

# Kids U



# PARENT HANDBOOK



## **About This Handbook**

The intention of the Parent Handbook is to provide our families with the information they will require to have a successful working relationship with Kids U.

This handbook shall be reviewed no less than once per year by the Director of Early Learning and Child Care Services, 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 comments or emails to [feedback@kidsu.ca](mailto:feedback@kidsu.ca) at any time during the year, which is a monitored email address. Families are also encouraged to provide their feedback, in writing, directly to their campus Program Supervisor so there is a record of when the feedback was provided as well as the details.

Amendments to this handbook will be provided by way of memo, campus posting, or our monthly newsletters throughout the year as required.

Parents and guardians interested in knowing more about the specific policies and procedures that govern our programs can contact us at [info@kidsu.ca](mailto:info@kidsu.ca).



## Table of Contents

<b>Kids U's Mission, Vision, Core Values and Philosophy</b>	<b>6</b>
Mission	6
Vision	6
Core Values	6
Kids U's Educational Philosophy	6
<b>About Our Staff, Teachers &amp; Volunteers</b>	<b>7</b>
Staff	7
Lead Teachers	7
Volunteers	7
Extended "Team" Members	8
<b>OUR PROGRAMS</b>	<b>8</b>
INFANT PROGRAM	9
JUNIOR PRESCHOOL PROGRAM	10
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM	10
KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM	11
Transitions and Schedule	11
Learning Assessments	12
What's Included?	12
What Do Families Need To Bring?	12
Daily Routines and Napping	13
<b>ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION POLICIES</b>	<b>13</b>
Admission	13
Registration	14
Children Information Review	14
Schedule Change Requests	14
Re-Enrolment	15
Transferring	15
<b>OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b>	<b>16</b>
Hours of Operation	16
Extended Care Options	16
School Calendar	16
Statutory Holidays	16
Christmas & New Year Break	17
Professional Development Days	17



Parent Teacher Meetings	17
Early Dismissal for Christmas Concert	17
Make Up Days and Emergency Closures	17
Specialized Services	18
Semester System	18
Arrival & Dismissal Policy	18
Independent Entry Policy	19
Absence Policy	19
<b>COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK POLICIES</b>	<b>19</b>
Open Door Policy	19
Daily Reports	20
Monthly Newsletter	20
Parent Feedback	20
Concerns	20
<b>FINANCIAL POLICIES</b>	<b>21</b>
Registration Fee	21
Annual Materials Fee (AMF)	21
Tuition and Fees	21
Lost, Stolen or Damaged Items	22
Tuition LumpSum Payment Benefit	22
Family Rates	22
Twin Rates	22
Collection of Fees	22
Failure To Pay Fees	22
Subsidy	23
Issuance of Receipts	23
Late Pick Up Fees	23
Refunds	23
<b>TERMINATION OF SERVICES</b>	<b>24</b>
Parent and Caregiver Initiated Termination	24
Campus Initiated Termination	24
<b>CHILDREN RECORDS</b>	<b>24</b>
Semi-Annual Review	24
Allergies and Guardianship Orders	24
Access to Records	24
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURE</b>	<b>25</b>

Allergies and Medical Conditions	25
Aerosols	25
Outdoor Policy	26
Neighbourhood Walks & Outings	26
Appliances	27
Bottles, Nap time	27
Communicable Diseases & Illness	27
Handwashing	28
Pandemics	28
Cleaning and Disinfecting	29
Accident/Incident/Illness Reporting	29
Administration of First Aid	29
Emergency Medical Services Personnel	30
Administration of Medication	30
Fire Drill, Emergency Evacuation, and Centre Lock Down Procedures	31
Nutrition Policy	32
Nut-free facility	32
Daily Routines and Napping	33
<b>ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION</b>	<b>33</b>
Behaviour Guidance Policy	33
Possible Guidance Strategies	33
Possible Intervention Strategies	34
Bullying	35
Ethical Conduct - Staff and Parents	35
Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution Model	36
Field Trips & Special Guests	36
Bins	37
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY POLICIES</b>	<b>37</b>
Photos, Creative Arts & Social Media	37
Media Release	38
Documentation	38
Group Photos and Event Media	39
Use of Technology	39
<b>FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS</b>	<b>39</b>



## **Kids U's Mission, Vision, Core Values and Philosophy**

### **Mission**

Our Mission is to shape the future through Early Childhood Education with a research based approach that brings together the best of educational science, technology, and childcare expertise to unveil a child's infinite potential.

### **Vision**

Our Vision is to transform the world of early childhood education through its holistic, whole brain development. Children impacted by our program will grow into well-rounded, well-regulated and joyful adults who serve their community and shape the future.

### **Core Values**

Our core values reflect what we believe in and what we stand for:

K - Knowledge - Advancing Research and Education in Early Childhood

I - Innovate - Pushing Traditional Boundaries of Early Childhood Education

D - Development - From Brain Cells, to Child and Community

S - Service - Excellent Service Provision for Families and Staff

U - Uplift - Building Positive Connections with Children, Staff, Families and Stakeholders

### **Kids U's Educational Philosophy**

Kids U's philosophy is built around the idea that we teach children how to learn, rather than what to learn. Our goal is to give children the opportunity to experience different teaching styles and learning environments in order to maximize their holistic development. Children who experience a higher quality early education program are more likely to have improved executive function skills which contributes to improved academic performance, enhanced self-esteem, and increased self-control as they grow.

This idea is central to our programming as children at Kids U participate in different learning environments; including our Left Brain (Montessori), Right Brain (Reggio-Emilia Inspired Philosophy), and Movement (focus on Physical Literacy) classrooms.

In each of these learning environments, children remain at the center of programming and teaching decisions. Our 'image of the child' guides our internal decision making, as children at Kids U are seen as capable, competent, and independent human beings.

As children graduate from Kids U into school aged educational environments, the goal is



for the child to have a strong foundation of executive function skills, including working memory, inhibitory control, and cognitive flexibility. In turn, these skills will serve the child as they apply themselves to a lifetime of learning.

