if your schedule should change. This enables us to schedule our staff accordingly. Parents/Guardians are required to sign-in and sign-out their child(ren) at drop-off and pick-up times on the sign-in sheet located at the center. **State licensing requires the time of drop-off and pick-up and a full signature.**

**Authorized Pick-Up: Only individuals that are identified as "authorized pick-up" on the enrollment forms are allowed to pick-up your child.** When authorized individuals are between 16 to 18 years old, the parent is responsible for determining the responsibility level of the individual, the safety of the route to be taken and whether the younger child listens well and follows directions. Should a parent/guardian give verbal or written permission for someone who is not listed on the enrollment paperwork, Kids Co. staff will ask for picture ID and the pick-up is only authorized for the specified day(s).

If any authorized pick-up person's conduct leads our staff to believe it is unsafe to release the child (i.e. inebriated, disorientated, confrontational, violent or other risky behavior), we will contact another person from the pick-up list or call the police as required by law. All persons 18 years and older must provide **picture ID** when picking up your child. This could be asked at any time, by any staff person despite the number of times the person has picked up or their relation to the child.

**Parents/guardians are expected to call the center, 1 hour in advance, in the event that your child will not be in attendance.**

**Kids Co. Family Handbook**

**Child Locator Fee:** When a child does not come to Kids Co. as scheduled, a staff person must spend time looking for that child. When one staff member has to concentrate all of his/her efforts to locate a child, the rest of the program suffers because we are left short-staffed during the time one person is away from the center conducting a search. In an effort to minimize the need to locate children, parents will be charged a **\$10 fee** for failing to notify Kids Co. that their child is absent. In order to avoid this fee, please contact the center at least **1 hour before your child is expected to arrive**. Excessive failure to notify may result in suspension or termination of enrollment in Kids Co.

**Early Drop-Off Fee:** You will be charged **\$1.00 per minute** if you drop off your child earlier than the time your child's program is scheduled to begin (unless previously arranged with the manager, see Extra Hours Policy). This fee will be added to your account.

**Late Pick-Up Fee:** You will be charged **\$15.00 for the first one to fifteen minutes, and \$1.00 per minute for each additional minute** if you pick up your child later than the time your child's program is scheduled to end (unless previously arranged with the manager, see Extra Hours) or later than 6:00 PM. This fee must be paid at the time of pick-up or will be added to your child care account. You will be asked to sign a late pick-up form.

Picking children up late puts stress on staff that are often attending night classes or have other commitments that are impacted when children are at the center beyond the 6 PM closing time. Parents who are late to pick-up more than on an occasional basis will be asked to arrange for someone else to pick up. In the event that late pick-ups occur on more than an occasional basis Kids Co. retains the right to unilaterally suspend or terminate care.

**FAILURE TO PAY THESE FEES MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT.**

Once an attempt has been made to contact all emergency contacts and authorized pick-up people, if any child is still at the center by 6:30 PM, our staff is required by law to call **Child Protective Services** to take the child until the parent is located.

**SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES**

<u>Full Day Preschool</u>		<u>School-Age</u>	
7:00 AM	Open Free Choice Activities	<u>Before School</u>	
7:30-8:30 AM	Breakfast	7:00-8:00 AM	Quiet Activities
8:00-8:30 AM	Preschool Inside - Free Choice	8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:30-9:00 AM	Books and Art	8:00 -8:50 AM	Games/Enrichment Activities
9:15 AM	Clean up	8:50-9:00 AM	Clean-up
9:30 AM	Circle Time & potty	9:00 AM	Dismissal to School
10:00 AM	Snack		
10:00-11:00 AM	Free Choice		
11:00 AM	Outside		
11:30-12 PM	Group Time	<u>After School</u>	Check In
12:00-12:30 PM	Lunch	3:10 PM	Free Play
12:15-12:30 PM	Books and Potty Break	3:10-3:45 PM	Snack
12:30-1:30 PM	Nap	3:45-4:00 PM	Enrichment Activities/Free Play
1:30-2:00 PM	Wake Up & Quiet Activities	4:00-5:00 PM	Clean-up
2:30-3:00 PM	Preschool Outside & Potty	5:00-5:15 PM	Quiet Activities/Close
3:00 PM	Hand washing & Snack	5:15-6:00 PM	
3:15 PM	Circle Time		
3:45-4:15 PM	Preschool Inside - Free Choice		
4:15-4:45 PM	Outside Time		
4:45-5:00 PM	Hand wash & potty		
5:00-5:30 PM	Circle Time & Quiet activities		
6:00 PM	Center Closed		

**HOLIDAYS & OTHER SCHEDULED CLOSURES**

We will be closed for the following nationally observed holidays:

New Year's Day	President's Day	Independence Day	Veteran's Day	Christmas (2 days)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Memorial Day	Labor Day	Thanksgiving (2 days)	

There are some holidays where public school custodial support may not be available and may result in Kids Co. having to close for the day. These closures will be posted at the sites with as much notice as possible. Alternate care may be available at one of the Kids Co. sites that will remain open. If this type of closure should occur, please discuss your care needs with the program manager.

Christmas, New Year's Day and Independence Day holidays will vary depending on how they fall within the week. All closures will be posted at the center in advance. ***Evergreen Children's Association dba Kids Co. does not adopt or promote any particular religion but we may recognize various aspects of religions such as celebrations and rituals and provide time off for our staff to participate in their family's celebrations.***

We will be closed 2 days each June between the end of the regular school year and the beginning of our summer program to plan and prepare for the summer months. We will also be closed 2 days before the first day of public school for planning and training purposes for the new school year. In addition we will be closed for 1 day in August for an All Staff In-service and preschool only will be closed 1 day between Jan-March for our annual Preschool Staff In-service.

**NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN FOR HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS, KIDS CO. CLOSURES, OR ILLNESS.**

**PUBLIC SCHOOL CLOSURES**

During the school year there are several early dismissals, holidays, teacher planning days and the possibility of public school teacher labor action (i.e. strikes, walkouts, etc.) when the public schools close. On these dates, there is no credit for absences. However, when care is offered and you would like your child to attend Kids Co. on these days, **there will be an additional charge for any hours beyond your regularly scheduled time slot** (please see your tuition rate sheet for extras hours charges). This fee pays for the additional hours of care and the additional staff needed.

**PUBLIC SCHOOL LABOR DISPUTE STRIKE POLICY**

Kids Co. is in the unique position of partnering with both public school staff and with parents in support of keeping Kids Co. children healthy, safe and ready to learn. These wonderful partnerships, although important to the success of each child, put Kids Co. in the precarious position of being "in-the-middle" when it comes to issues that result in school-time being missed. This policy establishes direction and clarification for all parents, staff and children of Kids Co. centers in the event that public school teachers walk out, sick out, strike, etc.

If public school teachers should take action over labor disputes such as staging a walk out, strike, etc., based on the situation at hand, Kids Co. may choose either to close the center for the first day or to only be open during our normal operating hours. In the event that the walk out, strike, etc. should extend beyond one day, we will do our best to remain open during our normal operating hours and make every effort to provide care during the extra hours that result from the absence of school teachers. This will depend on our ability to staff our centers appropriately.

We will strive for the best solution to offer the greatest amount of quality care. This might mean combining staff members at one center and requiring parents who need child care to use that particular center. It might mean providing care for fewer children than we normally serve. In this event, parents are asked to call Kids Co. daily to check on service availability.

**HAZARDOUS WEATHER POLICY**

This policy establishes direction and clarification for families of Kids Co. centers in the event of hazardous weather. Please understand that our first concern is the safety of our children and our staff.

**Procedures:**

- On any day when the weather is hazardous (ice, snow, strong winds, etc.) or threatens to be hazardous, we ask that you watch or listen to local news broadcasts and/or visit [www.schoolreport.org](http://www.schoolreport.org) for a status report on the school where your Kids Co. center is located. Closures, delays or limited service will be announced for the school.

- The school district may decide to close the school mid-day. If schools close early on a regular school day and children are sent home due to weather, Kids Co. **cannot** guarantee to have staff at the site. Parents/guardians should plan to pick up their child from school. Kids Co. follows the districts closures/delays schedule for the first full day of hazardous weather. Meaning, if the district schools are closed Kids Co. is CLOSED.
- Beyond the first full day, current district policy states that if schools are closed, due to unsafe conditions, child care programs will be closed as well. However,
- Should district approval be granted to have child care be open at the school, Kids Co. will assess the hazards and determine the hours of care we can offer. We will update our voice mail, website, and Facebook page with the most current information.
- If school is not in session (i.e. Winter Break), Kids Co. staff and administration will determine the closure/delay based on the current conditions at EACH center.
- Kids Co. will work closely with the district to determine if and when care can resume. In the event Kids Co. can be open, you MUST call the center directly to see if there is space available for your child. Only those who have called and registered for that day can be accepted. This allows us to provide service to the families who really need care and still meet Washington State licensing standards for staff-to-child ratios.
- In the event that your regular child care site may be closed, but we have an alternative site open, you may attend another site as long as the above procedure is followed and you confirm your child's spot at that site, for that day. All parents will be required to fill out a drop in form before leaving your child at the alternative site. Please allow adequate time to do so.
- The Kids Co. website [www.kidscompany.org](http://www.kidscompany.org), and our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/kidengagingfun> are other resources for current information regarding closures. We will update both with important weather related information.

**NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN IN THE EVENT WE HAVE TO CLOSE FOR HAZARDOUS WEATHER.**

**NUTRITION**

Kids Co. will provide a nutritious breakfast each morning. Snacks will be provided in the morning and afternoon. Snacks and breakfasts are balanced to provide at least 1/3 of the **RDA** for young children and based on licensing and USDA guidelines. If your child requires a special diet, please discuss this with the program manager at the time of enrollment. We will make every effort to meet these needs.

Please be aware that Kids Co. centers do not serve peanut products in the meals and snacks we provide. However, parents do provide lunches for their children that may contain peanut or other nut products. We will make every effort to accommodate the needs of children with allergies; however, we cannot guarantee that our centers are "Nut-Free". Each center follows different meal-time procedures based on the children enrolled, which may include having a table designated to accommodate specific food allergies. Please talk to your program manager for more information or to talk about your child's allergies.

**PRESCHOOL & EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS:** Kids Co. will provide snacks in the morning and afternoon. Parents are required to provide a nutritious sack lunch. **No soda pop, candy or gum is allowed at the center.**

**SCHOOL-AGE:** All children will be required to bring a nutritious sack lunch on no-school days. **No soda pop, candy or gum is allowed at the center.**

Parent provided lunches are required to include a balanced meal including a meat/meat alternate, veggie, fruit and starch. An example of a nutritious lunch is: apple sauce, carrot sticks, ham and cheese sandwich on wheat bread and milk. Please limit cookies, other sweets and foods that need to be heated.

