

BUILDING BRAINS ONE NEURON AT A TIME

Junior Preschool & Preschool
Parent Handbook

REVISED: March 2017

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**Please note that throughout the school year, there will be changes to Kids U policies and procedures. These changes will be communicated immediately to parents via email from their centre. The parent handbook will be updated at minimum once a year to reflect any changes to policies and procedures.*

About This Handbook

The intention of the Parent Handbook is to provide parents and guardians with the information they will require to have a successful working relationship with the Kids U team.

All new families will have the opportunity to review the Parent Handbook online or by booking an appointment with the Program Supervisor. Amendments, additions, or deletions to this handbook will be provided to families currently attending the centre by way of memo or other centre posting, or through the newsletter, and to new families through periodic updates to this manual throughout the year as required.

This handbook shall be reviewed no less than once per year by the program director(s), Kids U corporate director(s), or a combination of the two. Families are encouraged to provide feedback on policies and procedures that affect them through the use of the comment and suggestion box, or through discussion or emails with the Director of Operations at any time during the year. Families are encouraged to provide their feedback in writing so we have a record of when the feedback was provided as well as the details.

Parents and guardians interested in knowing more about the specific policies and procedures that govern our other programs can email us at info@kidsu.ca.

Kids U's Vision & Mission

Vision

Kids U inspires open collaboration to create a student-centered, project-based learning environment. We encourage a foundation for a well rounded, creative, structured and enthusiastic global-minded individual.

Mission

Our mission at Kids U is to provide exemplary early childhood education by offering a model program designed around the latest in brain research so each daily experience builds the child's foundation for future learning. Kids U ensures that each student strives for academic success, fosters creativity and builds imagination, while developing intellectual curiosity, and becoming a responsible global citizen.

Standard of Excellence

Children who experience a higher quality early education program are more likely to have greater academic success; enhanced self-esteem and increased self-control. Kids U aligns the program and curriculum to build both spheres of the brain using experienced early childhood educators.

Kids U strongly believes in keeping up with latest research in early childhood development and upholding its high standards. Kids U is accredited by The Alberta Association for Accreditation and Early Learning and Care Services (www.aelcs.ca). This aspiration is captured in Kids U's ability to maintain Alberta accreditation and adhere to quality guidelines. Kids U has annual self-evaluations for its programs and maintains a three-year Quality Enhancement Plan for continual improvement.

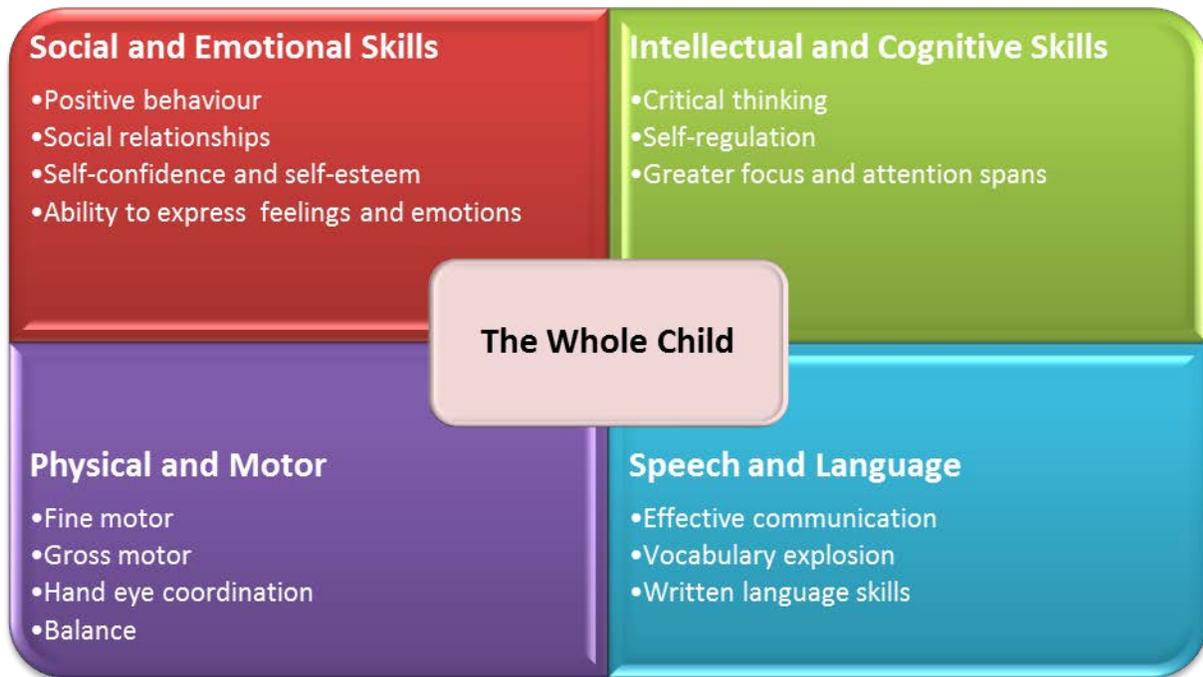
Kids U's Educational Philosophy

Kids U admits children of any race, creed and national origin. Young children require a nurturing and stimulating program. We strive to meet these through experienced personnel, current educational programs and an appealing surrounding. Our unique curriculum offers loving childcare while delivering an enriching and outstanding education program.

At Kids U, our primary goal is for children to feel safe and secure. Additionally, we believe that a learning environment, which fosters respect for cultural diversity and utilizes an eclectic approach to education allows for optimal growth and development of young children. By giving the children a variety of classroom options it provides them with a chance to become comfortable with schooling, our centre and all the teachers. Our classrooms are used in a manner to stimulate the child and then give the teacher opportunity to be able to give the children a higher experience. Young children's developmental tasks are to build trust, learn social skills, begin mastery of academic skills and develop positive self-esteem. In order to best support these tasks, our program strives to provide developmentally appropriate activities, well trained and consistent staff, a safe and healthy learning environment, and continuity of care. Also, throughout the whole learning process we believe parents are their child's first teacher; thus, we work to support parents in their efforts to guide their child's development as well.

Whole Child

Our Brain-Based learning curriculum is designed to develop the whole child. The following diagram describes the domains of development:

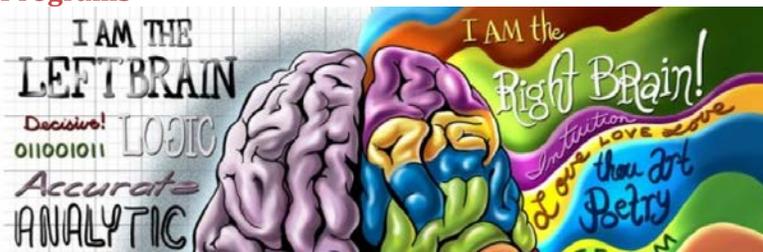


Brain-Based Learning

Kids U offers an innovative approach to early childhood education in way of an early learning institute. Kids U’s brain-based learning incorporates the latest research in neuroscience, developmental psychology, and early childhood education. The essence of Kids U is to create and enhance your child’s executive functions; functions that control self-regulation. Before the age of six, these functions make learning become more natural, entering new environments become more comfortable and social abilities become stronger, easier.

Before the age of six, the executive functions are malleable. This is why we promote and use this approach at an early age. To start, we use classrooms to independently develop both sides of the brain, the left (logical, structured, analytical) and right (creative, intuitive, imaginative) functions of the brain. Those functions are explained further below. When the children become more comfortable with these classrooms, we have classes that stimulate the entire brain and they work together for practical life to create the whole child.