### **About Our Staff, Teachers & Volunteers**

Specific information on teachers, staff, and volunteers is posted on our website and is provided on the 'Meet Our Staff' bulletin board at your campus. Kids U prides itself on offering regular opportunities for parents to meet the team through campus events, field trips, education nights and celebrations throughout the year.

Teachers and administrative staff are recruited for their diverse skill sets and their passion for working with children and families. Kids U accepts adult volunteers in the campuses to provide support with a variety of tasks and roles. All people working in the campus are required to adhere to the health, nutrition, and safety policies as outlined in this manual as well as employment documents.

#### **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 campus.
2. Submit current first aid certification
3. Provide Child Care Certification issued by the Government of Alberta if they are working with children within the first six months of employment.

#### **Lead Teachers**

Lead teachers come from a variety of educational backgrounds. They are selected for their experience, knowledge, and relationship with the children, as well as their attitude towards growth and development.

#### **Volunteers**

Parents and other community members may apply to volunteer at Kids U through the Program Supervisors. All volunteers are required to be 18 years of age or older.

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



Volunteers may be requested to perform a variety of duties at the campus, including but not limited to classroom support, filing, photocopying, preparing materials for classroom use, etc. Volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children. Volunteers will consistently work under the supervision of a teacher and the Campus Administrative team.

### **Extended “Team” Members**

Kids U may partner with different support agencies throughout the year, and other professionals may come to work with children and teachers. We work with different support agencies to bring best practices to support our children and teachers. In these cases, these individuals must comply with Kids U policies upon entering our campus along with their own agency’s documentation policy.

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

### **INFANT PROGRAM**

For many families, joining the Kids U Infant program is one of the first times parents and child have separated from each other. Not only are infants rapidly developing and changing during this time period, but many parents are also learning and growing as they get to know their child and develop new family routines.

With this in mind, parents are supported as they transition their child to school. In our Infant program, this support actualizes through regular connection with the teachers and daily access to the learning space. This allows children, teachers and families to create a learning community and grow together.

It is normal for parents and infants to have separation anxiety during this time. Our rule of thumb is generally to give it one month of continued care for the separation anxiety to get better. Trust us it does get better. After this period the child and parent will start normalizing and the separation anxiety will change to looking forward to drop-off. Parents are welcome to feed or visit their child in the classroom for children under 12 months (assuming there is no ongoing pandemic or outbreak).

### **One environment - three curricula**

We believe in giving infants as much experience as possible in a short period of time through supported interactions with their environment. This exploration allows them to learn and develop, to feel confident as they explore the world of wonder around them.

At Kids U, our Infant classrooms offer our Left Brain, Right Brain and Movement programming in one classroom space, giving the infant the freedom to choose and explore, while providing the most attentive care possible. Our infant teachers are skilled at reshaping and redesigning the classroom space to invite the children to new learning opportunities and adventures.

## **Infant Sleeping**

Freedom is considered to be the single most important factor in allowing children to develop as spontaneous, creative individuals. Maria Montessori saw the role of education as providing an environment in which the children could be set free to follow their natural impulses to become the wonderfully dynamic, natural learners they were created to be!

Our napping ritual is also designed around the Montessori philosophy. Sleep is based on an understanding of natural sleep patterns and a sincere desire to protect your infants' inborn ability to regulate and be independent in their sleep. We believe that if we can show our little ones how to sleep on a floor bed or cot, the parents will have a child who is more secure in sleep and more capable of staying in bed and not getting out as he or she grows older (as opposed to the 3-year-old's transition from crib to bed, which often leads to going back up into the parent bed in the middle of the night!). Letting a child learn that it is casual to get into and fall asleep on a bed without being forced is a great feeling.

*"To assist a child we must provide him with an environment which will enable him to develop freely."* –Maria Montessori

## **JUNIOR PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

### **The Cornerstone of Learning**

By the age of three, children's brains have formed all of the neural connections that they will ever have, meaning that the experiences of toddlers literally form the cornerstone of all future learning.

Junior Preschool is not 'watered down' preschool but instead a purposeful program designed to support children as they develop their sense of autonomy and their independence skills and prepare them for a lifelong love of learning.

### **Confidence and Independence**

With encouragement and positivity, children learn to separate from their parents without anxiety or tears. By saying goodbye in our offices and allowing our teachers to bring your child to class, parents and teachers work together to help Junior Preschoolers feel confident and independent.

### **Three Curricula, Three Classrooms, Daily Transitions**

Transitions between the different classroom environments (Left Brain, Right Brain and Movement) are an important part of building a child's brain. When children first join Kids U in



Junior Preschool, they will have a fixed schedule for ninety days (or, three months). In this time, the child will have the chance to adapt to the environment, observe other children transitioning and learn the general routine of the campus.

After this normalization period, children are scheduled for one classroom environment for a full day. This gives them continuity of care as they refine their self-help and independence skills. Throughout the week, on a daily basis, Junior Preschool children will move between the classroom and curricular environments.

We intentionally stress the child by introducing them to several different teachers in a week along with different learning environments to work within. Children learn how to communicate and work within different environments at an early age which reduces anxiety and the fear of something new as they grow older.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

### **Strengthening the Foundation**

After the age of three, the brain goes through a natural process called pruning. Just like it sounds, neural connections that are not used are trimmed away, and connections that are used more regularly grow stronger. Of particular importance are executive function skills, which are the focus at Kids U.

In preschool, students are given the chance to refine the skills they have previously developed and of course, to continue learning!

### **Frequent, predictable transitions**

The main difference between Junior Preschool and Preschool is that children transition several times in the course of a day, from one room to another. A child can experience two or all three different classroom environments in a day.

While these transitions can be stressful for many children (and parents) at first, Kids U considers these as opportunities to show children that they are capable and can overcome challenges. Transitions encourage the children to be flexible, adaptable, as well as develop their independence. In the long term, these transitions challenge children to identify and take ownership of their own learning styles and work preferences.

### **Practice makes perfect**

Children in the preschool program say goodbye to their parents in the main office or lobby after they have prepared themselves for a full day of learning. By taking responsibility for their own



belongings and walking into class independently, preschoolers practice skills that they will use daily once they are in grade school and adulthood.