If your child forgets her lunch we will call you to bring one. In an emergency only, we will provide something nutritious for your child to eat. Because our budget does not cover the cost of lunches you will be charged **\$10.00** for this service. Please note that this is not an alternative to providing a lunch for your child.

**Sample Snacks & Breakfast** (menus are posted at the centers)

A typical breakfast consists of:	French Toast Orange Wedges Milk	A typical snack consists of:	Mini-bagel w/cream cheese Apple Juice
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**BIRTHDAYS:** If your child wishes to bring a treat to share at snack time for his birthday, please talk to his teacher in advance in order to estimate how many children to plan for. Also, one of our regulating agencies, the public health department, requires that all treats, brought from home, are store bought items.

### **CLOTHING**

Accidents can happen for various reasons. For the comfort and health of your child, Kids Co. centers require all children age **seven** and under to have a complete change of clothing at the center at all times. This includes pants, shirts, socks and t-shirts.

We take the children outside regardless of the weather, so it is important that they are **dressed appropriately for the weather conditions**. In our attempt to help keep children healthy, during cold weather, children are required to wear a coat to be able to play outside. Children without coats may have to stay indoors for the day. All items belonging to your child must be permanently marked with his/her name. For the safety of your child, we recommend that you label all belongings on the inside. That way, strangers cannot address your child by name.

Kids Co. is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

The center keeps a small supply of extra clothing for emergencies. If your child is sent home in these items, please wash them and return them as quickly as possible so they are available if needed again. The Health Department will not allow us to rinse out soiled clothing (fear of cross-contamination), so you will receive soiled clothing in a plastic bag.

Remember, children will be exposed to active outside activities as well as particularly messy art activities inside. It is important that they come dressed in play clothes. Also, please be sure your child is wearing "active" shoes such as tennis shoes or other shoes they can run, jump and play in. **Flip flops are not allowed.**

### **FOR NAPTIME**

Each child below school age should have a small blanket at the center for naptime (some children like to have a pillow, too). This should be taken home each week for washing if the center does not provide this for you (some do not have facilities available). If your child needs a special toy to make nap time easier, you may bring that as well. These items will be kept in your child's cubby except when in use at nap time.

### **HOMEWORK TIME AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

All of our school-age programs offer homework time for at least 20 minutes most of the days of the week (excluding breaks and summer). Homework times vary at each center depending on the afternoon schedule. We provide basic materials and a quiet atmosphere for children to get their homework started. We often coordinate with classroom teachers to be sure that each child has their homework sheet for the day, though we expect children to be responsible for what they need. We encourage children to do their work on their own, but staff will help children to understand directions and assist when they are stuck. We cannot make sure that children complete their homework. If children do not have homework for the day we encourage them to read, work on a puzzle or do another quiet activity.

### **HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

**MEDICATION MANAGEMENT:** Written parental consent is required to administer any medication. All medication must be in its original container and properly labeled with the child's name; date prescription was filled or medication's expiration date; and legible instructions for administration such as manufacturer's instructions or prescription label. Children may not carry medication in their backpacks or self-administer medicine.

**NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION:** The following medication can be given with written parental consent, only at the dose, duration and method of administration specified on the manufacturer's label for the age or weight of the child needing the medication:

- (1) Antihistamines
- (2) Non aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers
- (3) Decongestants
- (4) Anti-itching ointments or lotions, intended specifically to relieve itching
- (5) Sunscreen
- (6) Cough Drops

A physician's written authorization is required for non-prescription medication that: 1) is not included in the above list; 2) is to be taken differently than indicated on the manufacturer's label; or 3) lacks labeled instructions.

**Parents must fill out a medication administration form** and specify the day(s) that the medication is to be received. Medications that need to be administered on a long-term basis will need to have a health care plan completed (see program manager for details).

**All unused medication will be returned to parents or will be disposed of properly.**

**ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS**

The goal of our illness policy is to prevent the spread of communicable disease among children and staff and to make sure each child gets the care he needs. These guidelines are consistent with the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health's Child Daycare Health Handbook. We ask you adhere to the following guidelines.

**You must keep home any child with the following symptoms:**

1. Diarrhea, more than one loose stool per day.
2. Vomiting, twice or more in the past 24 hours.
3. Rash, any not associated with heat or allergic reactions to medicine.
4. Drainage from the eye, redness of eyelid lining, swelling and discharge of pus.
5. Appearance/behavior, unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, difficult to wake, confused, irritable.
6. Sore throat, especially with fever or swollen glands.
7. Head lice, nits or scabies.

Each child will be observed upon arrival for any signs of illness. **Children are not allowed to remain at the center if any of the above occurs or if they have a fever of 100 degrees or more.** Licensing requires that your child be free of **symptoms and/or fever for 24 hours** before returning to Kids Co. If a child becomes ill while at the center she will be isolated from the rest of the group until she is picked up. Please arrange for prompt pick up of your child so as not to jeopardize his health or the health of the other children and staff.

Another way we try to stop the spread of illness is by requiring that staff and children wash their hands upon arrival at the center, before eating, before participating in food activities, and after toileting.

**Please be sure to contact Kids Co. if your child will be absent.** This will help avoid unnecessary searching and phoning. Be sure to notify your child's elementary school of his absence too. Also, please inform us if your child has come in contact with any communicable diseases.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS TOO SICK TO GO OUTSIDE, YOUR CHILD IS TOO SICK TO COME TO KIDS CO.**

**Major injury:** In the event of a major injury, center staff will administer first aid and fill out a report for the parent. If medical attention is needed, the parent and the child's physician will be notified and consulted for proper actions to take. If necessary, we will contact 911 and first aid will be administered until medical help arrives. The child will then be transported to the nearest hospital unless other arrangements have been made.