Brain Immersion Programs



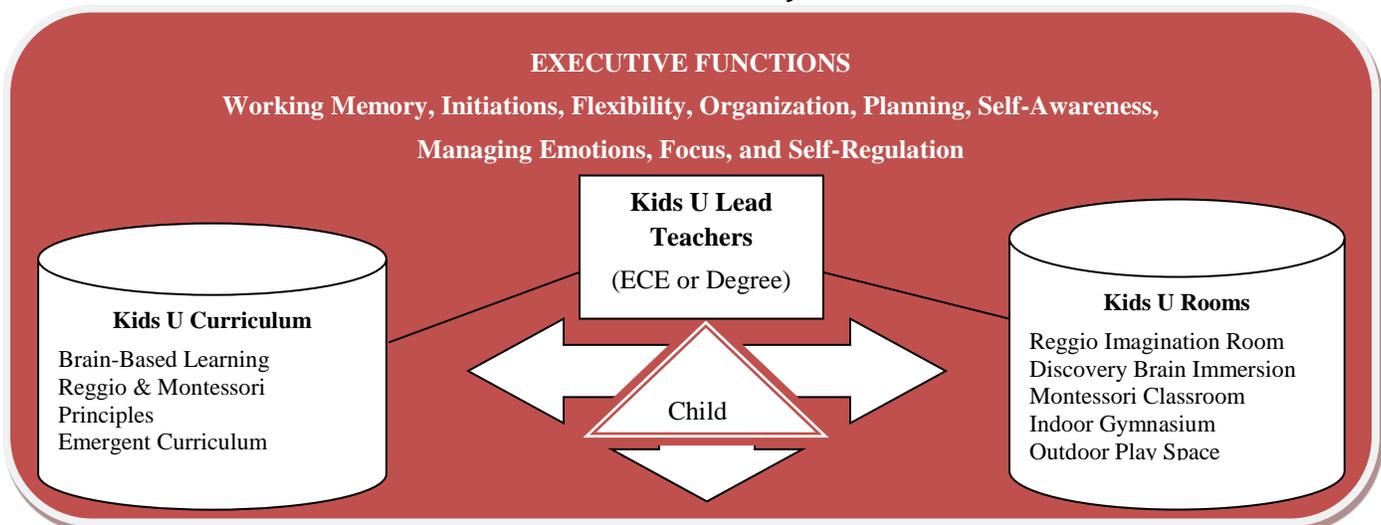
Developing and Strengthening Executive Functions in the Brain

Neurological research studies conducted by **HARVARD** in early childhood indicates developing **EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS** are vital to life-long success in school and in life

*“Acquiring the early building blocks of **EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS** is one of the most important and challenging tasks of the early childhood years, and the opportunity to build further on these rudimentary capacities is critical to healthy development through middle childhood, adolescence, and into early adult life “*



Harvard University



MONTESSORI

Maria Montessori developed specific educational methods and materials based on her beliefs about how children learn. Instruction is based largely on sensory materials (Ryniker & Shoho, 2001). Children are usually grouped into multi-age classrooms spanning three years (Edwards 2002). According to Ryniker and Shoho (2001), the Montessori approach is based on the tenet that children learn most effectively when information is developmentally appropriate. Therefore, the philosophy gives children the ability to learn at their own pace instilling personal independence, motivation, and self-discipline. In early childhood, Montessori students learn through sensory-motor activities, working with materials that develop their cognitive powers through direct experience: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, and movement (American Montessori Society, 2011).

Montessori and traditional education programs differ in several ways, including physical environment, instructional methodology, and classroom attitude. For example, Montessori classrooms employ an open concept in which desks are arranged in “rafts” to promote individual and small-group learning and are composed of students across a three-year age range. Traditional classrooms have desks oriented in one direction for whole-group instruction and consist of same-grade students (Chattin-McNichols, 1992). Instructionally, Montessori programs use manipulative materials designed by Maria Montessori as an instructional methodology, whereas traditional classrooms use materials as teacher presentation aids. Furthermore, Montessori is distinct in that it does not use textbooks, worksheets, tests, grades, punishments, or rewards (Haines, 1995).

Pickering (1992) stated that Montessori programs help students develop attention, organization/order, visual and auditory perception, written language skills, fine and gross motor skills, mathematic skills, and personality. A Study by Dawson (1987) examined the efficacy of Montessori programs which examined mean grade equivalent scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) for minority Montessori students in grades 1 through 5 against national norms. Results of the descriptive comparison indicated higher mean grade equivalents for minority students in the Montessori program as compared to national norms. Dawson also compared Montessori ITBS and MAT test scores against matched “conventional schools” (matched on ethnicity) in the district for grades 1 through 4. Results indicated that Montessori scores were significantly higher on nearly all grade level comparisons.

REGGIO EMILIA

The Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy focused on preschool and primary education. It was started by Loris Malaguzzi and the parents of the villages around Reggio Emilia in Italy after World War II. The program is based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment based on the interests of the children through a self-guided curriculum.

The heart of the Reggio Emilia approach is that the child has rights (Malaguzzi, 1993). Important to this approach is the teacher's documentation of children's development (Vakil, Freeman, & Swim, 2003). For instance, displays of photographs and examples of children's work as well as teachers recordings and note taking of conversations provide records of children's development (New, 1992). The interests of children, as evidenced by their questions and curiosities, help to guide learning. Additionally, individual and group work is supported. Multiple forms of knowing are embraced (Hewett, 2001). Keeping within this framework, projects that emphasize children's expressions in an aesthetic environment are emphasized in the curriculum (Lim, 2004). It is also characteristic of this approach to keep teachers and children in the same group for 3 years.

Brain Based Learning and Executive Functions

In the brain, the ability to hold onto and work with given information, filter distraction, focus ones thinking and switch the gears that drive the complex system of the brain in an efficient air traffic control system in an airport where multiple planes land everyday require a specific kind of skill referred to as executive function. Executive functions refer to a set of skills that relies on three types of brain functions: Working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control. Children have these three skills from the time that they are born and they are born with the abilities to develop these skills. This full range of skills continues to grow and mature as the child moves on from childhood to their teen years and into adulthood.

According to Professor Diamond, EFs includes a child's ability to think outside the box and see things from a different perspective (cognitive flexibility), having the ability to mentally relate to different ideas and different facts to each other. And giving the considered response rather than an impulsive one, resisting temptations from the external environment and staying focused (having inhibitory control, including selective attention). These abilities are of utmost importance to a child's development and ability to solve problems, develop the abilities to be creative and reason in all aspects of life in the society.

Curriculum Strategies

INTEREST BASED PLANNING

Kids U recognizes that all children are individuals, and acknowledges that children will grow and develop at unique and varying paces. Our teachers differentiate their planning specific to each child. Developmentally appropriate activities are used to grow your child's skills and abilities. Ongoing observation of children's interests and abilities will be conducted and used as a guide when determining future planning goals and directions. Play will always be the main medium with which children learn and develop new skills in the program. Planned activities for children in the program will be open ended and the children will be allowed to complete the activity in ways that express and encourage their individuality.