## **KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

### **Leadership**

Many people in society think of Kindergarten as a child's "first year of school" and as such, they treat Kindergarten students as young, inexperienced children. At Kids U, we celebrate all that Kindergarteners have achieved already in their educational journey. We recognize them as leaders, and we honor that they are mighty learners with powerful perspectives and abilities to shape the world around them. It may seem small, but the simple change from novice student to leader is profound and represents the culmination of early childhood education.

### **Working with citizens to co-construct the future**

The influence of Kindergarten students in the classroom environment cannot be understated. As such, children in our Kindergarten program are able to work closely with our teachers to determine learning projects, field trips, special guest presentations, and much more. Kindergarten students follow the same transition schedule as preschool students, but they are able to take greater responsibility, experience mastery, and accountability for their schedule and experiences alongside their teachers.

### **Transitions and Schedules**

In all programs, teachers will closely observe the child and watch for signs that the child is ready to begin transitioning between the different environments. Teachers will also complete a Brain Based assessment to formally evaluate the child's executive function skills. After the ninety day period, a child's schedule may be adjusted regularly until reaching an optimal balance and routine specific to them.

Most importantly, children's schedules will be reviewed often to ensure that the correct balance between the different learning environments is being achieved. Feedback from the teachers regarding the children's schedules is provided monthly, and feedback from parents may also be considered.

It is expected that over time, all children at Kids U will be able to successfully move between all three classroom environments, though this can take place at different times for different children. If, after time and support, a child is unable to transition between environments, it may be determined that Kids U may not be the best fit for that child, and Kids U may terminate care in the best interest of the child.

Children's schedules may change regularly over the course of the year at the sole discretion of Kids U.



Please note, Kids U will not accommodate any requests to limit a child's schedule to just one learning environment, as this is not a part of Kids U philosophy.

## **Learning Assessments**

Kids U teachers use multiple ways to evaluate students' performance and development in different learning domains, including report cards from each classroom and documentation of learning. Your child's progress will be shared with you semi-annually throughout the year at our Parent-Teacher Interviews, but parents are also encouraged to set up a meeting with classroom teachers or the administrative team any time they require more support. Kids U teachers individualize student learning experiences through our understanding of their brain executive functions. Our application supports the development of your child's intelligence and keeps a connection in real time between teachers and families.

## **What's Included?**

Kids U will supply all daily consumables for children including diapers, wipes, and diaper cream.

Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks are included in our extended care programs, while our Preschool only programs include lunch.

Bedding is included in all Infant programs, and may also be available. Please speak to your Program Supervisor for more details.

In addition to the above, tuition fees include the following:

- All required materials for day to day activities
- Individualized reports and assessments per child
- Special guests, projects, and specialized instruction
- Special events are provided throughout the year, including Mother's Day and Father's Day
- Parent Education Nights and other adult-oriented educational programs

*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.*

## **What Do Families Need To Bring?**

There are some items from home that families are expected to supply in order for children to be able to participate in Kids U Programming. Families will need to ensure ALL items brought to the campus are labeled with the child's first name and last initial, including food items, indoor & outdoor shoes, clothing, prepared bottles, soothers, etc.



- Spare change of clothing, including underwear, socks, and weather appropriate tops and bottoms
- If potty training, a complete second set of clothing (at minimum)
- Indoor running shoes
- Water bottle
- Appropriate outdoor clothing including snow pants, toque, gloves, warm coat in the winter, rain pants, rain boots and rain jacket in the spring, and summer hat, sunscreen, and bug spray in the summer months
- Special snuggly items for children who are still napping such as soother, stuffed animals or blankets, additional cot bedding required for children in the Preschool program who are still napping
- For children in the Infant program, formula or expressed breast milk must be provided if a child is not yet drinking cow's milk. In these cases, the formula and milk must be labeled with the child's name and date.
- Mid-morning snack for children in all programs, to support the development of their independence and control

If a child does not have any of the above listed items, backup items may be available from the campus. If a child needs to bring any clothing home, families are expected to launder and return the items immediately.

Please note, toys from home are **not** permitted in the classrooms as they distract children from engaging with the learning materials and may get broken, stolen, or lost.

### **Daily Routines and Napping**

Each environment at Kids U follows its own unique daily routine. A copy of each room's independent routine is posted at the campus.

Napping opportunities are provided to children based on developmentally appropriate practices and licensing requirements. Kids U is required to meet the basic needs of our students which includes providing a place to nap if the children request or are tired. All infant and junior preschool rooms follow a nap time. For preschool children where napping begins to decline a separate non-napping program is implemented. Parents will need to discuss their child's napping needs with the campus staff to determine when the most appropriate time to begin limiting napping in the classrooms.

## **ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION POLICIES**

### **Admission**

Kids U accepts children from 3 months to 6 years of age, provided the child has not started attending Grade 1. *Please note that different Kids U campuses vary in age of children they accept.*



Kids U believes that our programs are best understood in person or virtually. We request that every family takes a tour prior to starting their child with us. At your tour, campus staff will provide you with a better understanding of the program philosophy, transitions, class sizes, and other important program details that are covered in this handbook. Tours are booked through our website or by calling our registration team.

## **Registration**

Families of prospective students must complete an application form and pay a non-refundable registration fee to gain admission to our program. All applications must be completed online.

In order to secure a spot at Kids U, all steps of the registration process must be completed for each child, which includes the following:

- Payment of registration fee (Non refundable)
- A signed enrollment contract
- First month's tuition deposit (100% of the fee if subsidy is not in place)
- Conditional Subsidy approval will be taken off if information is provided to the Registration Team
- If a promo is happening, we will take off the promo amount before 1st month is collected
- Annual Materials Fee payment (September - June)(Summer material fees may apply) (Non refundable)

Once all items are received by a Kids U staff member, parents will be invited by the campus for a Parent Orientation prior to your child's first day of attendance. At this time, remaining paperwork required before your child's first day will be signed and any questions you have will be answered. Please be aware that parent orientation is set up at the campus level and may be in a group format, or individual families.