**CONCUSSION INJURIES**

Washington State law requires all recreation and sports organizations and schools to notify parents about the dangers of concussions and the importance of removing a child from play if they are suspected of a head injury.

Since Kids Co. programs offer sports and active play, we offer the following information:

Concussions are one of the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities. A concussion is caused by a blow or motion to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Concussions can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. They can occur in any organized or unorganized sport or activity and can result from a fall or from players colliding with each other, the ground, or with obstacles.

Continuing to play with a concussion or symptoms of head injury leaves the child or adolescent especially vulnerable to greater injury and even death. Therefore, it is important that a youth that is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a sport or recreational activity be removed from play immediately. The youth should not return to play until he or she has been evaluated by a licensed health care provider and has received written clearance to return to play.

Kids Co does the following to prevent and treat concussions and other head injuries:

- Children are supervised and remain within visual or auditory range at all times;

- Staff are trained to recognize symptoms of a head injury (child appears dazed or stunned, seems confused, moves clumsily, loses consciousness-even briefly, shows personality or behavior changes, becomes nauseous or vomits, has double or blurred vision, or becomes dizzy);
- Children are required to use helmets when they ride bikes or other “wheels” (no skateboards);
- Children are reminded of the safety rules of the sport or recreation activity; and
- Parents are notified immediately in cases of suspected injury and appropriate medical treatment is sought. In the event the parent cannot be reached immediately, staff will call 911.

### **SAFETY & SECURITY**

Kids Co. staffs ensure that all children are properly supervised at all times. This includes times when children may be in transition from one activity to another, outside, traveling on a field trip, in a public place or in the school. Children are never out of sight and/or auditory range of staff. Walkie-talkies are used to supplement staff communication. Door chimes are used at some centers. When restrooms are located out of sight or auditory range, children are escorted in groups and are not allowed to go in pairs or on their own. Staff will ensure that the appropriate child to staff ratios will be met at all times.

### **INFORMATION REGARDING CHILD ABUSE**

All Kids Co. staff is given specific training about the detection and reporting of child abuse or neglect. Our staff is aware of signs of abuse, neglect or developmentally inappropriate behavior and is required by law to report suspected cases **immediately**. Referrals to CPS are made without conferring with parents. Please see the Statement for the Prevention of Abuse in your enrollment packet for more information about our policies and procedures that staff receives upon hire.

### **KIDS CO. STATEMENT FOR PREVENTION OF ABUSE**

All staff receives this information upon hire.

At Kids Co. we take the job of caring for the children in our programs very seriously. It is our responsibility to make sure that each child in our care is provided an enriching, nurturing and safe environment. Thus, the prevention of the mistreatment or abuse of a child is of the utmost importance to Kids Co. We have developed the following guidelines ensure each child is safe and protected while under our care.

All staff is carefully screened upon hire and background checks are conducted.

Staff must read and understand the Child Protective Services guide to being a mandatory reporter of child abuse/neglect or suspected child abuse/neglect. Details of this classification of Mandatory Reporter are outlined in the handout that staff are required to review upon hire.

Along with each staff's responsibility to report suspected cases of abuse, it is also extremely important that staff is aware of their own actions in caring for the children in the program that can put the child or the staff at risk. Please review the following guidelines about child contact and general protocol at the centers:

- The environment and operating procedures at each of our centers is designed for maximum visibility and safety to ensure that physical and/or sexual abuse does not occur.
- Verbally or emotionally abusing or punishing children as a form of discipline is not allowed at any time. All program rules and boundaries must be followed at all times by everyone at the center including staff, children, parents and volunteers/visitors.
- Staff should avoid being alone with a single child. If a staff is in a situation that requires one on one attention, the staff and child should be able to be observed by other staff or adults. Helping children change clothing must be done with the door ajar and an additional staff nearby. Staff should never leave a volunteer, visitor or parent/caregiver alone with any children.
- Children should not sit on the lap of a staff or be carried by a staff unless they are ill and unable to walk. The children should be told in a caring way that they can sit on their own, fostering independence, never rejected or ridiculed. In addition, although affection and warmth toward the children is encouraged, tickling, embracing hugs (an arm around the shoulders is okay) or rough-housing with the children is discouraged so that children can feel comfortable and staff minimize the chance of injury/risk or misinterpretation by someone observing the interaction.

- Staff should not give personal gifts to children or attend functions outside of the program. Staff are not permitted to babysit for families in the program (see Staff Professionalism) and must never be recommended by their program manager or solicit/offer babysitting while working at the center.
- Any information of abuse or suspected **abuse by families** (parents, grandparents and other extended family) must be documented fully and communicated to the program manager immediately. The program manager will determine the best course of action and will advise the staff of the next step (i.e. make a report to CPS). Our licenser will be informed of any reports made to CPS.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that an **employee, school staff or volunteer** abused a child, his or her conduct should be reported immediately to the program manager and regional manager. Appropriate actions will be taken regarding the employee or volunteer including suspension or termination.
- Staff should be keenly aware of possible abuse from **child to child** in the program and report any incidents, whether based on actual observation or what a child has reported. All allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and investigated internally to determine the next course of action. Parents will be informed of any reports their child has made to a staff and/or observations a staff has documented of a child to child incident.
- Confidentiality of information related to child abuse is crucial and should be limited to only those directly involved and the appropriate Kids Co. management and other authorities. Staff must never discuss with other families/children regarding a suspected case of abuse. Staff may only discuss these types of matters with the program manager, regional manager or president and CEO.
- Staff should always err on the side of caution. If staff hear or observe anything that is uncomfortable or doesn't seem right, bring it to the attention of the program manager or regional manager.