MULTIPLE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS

Most early childhood programs in Calgary enrol children into a single classroom; however, children in Kids U are enrolled into class groups where children can participate in multiple classrooms through the day. The Kids U teachers coordinate amongst each other to plan developmentally-appropriate activities in multi-age groupings. Children's schedules are adjusted weekly to reflect their interests. Planning sheets and class schedules are posted on Fridays prior to the following week on the main bulletin board.

ALLOWING CHILDREN TO MAKE CHOICES

Kids U endeavours to assist children in developing strong independence skills, encouraging children to be responsible for their choices and the inevitable outcome of these choices. A universal problem-solving model will be used with all children. The cause/effect relationship of choices/outcomes will be stressed with all children in the program

Preschool Program

What makes our Preschool Program the best and stand out from the rest? Kids U understands the early years of life are critical for growth and development, school readiness, and it sets the foundation for life-long success. We want to successfully be building stronger foundations and brighter futures with care, time, and patience. Kids U's preschool program is much more comprehensive than the average preschool program and runs for 6.5 hours a day. Classes are between 8:30am and 3:00pm. Kids U's preschool program provides growth, development and learning opportunities through a number of daily activities, special events, and other programs. A two or three hour preschool program, two or three days a week; promising to develop children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and language skills seems unrealistic. It is unrealistic because children take time to develop intellectually. With that said, if you are coming to Kids U for two days a week, you are at least giving your child 12 to 13 hours of education. That is two and a half times more than a typical Calgary preschool.

Our programs and curriculums are more comprehensive by providing a variety of activities and the curriculum is designed to expand and define each hemisphere of the brain. We offer two sessions 8:30am to 12noon and 12noon to 3pm. By rotating classes, children become flexible among staff and peers and gain life skills to transition, become more independent and socially adaptable. Preschoolers thrive in orderly, well-organized classrooms with schedules that allow for a balance of active and quiet activities.

Kids U preschool's educational approach is designed to teach children beyond the basic skills and information required for kindergarten. Our preschoolers are on an accelerated track to acquire literacy and cognitive skills through a standards-driven, brain-based curriculum. They are also immersed in an abundance of hands-on, multisensory measures designed to advance their learning. Then they break out to experience and further define those skills during independent, child-led classroom environments. All subject areas are covered in our full day preschool program so preschoolers experience language arts, science, math, social studies, health and physical education. They participate in whole-group, independent or teacher-directed, skills building or child interest - activities.

All preschoolers are welcomed, hugged first, and then taught.

Our teachers are specialized in their area of childhood development and are always highly educated. Preschool is an exciting new chapter in your child's life, and our teachers are prepared to nurture children's cognitive, social-emotional, physical and creative development. Our educated and specialized teachers are continuously committed to actively interacting with your children to reinforce the learning acquired during whole group or independent activities. They are trained to be able to focus on each child directly and enhance each individual's skills and abilities to the fullest.

While most preschools in Calgary have a ratio of one teacher to twelve children for preschool age, but Kids U classrooms boast a low teacher to student ratio of 1:8. Our teacher to student ratio is low so that we are able to work with children in small groups or one-on-one. By offering small group and one-on-one academic attention, Kids U offers the best foundation in preparing your child for the elementary school years. Each child receives an unparalleled level of individual attention, to ensure success in reading, writing, math, as well as drama, music and art, while bolstering a sense of self-confidence and accomplishment. Children build confidence through fun, engaging activities while our teachers are able to partner with your child's desire to learn and explore.

The sounds of children laughing and playing are the sounds of children learning at Kids U!

Kids U graduates out perform their peers, always. Children at Kids U are able to trust their own ability to think and solve problems independently. Like the rest of us, children tend to learn through discovery as well as trial and error. Kids U students learn not to be afraid of making mistakes. They quickly find that few things in life come easily, and they can keep on trying without the fear of embarrassment. Kids U teachers use multiple forms of ongoing assessment to evaluate students' performance and development in different learning domains and share progress with you throughout the year.

The largest most comprehensive childcare quality study in Canada shows a majority of early childcare centres in Canada perform below the standard of early childhood education requirements. Harvard studies show, when children attend a poor quality childcare centre, this creates poor cognitive abilities, more social and behavioural issues and the children have less exposure to positive impacts. With this said, children entering school without participating in center-based programs "risk staying behind, doing poorly, eventually dropping out, and enduring other troublesome outcomes" (Groark et al., 2002). Canadian childcare centres are shown to have less structure and educators not strong enough to truly enhance communication, social and emotional development. These studies have also concluded that these issues can take up to 10 years for a child to regulate and change. With all that said, Alberta abides by a set of minimum standards that regulate center operations, administrative guidelines, ratios, and other principles for basic care (Alberta Human Services, 2012). The overall levels of childcare quality in Canada were "barely above the level deemed to be minimally adequate" (Goelman et al., 2006, p. 14).

At Kids U, we strive to adhere to the highest quality of early childhood education through different teaching styles and learning experiences. We understand early childhood education is much more than shapes, letter, and numbers. Effective growth and development of children's skills and abilities requires sufficient time, wide variety of activities, and inspiring environments.

Our Schedule **Please note, schedules vary based on site

Opening to 8:15am: Breakfast and free play in the gym.

8:15 to 8:30am: Transition into the classrooms.

8:30 to 11:30am: Session 1

(Classroom time and outdoor play)

11:30am to 12:00/15: Lunch time

12:00/15pm to 12:30pm: Transitioning into the classrooms and nappers are being put to sleep.

12:30 to 3:00pm: Session 2

2:30 to 2:45pm: Naptime over, transition into classrooms.

2:45 to 3:00pm: Snack time

(Classroom time w/ outdoor play)

3:00pm to Closing: Snack time, Free time/educational playtime.

Kids U Preschool Activities

- Songs
- Stories
- Calendar activities
- Instructions for the day
- Group activities

Circle Time



- Art
- Dramatic play
- Creative movement experiences
- Puzzles & manipulatives,
- Building & construction,
- Science, math , numeracy
- Language & literacy

Activity Centers



- Dressing up for winter
- Walking to the playground
- Moving to different classroom

Transitions



- Scaffold to serve themselves
- Engage in meaningful conversations
- Encourage table manners
- Set up plates, utensils, cups, etc
- Promote healthy choices
- Exposure to cultural foods

Meal Time



- Outdoor play space
- Nature walks
- Community playground
- Indoor gymnasium
- Expression through musical movements

Structured and Unstructured Play



- Right/left brain immersion classrooms rooms use children's interests to promote creativity, imagination, logic, and reality.

Brain Immersion



- Sweeping floors, wiping table, rinsing dishes, emptying garbage bins or recycling bins, etc.
- Assist in snack and lunch preparations 3-4 times a month
- Creating classroom materials such as playdough and other materials as need

Class Group Ownership



- Field trips
- Guest performances
- Cultural days and events
- Exposure to various extracurricular activities: Yoga, Zumba, Mad Science, etc

Enrichment Programs



- Family is a critical part of early childhood. Children put together performances, projects, displays, and plays.
- Several events are organized during the school year to get parents involved in their child's learning.

Look What I Did!



About Our Staff, Teachers & Volunteers

Staff, teachers and volunteers are required to adhere to the health, nutrition, and safety policies as outlined in this manual as well as the Staff Handbook provided to them upon hiring. Specific information on the certain teachers, staff, and volunteers is posted on our website or is provided on the 'Meet Our Staff' bulletin board.