## **Children Information Review**

While your child is attending Kids U, you will be required to maintain current records on your child with the campus at all times. A semi-annual review of the child's enrolment application and emergency contact information will be required to be completed semi-annually. At this time all parents are expected in writing to update files (twice a year) regardless of registration date.

## **Schedule Change Requests (Example Part-time to Full Time)**

All changes to your child's schedule must be requested through a Schedule Request Change Form, submitted by the 1st of the month to have the change be effective the following month



(EG: a change request as of June 1 would require the form to be submitted no later than May 1). All approvals are based on availability within the campus and are approved on a first-come, first-served basis. If a schedule change cannot be accommodated for the month requested, it will be put in queue for the following month, pending any changes to the current enrollment numbers at the campus.

Schedule change requests received with less than 30-days notice are subject to a 10% expedited fee for any reduction in days attended. The 10% is calculated on the new monthly tuition rate.

### **Re-Enrolment**

The benefits of Kids U programs are best seen with consistent and long-term attendance. As such, should a family decide to withdraw their child from any Kids U program and request to return at a later date (such as during an extended vacation), the family must register once more as a new family. In order to keep their space during an extended absence, the expectation is that parents will continue to pay their tuition.

All returning families must pay all fees to complete their registration, including the Annual Materials Fee and the first month's tuition deposit. Returning families will not be able to use the Annual Materials Fee paid earlier in the school year.

### **Transferring**

Parents may request to transfer their child to a different Kids U campus at any time by providing a minimum of two weeks notice. This request will then be reviewed and approved based on availability and timing. Confirmation of receipt of request and subsequent approval if possible will then be communicated to the parent.

Parents attending our Infant-only Bridgeland campus are expected to transfer and transition to our sister campus, Kids U Centennial. Plans will be made to transfer children from the Bridgeland Infant Program to a Junior Preschool program based on our semester system of operations, meaning children will be cohorted together and move in January, July, August and September, where possible.

If families at Bridgeland wish to transfer to a campus other than Kids U Centennial, a minimum of 30 days notice is required from the 1st of the month and the transfer may still be subject to the semester system, based on the request and requirements of the family.

Should there be any differences between fees at our Kids U campuses, the fee will be prorated and adjusted accordingly.



## **OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Hours of Operation**

Kids U is open Monday - Friday, with the exception of Statutory Holidays as listed by the Government of Alberta and other closure dates in the Parent/School Academic Calendar Calendar.

The hours available for care vary by campus. 'Preschool Curricular' hours are 8:30 am - 3:00 pm.

It is expected that all children are dropped off at the campus by 8:30 am, barring illness or medical appointments, as this is the time that school begins. Detailed expectations for attendance are outlined in our Arrival and Dismissal Policy.

Late fees or other measures may apply in the event that program times are not respected.

### **Extended Care Options**

Families are able to sign up for full day preschool and care, which extends the time during which your child is learning at our campuses, before 8:30 am and after 3:00 pm.

### **School Calendar**

A full listing of campus closure dates is provided on the main bulletin board as well as online on the Kids U website. Dates are updated on an annual basis.

### **Statutory Holidays**

In the event that a statutory holiday falls on a Saturday, the campus will be closed on the Friday prior to the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the campus will be closed on Monday directly after.

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



## **Christmas & New Year Break**

Kids U campuses close for the holiday break to give families and staff an opportunity to enjoy the season. In order to support the staff and maintain the integrity of the program, regular tuition rates are applicable in the month of December.

## **Professional Development Days**

Based on Kids U's educational philosophy and commitment to Knowledge and Development, it is important for teachers and other staff members to participate in regular, paid training opportunities.

As such, the campuses close two (2) times per year for Professional Development Days.

These days will be communicated in advance through the annual school calendar. Other reminders, such as email or posts on the door, will also be sent out.

## **Parent-Teacher Meetings**

Kids U offers more than just child care. Because of our educational philosophy, we believe it is important to share children's progress with their parents and caregivers in a formal parent-teacher interview, rather than just in passing.

As such, Kids U observes two (2) planned parent-teacher meetings each year, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. The campuses are 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 for Christmas Concert**

Annually, the children and staff take great pride in creating and hosting a Christmas Concert in December. In order to make this day special for our families and students, we close at 12:30 pm. Early dismissal allows time for our students and teachers to prepare for their concert. The date will be posted in advance.

## **Make Up Days and Emergency Closures**

Please note there are no 'make up days' for days that children miss due to school closures, quarantines, illness, or vacation times.

In the event of an emergency closure due to facility, weather, or other issues, Kids U will review the circumstances before applying any decisions. During these events, communication will flow directly to parents from the Kids U team by phone and email.



## **Specialized Services**

Kids U is an inclusive environment and will attempt to support children with different needs and abilities, provided that additional support can be provided. Because of the nature of Kids U programming, large class sizes and the regular transitions throughout the day, Kids U may not be the right fit for all children. The child's needs will be at the forefront of all conversations regarding additional services and support that may be required.

## **Semester System**

Children graduate to the next program in September, January, July, or August, as a student cohort, subject to children's development and spaces available.

If parents/guardians are interested in learning more about what factors are considered when evaluating a child's developmental readiness, they are encouraged to speak to their Program Supervisor.

## **Arrival & Dismissal Policy**

All classes commence at 8:30 am sharp; to ensure all students benefit from the extensively planned curriculum children must arrive no later than 8:45 am. This allows our team to:

- Get the full classroom settled
- Introduce the day's learning projects
- Prepare for nature walks and other elements of the routine
- Focus on being with the children rather than greeting new students
- Naturalize the children to the school routine
- Participate in special events like field trips, special guests, class parties, and more!

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. Drop offs after 8:30 am and pick ups before 3:00 pm must consider the needs of the children and campus and should take place at natural breaks in the day:

- Outside time
- Snack and Mealtime
- Naptime
- Transition time

Kids U prides itself on creating a school environment. If parents are unable to commit to bringing their child to school on time and frequently are dropping off and picking up outside of core curriculum hours, termination of services will be considered.



***\*\*Please note: During pandemics, there will be screening at arrival and strict provisions will be adhered to.***

### **Independent Entry Policy**

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, collecting their belongings, and getting dressed themselves.