### **STAFF PROFESSIONALISM**

Kids Co. staff is trained to establish and maintain relationships with children, parents and other staff that is professional in nature at all times. In an effort to avoid any conflict of interest, Kids Co. staff is not permitted to provide private child care to program participants outside Kids Co. sanctioned activities.

### **EMERGENCY/DISASTER POLICY**

Kids Co. programs follow the Emergency/Disaster plans at each of our host schools. Emergency/Disaster drills take place at least once a month and are recorded on the Emergency/Disaster Drill Log. An evacuation plan is posted in the center. Out-of-state contacts are included in each child's enrollment form and are important for our staff to know in the event of a major emergency. **In the event of a major emergency, families can call our Disaster Information line at 1-877-KIDSCO1** for updated information. Our Facebook page will also have updated information as it becomes available, or access to the internet becomes available. Talk with your program manager about where to be reunited with your child after an emergency occurs. Lastly, we ask that you do NOT call the center immediately unless absolutely necessary so that phone lines can be used for outbound calls to emergency services or to other staff members. For more information, our entire Disaster Policy is available at the center for families to review.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

It is very important that you inform the center staff or program manager about changes in address and telephone numbers for yourself and your designated emergency contacts. Keeping the information current will ensure fast notification in the event of an emergency.

### **LOCKDOWN**

In the event that an unsafe situation occurs on or near the premises of the schools in which we are located, Kids Co. will follow the guidance of the school and law enforcement officials to institute a lockdown of the facility. In the event that children are outside on the playground when an unsafe situation occurs, we will bring all children inside immediately and lock the doors. A semi-lock down is sometimes advised in which we keep all children on-site and lock the doors. A full lockdown means that in addition, we will turn off the lights, pull down shades or curtains to shield windows and keep the children sitting in a group together with staff until notified by police that it

is safe and the situation is no longer a threat. Staff may not be able to answer calls to the center during this time, as phone lines may be needed for emergency purposes. Parents will be notified if a lockdown occurs.

**DISCIPLINE/CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY**

Discipline is a way of teaching children appropriate forms of behavior. **It is not punishment.** It is not enough to tell children what behaviors we find inappropriate, we must also teach them acceptable ways of handling difficult situations. There are many ways we attempt to accomplish this.

Prevention through careful planning is the best approach to discipline. Establishing a warm and loving relationship with the children can eliminate negative behavior through positive means. This is accomplished by:

1. Creating a warm and loving atmosphere.
2. Using prevention techniques (e.g., careful planning of activities and the environment, adhering to a consistent daily routine).
3. Noticing the positive behavior of each child.
4. Offering choices to children.
5. Being a role model by dealing with situations in a calm, controlled and caring manner.

There may be times when intervention is necessary. We discuss the situation with the child on a level he can understand. We then redirect the child to a positive behavior. If the child persists in disruptive behavior we offer the choice to correct the situation or to accept the consequences of the behavior. This may involve being restricted from play for a few minutes ("quiet time"). If a problem persists your child may be dis-enrolled from the program.

Although we try to review each situation on its own merits, we believe that consistency of discipline measures is more effective and in the best interest of each child. Therefore, as part of our child guidance policy, please be advised that if your child is suspended or expelled from school, she will not be allowed to attend Kids Co. during that time as well.

Kids Co. programs are large group care focused and designed to meet the needs of all children receiving care. If your child engages in conduct that indicates a need for small group or one-on-one care, you may be expected to provide an aide that meets Department of Early Learning child care center licensing rules and at your sole expense or Kids Co. may need to terminate enrollment.

Although Kids Co. will make every reasonable effort to provide care to your child there may be instances where a child's behaviors cannot be safely or adequately managed in a large group setting. Kids Co. staffs are not special education teachers nor do they have any specialization in working with kids who exhibit unsafe or especially difficult behaviors.

There are some behaviors that are of a serious enough nature that they are specifically identified in this handbook: biting or other violent conduct, inappropriate touching and/or language.

**Biting or other violent conduct:** Although biting is not common beyond the toddler stage, it can happen for various reasons in children preschool age and older. As stated above, every consideration is taken to help children manage their own behavior. If your child bites, in an effort to help the child doing the biting and to protect the other children from being bitten, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be asked to take their child home for the remainder of the day. It is very important that each child understand that biting is a very serious action and it is not acceptable at Kids Co. Biting that cannot be stopped will result in suspension up to termination of enrollment. The same protocol would apply to other violent conduct such as intentional hitting, kicking or any other physical conduct that poses a threat of harm to your child or other children enrolled at Kids Co.

**Inappropriate touching and/or language:** Although it is perfectly normal for children to be curious about their bodies, the expression of that curiosity should be appropriate for their age and stage of development. If inappropriate touching or explicit language occurs the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified and may be asked to take their child home for the remainder of the day depending on the severity of the incident. If there is another incident, depending on the severity and/or nature, the child will be suspended. It is very important that each child understand that inappropriate touching and/or explicit language is a very serious action and it is not acceptable at Kids Co. Inappropriate touching/language behaviors that cannot be stopped will result in suspension up to termination of enrollment. Depending on the severity of the incident, CPS may be notified.