Staff

All staff persons employed by Kids U must:

1. Provide a criminal record check, including vulnerable sectors search, dated within six months of their commencement date with the company. The criminal record check and vulnerable sectors search is renewed, at minimum, every three years thereafter in order for the employee to continue being employed by the centre.
2. Be childcare first aid certified and for this certification to remain current for the duration of their employment with the company.
3. Provide Child Care Certification issued by the Government of Alberta. Within the first six months of employment.

Teachers

The Government of Alberta issues certification levels or standings based on employee's education backgrounds. The three levels of certifications available are Assistant, Worker, and Supervisor.

Lead Teachers

Lead teachers have a bachelor's degree in education or an early childhood diploma from an accredited higher learning institution and hold at minimum the Government of Alberta childcare worker certification.

Volunteers

Volunteers are required to submit the criminal record check, including vulnerable sectors search, prior to their first day of service with the centre. We strongly encourage all volunteers to be first aid certified and all volunteers must adhere to all Kids U policies.

Admission and Registration Policy

Kids U accepts children 12 months - 6 years of age before the first day of service being provided, and they must not have started attending grade school. Please note that different Kids U sites may have varying ages which they accept.

To begin the registration process please visit our website www.kidsu.ca and click the "REGISTER NOW" button located at the top right corner of the screen. Once here, select the Kids U location of preference and complete the two-step process (Application form & non-refundable Registration fee). Once your application is received, a detailed email will be sent describing the application process.

Families of prospective students must complete a formal application to gain admission into our preschool program. Although, applications are accepted year round, admission is heavily based on the qualifications of the family and student.

In determining a candidate's admissibility, the site leadership will consider a student's development history, aptitude and behaviour, citizenship qualities, and extra-curricular interests. Simultaneously, goals of further enhancement and enrichment, and abilities to stay actively involved in their child's development at Kids U, will also be considered. Although Kids U does not require an entrance exam and/or recent psycho-educational assessment, the site leadership may request a personal interview, classroom visit and permission to contact references from any other curricular or extracurricular activities the child is involved with to help us reach a complete assessment. Siblings of existing students are given preference over other candidates.

Once admitted, parents will be asked to complete an Enrollment Contract from our Registration Department. They will also be required to pay a deposit in the amount of one month's tuition to secure the requested and confirmed spot. This deposit is then applied to their account. Once this is completed, parents will be invited by the centre for a Parent Orientation; no later than two weeks prior to your child's first day of attendance. At this time, remaining paperwork and the \$250.00 Materials Fee is required before your child's first day.

While your child is attending Kids U, you will be required to maintain current records on your child with the centre at all times. A semi-annual review of the child's enrolment application and emergency contact information will be required to be completed, at minimum, each March and September. At this time all parents may be expected to complete files (twice a year) regardless of registration date. Changes to a child's file can only be accepted in writing.

Subsidy

We support the use of Alberta subsidized child care for families who qualify. Once accepted, parents are eligible to apply for subsidy. This can be done by visiting our website and clicking the "Apply for Subsidy" button on the top right corner. We recommend all parents apply and see if they qualify. The online application takes less than an hour and the results are instant. **Please forward the conditional approval letter prior to your enrolment date.**

If subsidy is established for the family, they are responsible for paying the difference between the program fee and the approved subsidy coverage amount as provided by the child care subsidy office.

It is the family's responsibility to ensure subsidy applications are completed and maintained in an up to date status at all times. The centre will not provide partial fees while waiting for a subsidy application to be processed. Families must be diligent in monitoring their subsidy file status as the centre will charge families full fees for services provided as soon as subsidy lapses or discontinues for any reason.

Tuition and Fees

Program fees are calculated on a yearly basis. Although the number of days in each month varies depending on the number of recognized holidays or closure dates, there is NO change in monthly fees for current students.

Parents must complete a Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) Form prior to their children's first day of Kids U. The Electronic Fund Transfer is processed on the first day of the month. Parents are responsible for having the adequate funds in their account at this time. If your payment is NSF, you will need to pay the monthly tuition by cheque in person; plus the applicable NFS Fee. If we do not receive your payment before the 10th of the month, there will also be a late fee charged.

Families who are not diligent in ensuring their account is kept in current status risk having care of their child terminated. Any family with an account with an outstanding balance will have their position immediately placed on hold (i.e. your child cannot attend if your fees are past due). Your child will be terminated from Kids U if your account remains in a past due status past the 10th of any month.

If childcare services are terminated due to non-payment of fees, families will still be responsible for ensuring the outstanding fees are paid to the centre. Kids U will forward any outstanding accounts to an outside collection agency to ensure proper closure of the account and monies owed are recovered.

Any fee for this will also be borne by the family involved.

One-Time Registration Fee

During application, there is a *non-refundable, non-transferable application fee of \$150.00* per child for new students through paypal. Should Kids U be unable to accommodate your start date and requested program, \$100 will be returned to you. The remaining \$50 remains as an Administration fee. If a parent chooses to withdraw your child's name from the waitlist, the full fee is non-refundable. Application fees are to be paid online via paypal to the Registration Department. Please make sure you receive a cash receipt upon payment. We do not charge registration fees for children who take the summer months off and return the following September as well as transferring students between Kids U locations.

Annual Materials Fee

There is a *non-refundable, non-transferable annual material fee of \$250.00* for all new and returning students. This fee helps to cover the cost of consumable supplies, developmental screenings, association memberships, and other materials for the children. This provides us the opportunity to ensure the classrooms are not restricted by their budgets and not purchase things that are not in the interest of a high quality education. The fee covers materials for the preschool year from September 1 to August 31. Unfortunately, this fee is only prorated for those registering for immediate enrolment after March 1st and is calculated at \$25/month for the remaining school year and summer months. This is required in full for all admissions. The material fee for new students is due no later than 30 days prior to your child's enrolment date. The material fees for returning students for the following school year are due by April 30. Parents who miss this deadline will lose

their child's place in class. If these parents choose to enrol their child a later time they will be considered a new student.

TUITION INCLUDES

The monthly program fee includes the following for every child attending the program:

- Healthy morning breakfast and lunch.
- Healthy afternoon snack is for children in preschool and care.
- Special guests, extracurricular activities, projects, and specialized instruction
- Activities, classroom supplies, and supervised care
- Personal cubby bins for storage of personal items
- Personal mattress or cot for napping
- Diapering consumables (if required)

Please note: Field Trips are NOT extracurricular activities as they are not mandatory to attend. Field trips are also NOT included in fees and may require an additional cost depending on the destination. Extracurricular activities include mandatory events school events such as: special guests, projects and specialized instruction.

Families are required to bring:

Families will need to ensure ALL items brought to the centre are marked with the child's first name and last initial, including food items indoor & outdoor shoes, clothing, prepared bottles, soothers, etc.

PRESCHOOL

- Bin/Backpack
- Indoor shoes
- Appropriate outdoor attire for all seasons, including comfortable footwear and sunscreen during the summer months and boots, waterproof mittens, hats/toques, snow pants and jackets for the winter months.
- Crib sheet, pillow, SMALL blanket for napping-aged children, to be taken home each weekend for laundering and returned at the beginning of the following week (exception: nursery).
- Personal water bottle
- Full change of clothing to be left on-site
- Snacks or food items (optional)

TODDLERS

In addition to the items mentioned above:

- Extra diapering consumables (optional)
- Prepared formula if child is not consuming dairy milk

Families are asked to ensure no additional items are brought from home under any circumstance as the centre cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken personal items brought into the centre. i.e. Toys, stuffed toys, etc. If the teacher requests your child to bring supplies or object, the parents will be notified. Personal cubbies are provided for children to keep their belongings and class materials. ALL personal items are required to be marked with the child's first name and last initial

to assist staff and children in locating their belongings, and also to help ensure mix-ups do not occur between families.