Typically when children see their parents they lose focus and are less independent, as parents often choose to do the things preschoolers can already do themselves. Also, parents choose to do the things preschoolers can already do themselves. We encourage parents to be patient while children are getting ready to come to lobby at the end of the day to meet their parents.

Parents must drop and pick up their children from the parents reception area organizing their personal and bin for the day. A staff member will assist them to their assigned classroom. We ask all parents and guardians to remove all footwear if they need to go inside any class or the gym area.

### **Absence Policy**

In the event of an absence for any reason, Kids U respectfully requests a telephone call or email to indicate the reason and anticipated date of return. This information is required in order to keep everyone safe and healthy and to ensure that all campus records are up to date. Voicemail is available 24 hours per day, so feel free to call anytime! Kids U will follow up with parents in the event of an unnotified absence.



## **COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK POLICIES**

### **Open Door Policy**

Kids U practices an open door policy, where parents and caregivers are welcome to visit the campus and observe their child at any time. During their time at the campus, parents are not allowed to interrupt teachers by entering the classroom, as the teachers are in class with children, and it can distract both the teacher and the children.

On the occasion that parents do enter the classroom during arrival and pick up time, please note that teachers are not expected to stop their engagement or involvement with the children in the room to speak with parents. At that time, parents are welcome to observe the classroom and other children. If parents have questions, please speak to campus management to set up a designated meeting.

Parents of infants are encouraged to enter the classroom to pass on pertinent information about their child's care routine, health, and well-being.

### **Daily Reports**

Daily reports will be sent home through our parent communication tool, Brightwheel, regarding day-to-day details about a child's experience at school. For day to day matters and details about their child's day, parents and caregivers are encouraged to communicate regularly with members of their campus administration team. Teachers do not regularly check the messages in the application because their focus is on the classroom and your children. Parents and caregivers are also encouraged to set meetings with their child's teacher in the event that they would like detailed feedback on their child.

### **Monthly Newsletter**

Kids U publishes a monthly newsletter that contains information relevant to families attending, and an overview of campus operations. Monthly updates on each room in the campus will be provided along with other points of interest, such as learning projects and themes in the classrooms, upcoming events, and other campus happenings.

### **Parent Feedback**

Comments and suggestions are welcomed by the campus and its management. Parents are encouraged to speak directly with their Program Supervisor and share their feedback in writing. Feedback may also be sent to [feedback@kidsu.ca](mailto:feedback@kidsu.ca).

Annually, parents and guardians may be asked to complete a satisfaction survey or similar document in order for the campus 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 functioning of the campus and its services, and what can be improved.

### **Concerns**

In the case where parents, community members, or other stakeholders have concerns or feedback that they would like to share, they are requested to first share their concerns directly with a member of the campus administration team. For serious concerns, documentation in writing must be submitted; either via letter or email to the Program Supervisor. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, then the concerned party may escalate the matter to the Director of Early Learning and Childcare Services.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

### **Registration Fee**

Families interested in registering with Kids U must pay a non-refundable, non-transferable application fee for processing services. Should a family choose to terminate care and return to Kids U at another time, the application fee must be paid again in full.

### **Annual Materials Fee (AMF)**

This fee supports the purchase of quality materials for the classrooms. The AMF also supports the different events that take place throughout the year, such as Christmas celebrations, Mother's Day and Father's Day as well as graduation.

The AMF is non-refundable and non-transferable for all new and returning students.

AMF are charged at the time of registration, and then again every year in May for the upcoming school year (Sept - August).

In the event that a family registers to start in January or later in the year, the fee will be prorated. Failure to pay the fee for the upcoming school year risks losing your child's place at Kids U.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Fees are charged monthly and although the number of days in each month varies (holidays or closures), there is NO change in monthly fees.

Annual fee increases will be communicated electronically with a minimum of 3 months notice to families before the increase takes effect. A number of factors may be considered when reviewing tuition increases including; inflation, program quality, cost of materials, and sustainability.



Parents can also hold their child's space once enrolled. For example, if a child was attending a campus but wanted to go on a holiday or take time off due to medical treatment the parent could pay a lower monthly holding fee versus monthly tuition to keep their child's space at the campus. Please contact [registration@kidsu.ca](mailto:registration@kidsu.ca) for more information.

### **Tuition LumpSum Payment Benefit**

Families can make a lump sum payment (minimum 10 months tuition) and will receive 10% off. Please note these payments are non-refundable. For more information, please speak with our finance department at [billing@kidsu.ca](mailto:billing@kidsu.ca).

### **Family Rates**

Although we realize the cost to send multiple children is high, we do not provide a family discount on the AMF, application or monthly tuition. 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.

### **Twin Rates**

For families of twins or triplets, the cost of child care can be even higher than for a family with multiple siblings. For this reason, we provide a 10% discount for families of twins and triplets enrolled at Kids U.

### **Collection of Fees**

Fees are collected monthly, on the 1st to 5th of the month, in advance of services. Fees must be paid via EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) or by credit card. A 3% processing fee will apply for all credit card payments.

In the event that monthly fees are not submitted on time, or if an account is withdrawn and declared NSF (non-sufficient funds) or cancelled, then a late payment processing fee will be applied, plus the fee for NSF.

### **Failure to Pay Fees**

Once notified that their payment was not received, families will have until the 15th of the month to submit payment, or their child's care will be suspended. If payment is still not received, families risk termination and their information may be shared with other collection agencies for payment.

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 campus. 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.

### **Subsidy**

Families are responsible for paying the difference between the program fee and the approved subsidy coverage amount as provided by the child care subsidy office.

Please forward the conditional approval letter to the [billing and finance department](#) prior to your enrolment date to prevent any delays or errors on your account.

It is the family's responsibility to ensure subsidy applications are completed and maintained and up to date at all times.

Kids U 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 Kids U will charge families full fees for services provided when subsidy lapses or discontinues for any reason.

Subsidy is based on hours of attendance in the program; families are responsible for ensuring that their child is meeting the required number of hours to ensure their full subsidy payment is provided. Any shortfall in the amount paid to Kids U will be borne by the family and collected in full.