Kids Co. retains the right to unilaterally terminate care following conduct by children or parents that is contrary to the policies and expectations contained in this handbook and distributed to all families upon enrollment, or for any other reason, and may do so at any time.

**Under no circumstances will corporal punishment, ridicule or name-calling be used as forms of discipline on the premises.** Additionally we prohibit: aversive stimuli, withholding nutrition or hydration, inflicting physical or psychological pain, forced physical exercise to eliminate behaviors, punitive work, punishment by peers, and group punishment for individual behavior.

**Physical Restraint:** We are committed to preventing situations where the use of physical restraint is necessary, and we will do everything possible to de-escalate the situation, including but not limited to: using a soothing quiet voice, moving away from the child, removing the child from the situation and validating the child's feelings. In most cases, physical restraint is not needed; however as a last resort it may be used when a child poses a threat to him/herself or the safety of others. Parents will be notified immediately in the event that physical restraint was necessary. Repeated behaviors where restraint is needed will not be tolerated.

Additionally, in an effort to keep all of our children safe while in our care and to eliminate as much possibility for accidental harm or injury, Kids Co. is a "drug and weapon free" program. We have a policy of **NO TOLERANCE for threatening language used by children or adults, illegal substances, weapons or toy weapons on Kids Co. premises.** If such an item is found on your child or in your child's belongings, he will be removed from the group and you will be called immediately to take your child home for the remainder of the day. Your child will also be suspended from attendance at Kids Co. for one additional day. Failure to comply with this policy may result in your child's enrollment being terminated.

### **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

We believe that parents provide the most important influence in a child's life. The more involved parents are in our program and the more frequent the communication between parents and teachers, the greater will be the child's opportunity for development. Our first step is to have parents attend an orientation/open house in the Fall of each year. **We encourage all parents and children to attend an orientation/tour.** At the orientation or tour families can learn about our facility, visit and meet the classroom teachers, discuss expectations, hear about available resources and review enrollment documents. If an interpreter is needed, please make that request to the program manager in advance.

Our staff is available throughout the year by email, telephone, and in person conferences by request. For our early learning and preschool participants, parent teacher conferences are scheduled 2 times per year. Progress reports, portfolios or other assessment reports will be reviewed at that time. All parents will receive individual feedback verbally about their child.

**We have found that parents/guardians who spend time in the program strengthen the relationship between the families and the staff at Kids Co. This also sends a very positive message of caring and support to your child.** Please arrange volunteer time in advance with your program manager. All regular volunteers must complete a Washington State Patrol and Department of Early Learning Background Check.

**Parent/Guardian Conduct:** While we encourage and enjoy parents/guardians to spend time in their child's program, we also have an expectation that all adults and children in the center abide by the center rules and guidelines. We ask that parents/guardians of the children in our program take special care to be courteous and respectful in all of their interactions whether with children (including their own child), staff, or other parents. If there is a situation where the conduct of a parent/guardian is not consistent with the center rules or is disrespectful, the program manager may ask that parent to refrain from the behavior or to leave the center. Weapons or firearms of any kind are not permitted in the center or on the grounds. In addition, there is no smoking permitted at Kids Co. or on the school grounds at any time.

If at any time a staff feels a parent/guardian is out of line or dangerous to anyone, he/she will report it immediately to the manager. We ask that parents/guardian help us to make our centers a home-away-from-home; a place where children and staff feel warm and welcomed each day.

Inappropriate conduct by parents, authorized pick-ups or emergency contacts may result in staff calling 911 and/or termination of enrollment.

**STAFF**

Our managers and teachers are typically university/college educated, have an early childhood/child development background and are experienced in working with young children. They are provided with in-service workshops and training, including 1st Aid/CPR certification. All staff members meet the licensing requirements of the State of Washington, Department of Early Learning. Most important, they share a love for children and are dedicated to providing high quality care for your child. All staff receives STARS/MERIT (the State of Washington registry system) certification which includes 20 hours specific training plus at least 10 hours of continuing education each year.

**TUITION**

Kids Co. is a non-profit corporation. The fees charged to the parents are set where our income and fundraising efforts offset our monthly expenses for space, toys, operating supplies, staff and administrative costs. **The cost of our program does not vary with individual daily absences, illness, holidays or vacations so we do not make tuition adjustments.** Tuition is evaluated annually. All fees and policies are subject to change without notice. Whenever possible, 30 days written notice will be given for tuition increases.

Kids Co.'s Tax ID # 91-1450148

**Tuition rates vary by center and time slot. Please see your tuition rate sheet for rates that apply to your center.**

**Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. If payment is not received by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, a \$25.00 late fee** will be charged to your account. If fees are not paid in full by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, your child's enrollment will be suspended beginning the 15<sup>th</sup> and your child will not be permitted to attend. **There is a \$25.00 NSF fee** for checks that do not clear. Failure to pay in full by the end of the month **may result in termination of enrollment.** Finance charges of 1% per month, 12% per annum will be applied to past due balances.

All tuition payments are to be made to **Kids Co.** Payments can be mailed to the Kids Co. administrative office, given to the program manager, assistant manager or placed in the tuition box in the sign-in area. Statements will be mailed to your home each month. If you do not receive my monthly statement it is your responsibility to call or ask the program manager or the billing office for the correct amount due.

**Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):** Payment by EFT is available as an option for paying child care tuition and fees. For families who elect to pay their tuition via EFT, the transaction will be made on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month tuition is due. If the 10<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, the transfer will be made the next business day. For failed transactions, Kids Co. will charge a **\$25 processing fee** in addition to charging your Kids Co. account a late payment fee.

**All families that have difficulty keeping their account current will be required to pay their bill via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Payment agreements can be made, see the program manager for the appropriate form.**

**In the event there is an overdue balance on my account and it has been sent to a collection agency, all court costs, collection fees, interest fees and filing fees will be paid by the parent or legal guardian.**

**TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**WE ACCEPT HSD (City of Seattle) and DSHS (Washington State) CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES.** Please ask the manager for information about these programs.

In addition, Kids Co. offers a **Schedule B reduced tuition rate** to those families that qualify. Please refer to your tuition rate sheet and income guidelines for further qualifying information. We also offer **Special Case Scholarships** for those that may have extenuating circumstances that require tuition assistance beyond the Schedule B or other subsidy programs can accommodate. Please ask your program manager for an application or see our website for more information. Special Case Scholarships are granted on a limited basis for families with compelling need for tuition assistance. Our ability to offer scholarships may change from year to year. A fully completed application is required. Recipients may be asked to participate in an evaluation process that may consist of a written or telephone survey or interview. In our effort to provide tuition assistance to as many families that need it, 100% scholarships for tuition are not available.

Scholarships that are not renewed on time or applicants who submit incomplete forms will be subject to the regular tuition charges and may mean the family is no longer eligible to receive assistance.

### **IMPORTANT CHILD CARE SUBSIDY AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES**

We are here to help! Our goal is to make sure families receive high quality care for their children at our centers while still maintaining our budget. If you need help understanding our policies or completing the required information to receive a subsidy, please feel free to ask your program manager for assistance.

If you are seeking tuition assistance or scholarship support for your child to attend a Kids Co. center, please read the following important information regarding our policies and procedures for the following subsidy programs:

- ✓ State of Washington (DSHS)
- ✓ City of Seattle (HSD)
- ✓ Kids Co. (Schedule B and Special Case Scholarship)

Kids Co. is operated by Evergreen Children's Association, a local, 501(c)(3), non-profit corporation. We are committed to serving families of differing economic means, which is why we accept DSHS and HSD subsidies, offer reduced tuition rates (Schedule B) and special case scholarships. Because we do not set limits on the number of families receiving subsidies/scholarships, it is critical that participating families maintain their eligibility. The amount of funds we receive from the subsidy programs does not cover our actual cost to provide care, therefore we ask that parents read and sign the attached agreement in order to protect our ability to accept subsidies and offer scholarships.

**Schedule B Tuition Assistance** is a program provided to parents in the event that coverage by the City of Seattle or Washington State is not granted. This program is based on income and requires a completed application and proof of income. The number of schedule B subsidies given during the year is dependent on the amount of scholarship funds available and may change from year to year. Schedule B recipients must renew their agreements every 6-12 months or less depending on each individual situation.

**Special Case Scholarships** is a program provided to parents in the event that coverage by the City of Seattle or Washington State is not granted, subsidies are granted but the co-pay is too high or there are extenuating financial hardships. This program is based on need and requires a completed application and proof of income. The number and amount of scholarships given during the year is dependent on the amount of scholarship funds available. The scholarship amount requested and the amount granted may change from year to year. Special case scholarship recipients must renew their agreements every 6-12 months or less depending on each individual situation.

### **SUMMER PROGRAM**

During the **summer**, Kids Co. offers a wide range of activities including field trips, arts and crafts, sports, games, science activities, etc. A summer brochure will be available in late winter/early spring explaining the summer program more thoroughly. The summer program for school-age children will be based on a weekly fee (fees, schedules, and activities will be addressed in the summer brochure).

### **FIELD TRIP TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Kids Co. offers field trips as a part of our enrichment programs. Our field trip transportation policy is to utilize public transportation when feasible, and to coordinate the use of private vehicles driven by parent volunteers (only very rarely and with appropriate seat belts/restraints, valid driver's license and adequate auto insurance) when public transportation is not possible. For some trips, school district buses are used. Field trip attendance lists and staff to child ratios will be strictly followed. Parents will be informed of field trip dates, times, and locations in advance. Children will be expected to follow all safety rules of the field trip venue and transportation. Children who are not able to follow directions or follow safety rules may be asked to stay behind and parents may need to find alternate care for that day.

Taking a large group of children on a field trip can be challenging. We are very serious about the safety rules and will inform you of any safety issues, if they occur. There are some problems that may result in your child being suspended from field trips. If this should occur, you are responsible for finding alternative care for your child. In the event that your child is asked to stay back from a field trip it is not acceptable to have them join another group even if that group is at the center.

**FIELD TRIP BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS** - Please note that although some of the expectations are geared more toward school-age children. Staff adapts these expectations as appropriate for younger children.)