Late Pick Up Fee

Like you and your family, our staff value and enjoy having quality family time in the evenings following a long and full day's work. As such, if you are going to be late, we appreciate receiving a phone call as soon as you are aware of the situation. **Late childcare fees begin at 3:00 PM for preschool only and 5:30PM (6pm for New Brighton, West 85 & Strathmore locations) for preschool and care at a rate of \$1.00 per child per minute and are payable to Kids U.**

Issuance of Receipts

Kids U issues receipts at the end of each fiscal year for the previous year's fees. Receipts will not be issued on a monthly basis. Yearly receipts will be emailed to families by the last business day of February of each year. Families no longer attending the centre will need to ensure they provide up to date information for their files in order to ensure their receipts can be emailed out to them. Anyone who has an outstanding balance, you will not be given a receipt.

Family Rates and Discounts

Although we realize the cost to send multiple children is high we do not provide a family discount on registration, material, or monthly fees. The fees are set to maintain the quality and integrity of the program. However, to assist families with multiple children we provide priority registration for siblings. At Kids U's, if you pay for the whole year tuition, a minimum 10 months, you get 10% off. Please note that Kids U **will not** issue a refund for families who have pre-paid tuition for the year.

Early Dismissal and Closure Dates

A full listing of centre closure dates is provided on the main bulletin board when entering the facility and is updated on an annual basis. ****Please note there are no 'make up days' for days that children miss due to school closures, illness or vacation times.**

Holidays

Labor Day	Good Friday
Thanksgiving Day	Easter Monday
PD Day	Victoria Day
Remembrance Day	Canada Day
Christmas & New Year Break	Heritage Day
Family Day	

Christmas & New Year Break

Kids U closes the centres for the holiday break. The school year calendar will have these closure dates available for you online. A reminder of these dates will also be posted well in advance in order for families to make alternate child care arrangements.

Professional Development Days

Kids U observes three (3) professional development days per year for staff. The centre will be closed for these three days. The school year calendar will have these closure dates available for you

online. A reminder of these dates will also be posted well in advance in order for families to make alternate child care arrangements.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Kids U observes two (2) planned parent teacher meetings each year, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. The centre will be closed for these two days. The school year calendar will have these closure dates available for you online. A reminder of these dates will also be posted well in advance in order for families to make alternate child care arrangements.

Early Dismissal

We do have two early dismissal days each school year. One is for our Christmas presentation. In addition, the Kindergarten and Preschool programs have an early dismissal for Graduation Day. Both early dismissal times are at 12:30 PM. We want these days to be special for them and for them to be able to spend it with their whole family. **These dates will be given to you on the school calendar for your information.**

Arrival & Dismissal Policy

All classes commence at 8:30am sharp; to ensure all students benefit from the extensively planned curriculum children must arrive no later than 8:45am. We understand at times, parents have different days off or appointments; if this is the case, please let us know the day or evening before. Drops offs or pickups between 12:00 pm and 2:30 pm are also strongly discouraged as this is napping time and many of the children are sleeping during these hours.

We ask all parents and guardians to also remove all foot wear in case they need to go inside any class or the gym area.

Kids U practices independent living; children should be made responsible to go to their classrooms and put their materials in the designated area and undress themselves. At the end of the day, children are responsible for cleaning or finishing their activity they have been working on, grab their belongings and get dressed themselves. Typically when children see their parents they lose focus and ability to be responsible. Also, parents choose to do the things preschoolers can already do themselves. **Parents must drop and pick up their children from the parents reception area organizing their personal and portable cubby for the day. A staff member will assist them to their assigned classroom.** Jr. Preschool parents are also encouraged to do the same thing, allowing the toddlers to develop their independence and self-confidence. Please ensure all items have been placed in your child's personal cubby area before heading to their classroom.

Parents are not allowed to interrupt teachers as the teachers are in class with children, as it will distract the teacher and the children. This will impede the learning of the children. If the parents have questions, please ask to set up a meeting with teachers or our staff members. Teachers are not expected to stop their engagement or involvement with the children in the room to do so. A teacher or staff will bring your child to the staff or group and leave them engaged in an activity or in a situation that encourages them to become involved. Teachers and staff will ensure that all of the child's items are placed in the appropriate areas.

In the event of an absence for any reason, Kids U respectfully requests a telephone call or email to indicate this. Voicemail is available 24 hours per day, so feel free to call anytime! Kids U will try to call or email parents in event of an un-notified absence.

Signing Your Child In & Out

Licensing regulation requires children to be signed in to the program when they arrive and signed out when they leave. We ensure the attendance by using the program at the centre. Parents are asked when possible to please sign their child in to the appropriate classrooms. At the end of the day, the parent is also asked to sign the child out again when possible. **It is very important that accurate records are kept on children's attendance on Timesavr. Kids U respectfully asks all parents and guardians to work in partnership with teachers to be diligent in ensuring these records are maintained accurately and to please sign their child in and out when possible.**

Communication & Family Involvement

Kids U exercises an open door policy in the centre, meaning that parents and guardians are encouraged to visit or check in on their children while at the centre at any time. Kids U provides observational windows so you can monitor your children in their class environments. Parents are not allowed in the child's classroom, but can observe through the windows. Please let the front desk know you would like to observe your child so they will not pick them up from the class for dismissal. That staff will guide you to the appropriate class.

The centre strives to ensure children and their parents or guardians are comfortable at all times while under the centre's care.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to be involved in the centre's activities as much as their schedules allow. There are 3 places for information: The main entrance for licences and policies and government regulations, then upon entering the parent reception, the information board has community events, community programs and notices the staff feel are relevant to share such as program closure dates, rates or services provided. Finally, our website has updated menus, parent information and program guides.

Monthly Newsletter

Kids U publishes a monthly newsletter. Newsletters contain information relevant to families attending, Kids U and its operations. Monthly updates on each room in the centre will be provided along with other points of interest.

Parent Feedback

Comments and suggestions are welcomed by the centre and its management. Parents are encouraged to use the comment box.

At least annually, parents and guardians may be asked to complete a satisfaction survey or similar document in order for the centre to gain feedback on its services and the clients' levels of satisfaction with the services being provided. Kids U strongly encourages all families to participate in these voluntary surveys to ensure an accurate picture of the centre and its clients can be formulated.

Additionally, parents will receive ongoing written reports on their child's progress and interactions while at the centre. You can also add feedback, ask questions and give suggestions regarding your child. Daily feedback will be available and parents are encouraged to provide similar feedback to staff when dropping children off in the morning as staff will use this information to provide the highest level of care to the child throughout their day at the centre. Parents may arrange meetings with teachers and site leadership at any time.

Parents and other family members are encouraged to participate in offsite field trips in order to enhance the ratios and levels of supervision of children while away from the program. Specific information relating to the field trip will be provided to families prior to the scheduled field trip and appropriate consent forms will be required to be completed in order for children to participate in the field trip.

Parents or other family members volunteering their time for these trips will be required to complete a Kids U volunteer form and submit a clear criminal record check, including vulnerable sectors search, to the centre's Program Coordinator prior to the field trip date as they are recognized as centre volunteers and are bound by the same requirements under licensing.