Families entering Kids U for the first time are expected to pay the full first month's tuition deposit, unless Kids U has received confirmation of subsidy status from the Alberta Government 30 days prior to the child's enrollment date. Once subsidy is collected, a credit will be applied to the family's account.

### **Issuance of Receipts**

Receipts are available through the 1Core parent portal. Receipts will not be issued on a monthly basis. It is expected for parents to print their own tuition receipts from the parent portal for preparing their taxes.

### **Late Pick Up Fees**

Families who pick up their child(ren) after their child's scheduled departure time (i.e., 3:00 pm in the Preschool only program, will be charged \$1 per minute. These additional fees will be applied to monthly tuition. Parents who continually abuse the late pick up policy will be asked to enrol in the extended care programme or may be subject to termination of care.



## **Refunds**

There are no refunds for termination of care initiated by the parents or caregivers.

## **Lost, Stolen or Damaged Items**

Kids U is not responsible for any items that go missing or any damaged items. We ask that personal items such as toys and electronics do not come to the campus.

## **TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

### **Parent and Caregiver Initiated Termination**

Parents are required to provide written notice of termination of care. Notice must be provided at least 30 days in advance, from the first of the month. For instance, notice of termination provided on June 1st would mean the last day of care is provided on June 30th. Notice of termination provided on May 15th would mean the last day of care is provided on June 30th.

### **Campus Initiated Termination**

In exceptional circumstances, Kids U may need to terminate care for a family. These circumstances may include when a family is unwilling to follow the policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook, and when the behaviour of a child or parent/caregiver is disruptive to the other families, disrespectful or threatening to staff members, or requires support beyond what Kids U is able to provide.

At times, if a child's behaviour does not improve or if the parent is unwilling to work with Kids U to implement behaviour support, then termination may be considered.

## **CHILDREN RECORDS**

### **Semi-Annual Review**

Parents may be expected to review and update paperwork in their child's files (March and September/October) regardless of registration date. Changes to a child's file can only be accepted in writing or via email to ensure that they do not get lost; this includes changes in contact information, medical information, or others. Parents are responsible for ensuring that all changes are communicated to the campus administrative team.

### **Allergies and Guardianship Orders**



It is important to note that parents and caregivers must be especially diligent in communicating any information around a child's medical history, allergies, and food restrictions, as well as any guardianship orders in place. Corresponding documentation, such as doctor's notes and court documents, may be requested to ensure proper care is provided to your child.

### **Access to Records**

Children's records will be available for parents and caregivers to review by request. Kids U will retain all information pertaining to your time with us for a minimum of 2 years.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURE**

### **Allergies and Medical Conditions**

Kids U expects that parents/guardians act as professional partners when it comes to ensuring the safety of all children. This includes keeping all medical information up to date and notifying campus staff immediately in writing of any changes.

All allergies, food restrictions, and medical conditions will be documented using Kids U's Allergy and Medical Conditions form. These forms will outline the severity of the condition, associated triggers, expected symptoms, and what kind of medication will be provided.

Please note, if a child requires an inhaler, epi-pen, seizure medication, or any other life-saving medication, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the campus with those items. If the medication is not at the campus or has expired, Kids U will call and notify the parent/guardian, who will be required to bring it to the campus immediately or pick up their child. Kids U will ensure that parents are informed in advance of medication expiration.

Teachers will ensure that emergency medication moves with the child(ren) and is available for use at all times. Teachers will be directly responsible for overseeing and managing the service of meals in the classroom, and management of any medical safety plan. Campus Program Supervisors will be responsible to enforce all Kids U policies regarding medical conditions and life-threatening allergies, as well as ensuring that all parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

### **Aerosols**

Kids U will not use aerosols for any reason within the presence of children attending the campus at any time. The use of pesticides shall not occur in the presence of children attending the campus. Additionally, when the campus is made aware of a public application of pesticides (i.e. on the public park adjacent to the campus), children attending the campus 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.



***Please note: Kids U does not accept aerosol sunscreen or bug repellent on any campus.***

## **Outdoor Policy**

It is expected that parents/guardians provide their children with the correct gear to enjoy outdoor time, including snow pants and rain boots.

Children will not be taken outside for outdoor time if

- The temperature is higher than 30-degrees celsius;
- The air quality is rated a 7 or higher;
- The temperature is lower than -10 degrees celsius for Infants (including wind chill)
- The temperature is lower than -12 degrees Celsius for Junior Preschool (including wind chill)
- The temperature is lower than -15 degrees Celsius for Preschool (including wind chill)

If the air quality is rated at 4, 5, or 6, outside time will be reduced and children with respiratory conditions and infants will be closely monitored.

While outside, 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 campus staff prior to allowing children to use the structure or play site. 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 or return to the campus. Parents and caregivers will be notified at the time of orientation of all approved nature walk routes and other designated playfields.

## **Neighbourhood 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 neighbourhood walks or outings in close proximity to the campus. These activities are separate from regularly scheduled field trips and may be spontaneously initiated by children's interests. Children will leave the campus with the regular room staff that will bring with them the room's first aid kit, emergency contact information binder, emergency medications, and a cell phone in order to maintain communication with campus management at all times. The neighbourhood walks will follow a predetermined route shared with parents at time of enrollment.

These nature walks and adjacent community parks are indicated on the campus Walking Permission form, which varies by campus. Spaces and pathways that are not indicated on the permission form will not be used by Kids U teams without obtaining parental permission.

## **Appliances**

Any appliances used by the school campus will be subject to ongoing inspection for safety concerns or product failure and will be removed from the campus 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 campus. Any appliance or electronic device used in the presence of children will have cords made inaccessible to the children for safety reasons.

## **Materials**

Art and craft materials used by Kids U shall be of the non-toxic variety at all times. Although the campus encourages the reuse of certain materials in order to promote recycling efforts and support our Loose Parts programming in our Right Brain classrooms, considerations for health and safety will be of top priority. For instance, empty food containers will be washed before use in the classroom. Also, items that 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).