As a participant in the Kids Co. Summer Program it is understood that children are expected to make every effort to follow these rules on field trips:

1. Stay with your group at all times.
2. When walking children are to stay behind the front teacher and in front of the back teacher. Children will follow all street safety rules and must always stay away from the curb while waiting for the bus, walking and/or while waiting to cross the street.
3. Children will hold their partner's hand if my teacher requests it.
4. On the bus children must follow these rules:
  - wait until a teacher gets on/off before children do
  - go all the way to the back of the bus and sit down if there is an available seat
  - sit down until it is time to get off the bus
  - keep all parts of your body inside the bus, not outside the window
  - sit properly on the bus
  - Children will talk quietly and use appropriate language
  - Children are not allowed to eat on the bus
5. Keep my toys and money at home. Children are responsible for keeping track of their clothes and personal items.
6. On a field trip children must always be directly supervised or escorted by a teacher when s/he has to go to the bathroom. It is not acceptable to be escorted by parents, a school-age buddy or field trip volunteers.
7. If a child gets lost s/he is to stay where they are (even if a stranger offers to help) because a teacher will be searching for me.
8. Wear appropriate clothing on field trips (shorts when it's warm, pants when it's cold and good walking shoes and socks). Keep extra clothes at the center so I can be comfortable no matter what the weather. And, wear your Kids Co. t-shirt when instructed. Children should not wear flip-flops unless it is allowed for the pool or beach.
9. Follow all instructions from the teachers at all times. I will try to be friendly and cooperative with the other children. I will refrain from doing things that are dangerous to the other children or me.

I realize that if I do not follow these rules, I will not be able to go on field trips and my parent(s) understand they will have to find alternative care for me. I understand that these rules are for the safety of the group.

### **CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

Kids Co. welcomes any and all suggestions for improvement. If you have specific concerns please direct any concerns first with your child's teacher. We ask that these types of conversations do not occur in the classrooms and in front of the children. If you feel your concern has not been addressed or you would like to contact a supervisor, talk to the program manager or assistant manager at the center. If you have feedback you would like to share with our administrative leadership, contact the regional managers at the Kids Co. Administrative Office at 206-781-8062. You can make a complaint or grievance without fear of retaliation or interference. You will receive timely notification of the resolution and an explanation of any further appeal, rights or recourse.

### **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q. I want to enroll my child for 3 days a week. Can the days vary each week?**

*A. No. You must choose the same 3 days each week for your child to attend. This is the only way we can staff appropriately and make sure we are within state guidelines for staff to child ratios.*

**Q. There are several days when the Seattle Public Schools close for in-service training. Will you provide care on those days?**

*A. Yes. We do our best to provide all-day care on those days for all the children enrolled in our programs. The only reason care may not be available is if we have difficulty getting the proper amount of staff to provide quality care. Your program manager will let you know the number of children that can be served on school closure days. Children enrolled in our programs will be charged for care provided beyond their regular time slots. Please see the EXTRA HOURS portion of your Tuition Rate Sheet for details (in the left-hand side of your packet).*

**Q. After school I only need care from 3 to 5 PM. Can I get a break in tuition?**

A. No. Our fees are based upon time slots due to staffing and budget concerns. Your child will always have care available until 6:00 PM even though you normally pick her up earlier.

**Q. Does Kids Co. provide child care during Winter Break and Spring Break when the public schools are closed?**

A. Most of our centers remain open year round and we continue to provide care during most public school breaks/closures. At certain centers it depends on the needs of the families. Depending on the situation, we may be required to pay the Seattle School District (our landlords) extra money to remain open and it is sometimes not financially feasible for us to do that. Please check with your program manager regarding your location. During these times enrolled families will be billed for extra hours of care used beyond their regular time slot. Drop-in hours for not regularly enrolled children are available as well. Please refer to the Tuition Rate Sheet for details.

**Q. What if Kids Co. is closed on a day my child is normally scheduled to attend? Can I switch days that week?**

A. No. You must keep the same schedule each week because of our staffing and licensing requirements. All closures are clearly stated in this handbook. Please plan ahead of time and be aware that you will not have care available that day and that you will not be able to switch and use another day.

**Q. What if the weather report is for snow and bad weather? How will I know if my center will provide care on those days?**

A. Our policy is to announce all closures, delays and limited service availability on our website and center voicemail. You can find out if your school is closed by going to [www.schoolreport.org](http://www.schoolreport.org) We will update our voicemail, Facebook page and website regularly, so please check back frequently for the latest information.

**Q. I have a flexible work schedule and may need to change my child's schedule weekly. Can I do that?**

A. No. To change your child's schedule you must give written notice by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month prior to the change (forms are available from the manager). This allows us to continuously provide all our families with uninterrupted quality care. We cannot change schedules weekly.

**Q. What if I have to withdraw my child from the program and cannot give the center 30 days notice? Will I lose my deposit?**

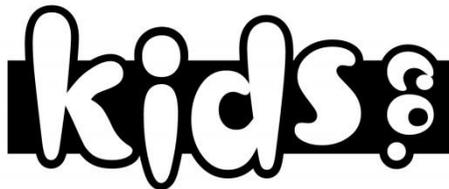
A. You must give a 30-day written notice of withdrawal (forms are available from the manager). Once that notice is received and the tuition is calculated for 30 days from that date, your deposit will be applied to the balance due. If adequate notice is not received, tuition will accrue for 30 days from the last day your child was in attendance and you will also forfeit your deposit.

**Q. What if we don't plan on using child care during winter and/or spring breaks, can we get credit for these hours?**

A. There are several fixed costs that need to be paid whether your child chooses to attend during these times or not. No credit will be given for absences.

If you have any additional questions about our programs, policies, etc., please contact the program manager at your center.

**THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING KIDS CO. AS YOUR CHILD CARE PROVIDER! WE LOOK FORWARD TO SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S SUCCESS IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE.**



Kids Co. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Our mission is to provide and advocate for quality childcare that enriches and nurtures all children, supporting their success in school and in life.