Nutrition Policy

Kids U believes in encouraging children to make healthy lifestyle choices from an early age. In order to support this, the centre follows the recommendations as outlined by Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide, as well as the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth.

Kids U provides meals and snacks to all children attending the centre in accordance with the above-mentioned guides as reference, and in sufficient quantity and time intervals to meet the individual needs of the child. A six-week rotating schedule will be posted for families to review on the main bulletin board. Parents will be required to ensure allergy, food intolerance, and special nutritional considerations are kept up to date in order to ensure their child's safety. Kids U will make every effort to accommodate basic allergies (specific to simple foods). However, please confirm with your specific location prior to orientation if this will be possible. If Kids U is unable to accommodate your child's allergy, we will ask that you provide replacement meals for them. In addition, there WILL NOT be any financial compensation in lieu of meals not provided.

Kids U menus utilise organic produce where possible and do not use artificial sweeteners of any kind. Emphasis will be placed on providing meals and snacks that also provide children with a variety of food tastes and textures. Diversity of ingredients and recipe heritages will be observed as is reasonable in order to provide children with a variety of food experiences. Children will be encouraged to try new foods on a regular basis.

All meals and snacks will be prepared onsite by the centre's cook. The centre will ensure that the staff have completed the required Provincial Food Safe Certification.

The centre maintains a nut-free facility at all times. Items containing or having the possibility of containing, nuts of any kind will never be served and/or allowed in our centres.

Children will be encouraged to remain seated at the tables until they have finished their meal, snack or drink. Staff are required to follow the same nutritional guidelines in their meals as are required for families and children attending the centre.

Points to Remember about Kids U Meals:

- Low in sodium, low in sugar, low in fat, and no MSG
- Kids U includes fresh organic produce in the menu where possible
- Kids U requests parents not to send snack items which can be a choking hazard (such as Popcorn) or unhealthy snacks (such as sugar filled/greasy snacks) with their child for health reasons which go against our goal of providing healthy meals at Kids U.

Health & Safety In The Centre**General Health & Safety Concerns**

Kids U will not use aerosols for any reason within the presence of children attending the centre at any time. The use of pesticides shall not occur in the presence of children attending the centre. Additionally, when the centre is made aware of a public application of pesticides (i.e. on the public park adjacent to the centre), children attending the centre shall not be allowed to use these areas until the risk of exposure has passed. Alternative sites will be used by the school to provide similar experiences to the children.

Kids U accesses and uses both public pathway systems as well as public parks in the community on a regular basis. The use of any public park shall be subject to a safety inspection to be completed by centre staff prior to allowing children to use the structure. Any hazard or potential hazard that cannot be safely removed or corrected by staff shall deem the site as inappropriate for use by the children. The same discretion will be used by staff when accessing public pathway systems. Should a staff member become aware of a safety risk, either potential or imminent, the children shall be immediately removed from the area and redirected to a more suitable area.

The children will not be taken outside for outdoor time if the temperature becomes hotter than 26-degree C. If the air quality is higher than 6, children will not be taken outside too. With air quality of 4, 5 or 6, the children outside will be monitored and their length of time outside will be shortened. Extra care will be given with regards to infants or children with breathing concerns.

Any appliances used by the school centre will be subject to ongoing inspection for safety concerns or product failure and will be removed from the centre if ever found to be in a state of disrepair. Appliance checks will be part of the daily safety inspection checklists completed by staff of the centre. Any appliance or electronic device used in the presence of children will have cords made inaccessible to the children for safety reasons.

Art and craft materials used by Kids U shall be of the non-toxic variety at all times. Although the centre encourages reuse of certain materials in order to promote recycling efforts, considerations for health and safety shall at all times be of top priority. For instance, where an activity might call for toilet paper rolls, paper towels rolls shall be substituted in order to decrease the risk of any contamination. Also, items which pose a risk to children's health or safety shall not be used (i.e. Styrofoam that creates small balls when broken and pose an inhalation risk).

The use of glass bottles for infant-aged children shall be accommodated by the centre, however it will be the responsibility of the family to ensure all glass bottles are provided with an impact reducing/resistant cover to minimize chances of bottles breaking. These covers are usually silicon in nature and can be found in most stores, which sell glass bottles.

Under licensing regulation, children cannot be put to sleep with the use of bottles or training cups. Soothers are considered acceptable in their place at this time.

Communicable Diseases & Illness

Kids U believes in promoting the health and safety of all persons involved with the centre, from clients to staff. In order to meet this goal, the centre observes the recommendations for controlling communicable diseases as outlined by the Calgary Health Region.

Children exhibiting any of the following symptoms or conditions may not attend the childcare centre:

- Fever more than 38 degree C (24 hours from last fever reading)
- Vomiting (24 hours from last incident)
- Diarrhea (24 hours from last incident)
- Continuous green or yellow nasal discharge (indicates infection)
- Discharge from eyes (indicates infection)
- Head lice (until first treatment has been applied)
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) (until 24 hours from beginning of treatment)

Any other communicable disease (until medical note can be provided to indicate safe return to centre)

Children who develop any of the above symptoms or conditions will be removed from childcare to a quiet area for proper supervision while parents, guardians, or emergency contacts are notified of the immediate need for the child's departure. Additionally, any child who is known to be, or suspected to be, suffering from any condition listed on Schedule 1 of the Communicable Diseases Regulation will not be able to attend care at Kids U until such a time as the communicable disease has passed.

In rare circumstance, certain other conditions which may pose a threat to the health and safety of other clients or centre staff may also warrant the required removal of a child from the centre, at the discretion of the Program Supervisor or Program Coordinator.

Regular and ongoing hand washing routines are in place within the centre and promoted to all children by the centre's staff. Staff will ensure children practice thorough hand washing on a regular and ongoing basis and that it:

- Includes the use of warm water and soap, and is completed:
- Before and after eating food
- Before and after food preparation and handling
- After diapering and toileting
- After playing in sand, water, or other sensory tables
- After wiping noses
- After sneezing or coughing, and
- Whenever hands are soiled

The centre observes the guidelines as set forth by the Calgary Health Region for the daily maintenance and sanitation of various areas in the centre. Proper hand washing, diapering, and food preparation methods are posted and observed by all staff at all times. Dilute bleach solutions

are used by centre staff as per the recommended mixing concentrations provided by the health region.

In the event of centre contamination with a communicable disease, a full sanitation of the affected areas will occur as soon as is reasonably safe to do so (i.e. vomit will be immediately cleaned and sanitized with a 1:9 bleach to water solution, whereas an identified case of pink eye will result in high risk areas being immediately sanitized and full room sanitation occurring at the end of the day when all clients are removed from the area).

Accident/Incident/Illness Reporting

Should a child be injured while in the care of the centre, an accident/incident or illness report will be completed by the staff person who witnessed the event. This report will detail what the event was, how it occurred, who witnessed it, whether first aid or other medical intervention was required and what was completed, and any other relevant information (such as corrective action). These reports must be signed by the child's parent or guardian, with the original form remaining in the child's file at the centre. Parents and guardians are welcome to request a copy for their records if they so desire.

Administration of First Aid

Before the first day of service can be provided, families must consent in writing to the administration of emergency first aid to their child by centre staff. The centre ensures all staff has current first aid training in order to ensure the quickest time in the event of the need for the administration of first aid to a child.