## **Bottles & Nap time**

The use of glass bottles for infant-aged children shall be accommodated by the campus, 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 in their beds. 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 campus, 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 campus:

- Fever more than 38 degrees Celsius (24 hours from last fever reading) or any temperature higher than 37 degrees Celsius which is also accompanied by a change in the child's temperament/behaviour (eg: crying, lethargy, irritability, refusal to participate in activities, expressions of general discomfort/pain)
- 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 the beginning of treatment)
- Any other communicable disease (until medical note can be provided to indicate a safe return to campus)

Please note. Kids U may request to see a doctor's note at any time in order to rule out if symptoms or a condition are contagious, cause for exclusion, and/or require additional staff support and training.

At times of an outbreak, observed removal times may be increased to 48 hours or greater as advised by the Government of Alberta. An 'outbreak' is defined as two or more cases of the same cluster of symptoms. In such circumstances, parents will be informed via email what symptoms to watch for, the mandatory exclusion time, the steps the campus will be taking to deal with the outbreak as well as steps that parents and families can take to prevent the spread of diseases at home.

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 circumstances, 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.

### **Pandemic**

During pandemics, Kids U will adhere to all regulations put forward by Health Services and may adjust their programming based on their guidance. Kids U will provide parents with a comprehensive guide for parents/guardians outlining the regulations and restrictions put in place.

### **Handwashing**

Regular and ongoing hand washing routines are in place within the campus 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

Proper hand washing and diapering methods are posted in the classrooms and observed by all staff at all times.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

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

In the event of campus contamination with a communicable disease, 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 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 campus, 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.

At times, an incident report may be completed to inform families of a child's behaviour while at Kids U. Examples of the kinds of behaviour that could be reported to parents in the form of an incident report includes biting, swearing, repetitive crying or yelling or other disruptive behaviour that lasts longer than is developmentally reasonable, or any other antisocial behaviour.

Occasionally, this kind of behaviour may require that the child is picked up early/sent home. If the behaviour continues or does not improve over time, other avenues of support will be considered, up to and including termination of care.

### **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 campus staff through their signed enrollment contract. The campus ensures all staff have 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, or immediately any time an epi-pen is administered.

### **Emergency Medical Services Personnel**

If the need arises for EMS to attend the campus to provide medical assistance to any of the campus's clients, any costs associated with this will be billed to the child's parents or caregivers. 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 may administer medication to children under parental request, including prescription medication, over the counter medication as well as herbal remedies.

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 campus's appropriate paperwork
- **The medication is in the original labelled container and indicates in English:**
  - The name of the medication
  - If the medication is prescribed, the first and last name of the child (which must match the child's registration/profile)
  - The dosage of the medication to be administered, which must match the known age/weight of the child
  - 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.)
  - Any other directions provided by a doctor
- 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 symptoms requiring the administration of any medication (i.e., pain for teething)

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 campus'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 campus 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 name and initials of the person who administered the medication

All medications while in campus will be made inaccessible to children. Emergency medications in the campus 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 over the counter medication, herbal remedies or supplements administered to their child while in the care of Kids U must provide the campus 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 campus if their child has had medication administered prior to arriving in the care of the campus. The campus'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 fire drill practice, both announced and unannounced. Additionally, emergency evacuation and campus 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 campus to ensure clarity for all persons in the campus 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 a copy of the procedure is additionally provided to them in the emergency contacts binders kept with the first aid kit in each room in the campus. 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.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, all parents will be informed as soon as is practical and reasonable. 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.

## **Nutrition Policy**

Kids U believes in encouraging children to make healthy lifestyle choices from an early age. In order to support this, Kids U has partnered with Fueling Minds to provide wholesome, fresh and child-friendly meals to the campuses. Fueling Minds follows the recommendations as outlined by Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide, as well as the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth.

A seasonal, rotating menu created by Fueling Minds, will be posted for families to review on the main bulletin board, shared through the monthly newsletter, and posted on the website.

Parents of children with food restrictions and allergies will be required to notify campus staff at the time of their registration and to confirm the information at time of orientation. There will also be additional paperwork to complete at time of orientation, or at such time a new allergy is identified, to ensure that all involved parties are aware of the food restriction/allergy. Kids U staff may request to see a doctor's note in order to ensure the most accurate up to date information is available to campus staff in terms of allergy management.

Kids U will make every effort to accommodate basic allergies (specific to simple foods). We will not serve nut or pork based products to our children. If we are unable to accommodate your child's allergy, parents/guardians will be asked to provide replacement meals. Please note, there will not be any financial compensation or discount in lieu of meals not provided. Replacement meals provided by parents must adhere to our nutrition policy and nut free environment, including but not limited to oils, flours, butters, and milks.

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, as well as encouraged to remain seated at the tables until they have finished their meal, snack, and/or drink.

## **Nut-free facility**

Kids U campuses attempt to maintain a nut-free facility at all times. Items are screened closely by staff. Any item found to be containing (or having the possibility of containing) nuts of any kind will not be served and/or allowed in our campuses. This includes food brought from home by children, including those items that say, "May contain traces of tree nuts and peanuts" or "Made in a facility that also processes nuts."

The above request also applies to food brought in to celebrate special occasions and birthdays with children. Kids U requires that any food that will be served to children is made in a professional facility (no homemade birthday cake or cookies) that does not contain nuts of any



kind. Should a parent/guardian provide any item that has been store bought and in its original unopened container, to be served to the children for a special event such as a birthday. Kids U requests an ingredient list be provided, and these items will be sent home individually rather than consumed.

Please note, nut-free requirements are also followed by Kids U staff and teachers.

### **Daily Routines and Napping**

Each environment at Kids U follows its own unique daily routine. A copy of each room's independent routine is posted at the campus.

Napping opportunities are provided to children based on developmentally appropriate practices and licensing requirements. Kids U is required to meet the basic needs of our students which includes providing a place to nap if the children request or are tired. All infant and junior preschool rooms follow a nap time. For preschool children where napping begins to decline a separate non-napping program is implemented. Parents will need to discuss their child's napping needs with the campus staff to determine when the most appropriate time to begin limiting napping in the classrooms would be.