Should a child require additional medical attention beyond the scope of emergency first aid treatment that can be provided by centre staff, Kids U will, depending on the severity of the incident, attempt to reach:

- The parent(s) or guardian(s) listed on the child's emergency contact form
- The emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency contact form
- Call 911 at the direction of the Program Supervisor or designate

Emergency Medical Services Personnel

If the need arises for EMS to attend the centre to provide medical assistance to any of the centre's clients, any costs associated with this will be borne by the client and the client's family. Kids U will make every effort to act in the best interest of the health and safety of the child involved in the incident in addition to calling the parents or emergency contacts immediately.

Administration of Medication

Kids U can only allow the administration of medication to children within their care under the following conditions:

- The parents or guardians have provided written consent for the administration of the medication through the completion of the centre's appropriate paperwork
- The medication is in the original labelled container and indicates:
 - The name of the medication
 - The first and last name of the child
 - The dosage of the medication to be administered
 - The frequency of administration of the medication

- The length of time over which the medication is to be administered (i.e. 2 weeks, until finished, etc.)
- For emergency medications (i.e. asthma inhaler, EpiPen, etc.), under what conditions the medication is to be administered (i.e. physical signs that will be present indicating the need for the medication)
- The medication is prescribed by a physician and bears a prescription label, or a physician's note indicating all fields required above can be provided for the child's file

In all cases of administration of medication, only persons with a valid first aid certificate will be allowed to administer medication to children in the centre's care. For ongoing medications, an ongoing form for the administration of the medication will need to be completed. Completed medication forms remain at the centre in the child's file.

Following administration of medication, staff will ensure children are observed to ensure no sign of adverse reaction presents itself. Staff will ensure the appropriate paperwork is completed following the administration of any medication, and that the following information is documented:

- The name of the medication
- The time of administration
- The amount administered
- The initials of the person who administered the medication

All medications while in the centre will be made inaccessible to children. Emergency medications in the centre will be placed in a marked container, out of reach of children, but readily accessible to staff. Non-emergency medications will be stored in a locked container, and made inaccessible to children.

Families who wish to have herbal remedies or supplements administered to their child while in the care of Kids U must provide the centre with the same documentation as is required for regularly prescribed medication as listed above.

In addition to the conditions outlined above, parents and guardians are also required to disclose to the centre if their child has had medication administered prior to arriving in the care of the centre. The centre's administration of medication form will be required to be filled out by the parent or guardian each time this occurs.

Fire Drill, Emergency Evacuation, and Centre Lock Down Procedures

Kids U observes monthly, unannounced fire drill practice. Additionally, emergency evacuation and centre lock down practices will occur throughout the year to ensure all staff and centre clients are comfortable with the procedure in the case that a real need for any of these should arise.

Evacuation routes are posted in each room in the centre to ensure clarity for all persons in the centre at the time of the drills. All staff have been provided with a complete outline of the procedures required for each type of drill, and copy of this is additionally provided to them in the emergency contacts binders kept with the first aid kit in each room in the centre. Emergency contact information and first aid kits are removed from the centre and kept with staff during any and all emergency evacuations, fire drills, or centre lock downs.

Should the school need to remain evacuated due to the imminent danger present to the centre or its clients, parents and guardians of children will be contacted from the evacuation site by telephone and email, and will be advised of the situation and where their children can be picked up from. In the event that parents or guardians cannot be reached, emergency contacts will then be notified of the situation.

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Children look to adults for guidance. Kids U strives to provide children with an environment that encourages exploration, interaction, decision making, and fosters self-control. When adult guidance is needed, the individual needs and behaviours of each child will be taken into consideration. This is also true with discipline. The goal of discipline is not to influence behaviour through fear of punishment, but to support the development of self-control and problem solving skills.

Purpose of This Policy

This policy is the guideline that Kids U will follow to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, and sensitivity when interacting with others. Guidance is required to prevent injury and ensure a child's activities are not infringing on the rights of others.

Guidance Strategies

It is important that staff create a positive atmosphere with maximum opportunities for desirable behaviour and problem solving. This will be done by:

- 1) Exploring with the children what behaviours are acceptable and discuss the reason for limits, and doing so in a positive way.
- 2) Focusing on the child's behaviour rather than on the child
- 3) Allowing the children time to respond to the expectations
- 4) Reinforcing appropriate behaviour
- 5) Being willing to listen and respond in a fair and supportive manner
- 6) Observing children in order to anticipate potential challenges and assist in problem solving.

Intervention Strategies

One or more of the following strategies will be used to help create a positive climate and minimize problems in a supportive rather than punitive way:

1. By establishing eye contact and communicating in a respectful manner at all times
2. Having the children involved in making plans and rules within the program
3. Children will be reminded of limits, taking their feelings into consideration
4. Verbal assistance will be shown by modeling problem solving if a child is discouraged or frustrated
5. Children will be offered choices in a non-threatening and non-punitive way to assist them in meeting expectations
6. We will clarify the inevitable or unavoidable outcome/consequence of specific behaviour to the child
7. If the child is unable to resolve a problem or take responsibility for their actions, they will be redirected to another activity, or in special circumstance, be limited in the use of a piece of equipment
8. If all else fails, the child will be removed from the situation in a way that ensures that the time away is a positive learning experience

- a. Prior to the use of 'time away' the child will be given an explanation of what it means and what it involves
 - b. The 'time away' place will be located within the play area, where they can still be supervised, but far enough from the activity
 - c. The child will be allowed to determine when he/she can return to the activity
 - d. For preschoolers, the time away period will be no more than one minute per year of age, to a maximum of five minutes
 - e. Appropriate or acceptable behaviour of the child following the time away will receive praise
9. On a rare occasion where a child loses control and could possibly injure him or herself or others, we may be required to hold the child and soothe them until self-control is regained
 10. When a child is ready, they will be provided an opportunity to make amends

Practices Which Are Unacceptable

Kids U considers the following practices unacceptable and will not tolerate their use:

- Any form of physical punishment
- Any form of verbal or physical degradation
- Any form of emotional deprivation
- Deprivation or threatened deprivation of any basic necessity
- Any form of physical restraint, confinement, or isolation

Any disciplinary action taken must be reasonable for the circumstances of the situation being addressed.

Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution Model

Kids U will practice, model, and share the following problem solving and conflict resolving idea with all children and staff within the program:

S - T - O - R - E

Stop – Have everyone involved in the conflict stop to regain self-control so they can discuss the situation

Talk – Encourage children to talk about why they are upset and ask questions to identify the problem

Opinions Count – Give everyone a chance to brainstorm possible solutions, encouraging children to be as creative as they can, and accepting all ideas

Reconsider – Consider all the ideas that were generated. Have children think about whether an idea would work, is fair, and what might happen if they tried it. Have children agree to try one of the ideas.

Execute – Discuss how to carry out the decision

Withdrawal & Termination of Care

We assume that parents and guardians have put time and consideration into choosing Kids U for their childcare needs, and we strive to make the child's experience with us a positive one. **If a family must withdraw from the program, one month's written notice from the 1st of the month is required.** Parents and guardians are expected to pay for partial month's services as a full month's requirements. No prorating of fees will be provided. Those who opt to pay the full year's

tuition in advance will not receive a refund on their payment, regardless of giving Kids U one month's notice prior to withdrawal.

Termination of care may be initiated by the centre under various circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Failure to keep program fees up to date
- Failure of families to adhere to centre policies and procedures as outline in this manual and any future updates provided
- If a child puts staff or other children's safety at risk
- If staff feel the program is not meeting the needs of the child and/or family
- If a child is exhibiting destructive behaviour which does not improve with intervention

In the event of a centre initiated termination, written notice of such will be provided to the family. It is the intention of the centre to pursue as many avenues of assistance and intervention in assisting with meeting the needs of all the families enrolled in the centre as possible, however this cannot be at the expense of providing quality service to other clients.

Written observations of children behaviours, interactions, development, interests, etc. will be kept on file in an effort to attempt to assist with any challenges the child may be experiencing. Additionally, written documentation of incidents and the strategies used while handling these incidents will also be recorded by the centre's staff and maintained on the child's file.

There will be no refund of remaining fees for the month of termination. Deposit fees will be refunded so long as there are no outstanding amounts on the family's account.

Centre Daily Routine, Napping, & Room Transitioning

Each child at Kids U has its own independent routine, however many areas throughout the day are common across their class groupings. A copy of each room's independent room routine is posted at the centre in the room it applies to.

Napping opportunities are provided to children based on developmentally-appropriate practices in the gym. For children where napping begins to decline a separate non-napping program is implemented. Each child participates in activities that are geared towards their interests in hopes to further prepare children's attendance of kindergarten programming. Parents will need to discuss their child's napping needs with the centre staff to determine when the most appropriate time to begin limiting napping is.

At Kids U, children transition several times from one room to another, and staff are trained to help the child become familiar with the new space, children, and the staff that surround them. Transitioning of children will typically occur when children are emotionally ready to handle the transition and are able to self-regulate during the actual move. Kids U believes that executive functions in the brain are challenged each time children transition between groups, classrooms, and teachers.

Community Walks & Outings

Kids U believes in the importance of daily physical activity, including outdoor time at least once per day when weather permits. From time to time, children may be taken on community walks or outings in close proximity to the centre. Children will walk for the majority of these but may

exercise public transit to add to their experience or protect them from harsh weather. These activities are separate from regularly scheduled field trips and may be spontaneously initiated by children's interests. Children will leave the centre with the regular room staff that will bring with them the room's first aid kit, emergency contact information binder, and a cell phone in order to maintain communication with site management at all times.

Field Trips & Special Guests

In order to enhance the programming offered to the families attending the centre, Kids U will attempt to schedule either field trips or special guests, or both, on a regular basis.

When field trips are scheduled, parents and guardians will be provided with a consent form outlining the specifics of the field trip including:

- The location of the field trip (name and address)
- The time of departure from the centre and estimated return time to the centre
- The method of transportation being used
- The number of volunteers required to assist in enhancing the ratio and supervision of children while on the offsite activity

Photos, Creative Arts & Social Media

In order to enhance the child care environment and allow children to feel as though they are actively involved in the centre, staff of Kids U may take photos of the children attending the centre for postings within the centre, social media, and on our website for parents, families and friends. Photos may include individual photos of the children, photos of children involved in various activities throughout the centre, photos taken to document a series of events to reach a learning goal or objective identified by centre staff, or for similar reasons.

Additionally, as children complete various art experiences with the centre, these may be posted in the rooms to enhance the visual space as well as promote a sense of accomplishment and inclusion of children in the centre.

Media Release

Photos and/ or video may be taken of children or their artwork while they participate in Kids U program activities. Media images or reproductions of original art and writing involving the children may be used in newsletters, childcare sector workshops, Kids U social media sites, Kids U websites or by community media outlets.

Such use might occur during or several years after participation in our programs. Media Release forms are provided at the time of registration and give parents the opportunity to provide or withhold consent for the situations described above.

Procedures Outlining Volunteer Responsibilities

Families may be asked to volunteer on field trips as their schedules allow. Safety rules will be reviewed with both the children and the field trip chaperons prior to the field trip. If insufficient numbers of volunteers can be secured, field trips may have to be cancelled.

Kids U does not transport children requiring safety seats in vehicles to offsite activities. The use of public transit, chartered buses, or community walks are the only approved methods of transportation used by the centre at the time of this manual's publication/revision.

Parents and guardians will be required to consent in writing to their child participating in the outlined field trip in order for their child to be included. **Parents or guardians not providing this consent will be required to secure alternative child care arrangements for their children on the field trip day.**

Emergency contact information and first aid kits are taken from the school and remain with staff and children for all off site activities and outings.

Special guests may include all sorts of persons who can enhance the learning objectives of the centre. They may include individuals from: the Calgary Public Library, the Calgary Police Service, the Calgary Fire Department or Emergency Medical Services, veterinarians, cultural visitors, chefs, or many others. Families who wish to participate as special guests to share specific skills or experiences to enhance children's programming can discuss this option with the staff of the room to determine how this can best be accomplished.

Use of Technology

Kids U believes in the use of practical and traditional play materials in most of the experiences it provides to the children and families in the centre. However, Kids U also believes that electronic or computer devices enhance a child's preschool experience. Should this be used, it will be done so with proper supervision and child appropriate materials.

The centre does not promote the use of televisions and TV except for Movie Fridays or when special videos are presented around children's interests.

Frequently Asked Questions

My child's birthday is approaching. What does the centre do to recognize birthdays and can I bring anything in?

Kids U recognizes the excitement children will often experience around their birthday and the turning of another year. The centre recognizes birthdays by singing 'Happy Birthday' to the birthday child during afternoon snack on their actual birthday date. In addition, our Left Brain classroom will recognize your child's special day in a unique and special Montessori way. If you would like to see if you can bring extra 'goodies' or other items for the occasion, please see the Program Coordinator for more information.

All my child ever does is play. When will they start learning some real skills?

For a child, play is work. Although it can sometimes appear that all a child is doing is filling the time of the day with the distraction of toys, a tremendous amount of learning is taking place. For instance, when a child uses Lego blocks for building, they are developing fine motor skills by sticking pieces together and pulling them apart, mathematical skills through the observation of how the different sized blocks fit into specific spaces and shapes, pre-literacy skills through the colour or size sorting of pieces, and imagination skills when they are building their own creations without the assistance of a visual diagram.

I'm worried about the development of my child. It seems like all the other children in their age group are so much more advanced.

If you are worried about the developmental level of your child, please bring these concerns to the staff working with your child. Our staff are continually making observations on your child throughout their day and may be able to provide you with information you were not aware of. All children develop at varying paces, and usually with one area of development being stronger than others. For instance, some children develop very strong language skills at an early age, but it takes them a little longer to catch up in physical developmental areas such as fine motor or gross motor controls. Usually, by the time children are entering Kindergarten, most areas of development between children have levelled out, but if you have any ongoing concerns about your child, please be sure to discuss these with your physician.

I have items I would like to donate to the centre. Do you accept donations?

We appreciate you thinking of the centre for any donations you may have. Please be sure to speak with the program coordinator prior to bringing in any donations as the centre does not have a lot of extra storage space and they can determine whether the centre would be able to use your donation in a positive way to enhance programming. Unfortunately, under our food license, we cannot accept donations of any non-commercially produced goods.

How many times a day do the children go outside to play? And for how long?

Each classroom has the opportunity to go outside at least once a day, for 30-40 minutes, weather permitting. Children will not go outside if the temperature reaches below -18 degrees Celsius with wind chill. The Program Supervisor or Coordinator will make the final call at each location.