## **ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

### **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.

### **Possible 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 discussing 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 child(ren) time to respond to the expectations
- 4) Reinforcing appropriate behaviour through verbal praise

- 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.

### **Possible Intervention Strategies**

One or more of the following strategies may be used if a child displays inappropriate or anti-social behaviours such as biting. Please note, this list is not exhaustive and other strategies may be used.

1. 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 circumstances, 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

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

## Bullying

Bullying can be defined as an intentional, repeated targeting of a particular individual by another individual with the purpose of hurting them or excluding them. During the early years, children may hit or hurt other children, or resort to name-calling, because they are unable to express themselves with words to communicate how they feel.

Kids U strives to ensure that all children feel safe and cared for while at our campuses, and we take student behaviour very seriously. Our staff will work with all families to address any possible concerns due to behaviour or bullying-like behaviour, and we are extremely cautious to label young children as bullies as while these behaviours may look like bullying, it is important to note that **bullying must be both intentional and repeated**. Our goal is to support all classroom members and address the root causes of behaviour issues through education, conversation and where necessary, intervention.

At times, if a child's behaviour does not improve or if the parent is unwilling to work with Kids U to implement behaviour support, then termination may be considered.

## Ethical Conduct - Staff and Parents

Kids U strives at all times to maintain the highest ethical conduct and requests the same from parents and caregivers. The following practices are considered unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the campuses, with respect to adult-to-child interactions or adult-to-adult interactions:

- 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 other behaviour that is considered to be threatening or abusive in nature



## **Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution Model**

Kids U will practice, model, and share the following problem solving and conflict resolving ideas 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

## **Field Trips & Special Guests**

In order to enhance the programming offered to the families attending the campus, Kids U may schedule either field trips or special guests, or both, on a regular basis. There may be an additional fee associated with the field trip or special guest, and children are not required to participate in these optional activities.

When special guests come to the campus, they will work with groups of children at scheduled times. They will not be left unattended with any child. Special guests are not required to complete any volunteer paperwork and they are screened in advance by their professional organization and/or employer. Special guests may include all sorts of persons who can enhance the learning objectives of the campus. They may include individuals from the Public Library, the Police Service, the 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 campus management team to determine how this can best be accomplished.

When field trips are scheduled, parents and guardians will be provided with a consent form outlining the specifics of the field trip. Parents and guardians will be required to consent in



writing for their child to participate in the outlined field trip. Consent forms will include the following:

- The location of the field trip (name and address)
- The time of departure from the campus and estimated return time to the campus
- 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
- A description of the activity
- A description of the supervision plan that will be implemented while on the excursion

Parents are requested to participate in field trips to support their own children and to act as ratio enhancement. In these circumstances, parent volunteers will be provided with a short orientation and will be requested to fill in additional paperwork outlining confidentiality, code of ethics as well as the behaviour guidance policy. If insufficient numbers of volunteers are 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.

## **Bins**

Kids U uses a personal storage cubby system to store children's belongings at the campus. Plastic cubby bins are included during a child's time at Kids U. These bins should be brought back and forth between home and school, as there is no bin storage at the campuses. The bins should be treated with respect and care for the bin is utilized to teach children about self-care and independence. Families who mistreat their child's bin or regularly need a replacement may be charged for a replacement bin. Regular wear and tear are not considered mistreatment. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag inside the bin to be taken home at the end of the day.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY POLICIES**

### **Photos, Creative Arts & Social Media**

In order to enhance the environment and allow children to feel as though they are actively involved in the campus, staff of Kids U may take photos of the children attending the campus for postings within the campus, social media, newsletters, Brightwheel, 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 campus, photos taken to document a series of events to reach a learning goal or objective identified by campus 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 videos 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, social media sites, websites, or by community media outlets.

Should images of former students appear in current material, the parents of the children will not be notified.

Media denial forms are provided at the time of registration and give parents the opportunity to provide or withhold consent for individual photos.

By signing the media denial form, you are withdrawing consent for your child to appear individually in social media posts, communication posts through Brightwheel, educational videos, and promotional material.

Children who are on the media denial list may still appear in these photos or videos as long as it is in a large group setting (five children or more). In these situations, we take care to avoid showing close-up or front-facing shots of children with media denial forms.

### **Documentation**

Photos of children working on activities in groups or individually will be used for the purpose of classroom and learning documentation. These photos are added to a documentation binder and go home with parents at the end of the academic year when the child graduates and will also be shared periodically during parent-teacher interviews. Such photos are also used for daily sharing between the campus and families via the Brightwheel app.

## **Group Photos and Event Media**

Kids U regularly takes group photos and videos in the classroom and during internal and external social events, field trips, and for documentation of our programs for marketing and informational purposes.

## **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 technology be used in the classrooms, it will be done so with proper supervision and child appropriate content.

The campus does not promote the use of televisions except when special videos are presented around children's interests or for special events. At those times, the video played will be posted and logged in the classroom and shall be made available to parents upon request.

During special occasions, Movie Days may be offered to children as an activity, for instance during pajama day or Christmas break. At these times, parents will be informed in advance of the activity taking place, and all movies and shows will be selected with a "G" rating. During Movie Days, children will have the option to access other materials and activities.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **My child's birthday is approaching. What does the campus 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 campus recognizes birthdays by singing 'Happy Birthday' to the birthday child during afternoon snack on their actual birthday date. In addition, the Left Brain, Right Brain and Movement classrooms all have their own unique way of recognizing birthdays. If you would like to bring in any item for the occasion, we ask that all food be peanut and treenut free, as well as produced in a commercial kitchen (store bought).

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

For a child, play is work and work is play! Although it can sometimes appear that all a child is doing is filling the time of the day with play, 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 campus. Do you accept donations?**

We appreciate you thinking of the campus for any donations you may have. Please be sure to speak with the campus Program Supervisor prior to bringing in any donations as the campus does not have a lot of extra storage space and they can determine whether the campus would be able to use your donation in a positive way to enhance programming.

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

Each classroom can go outside at least once a day, for 30-40 minutes, weather permitting. The campus Program Supervisor will make the final decision on whether children shall or shall not go out.