



Parent Handbook

**P.O. Box 32453
Baltimore, MD 21282
410-484-6220
www.kidsplacebaltimore.org**

Kids Place – Providing a safe, fun, nurturing environment for children in our care

Welcome to Kids Place! We look forward to caring for your children.

This Parent Handbook has been prepared as a tool that outlines Kids Place policies. Please set aside some time to become familiar with it. It will be very helpful in answering many questions that arise. We recognize, however, that no handbook can answer every question. If you do not find an answer to a particular question, or if you would like a policy clarified, feel free to call the Kids Place office. We will be glad to help you answer every question.

Leslie Seidman

Sue Seidman

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Kids Place Philosophy

Kids Place provides quality care to children in our licensed programs. Our professional staff provides supervised care that is based on the whole child's physical, emotional, social, creative, and intellectual development. Centers offer self-selected and planned activities in an academically enriching environment.

Kids Place Mission

Kids Place provides a safe, fun, nurturing environment for children in our care.

- We strive for excellence.
- We encourage teamwork.
- We respect and appreciate diversity.
- We communicate openly and productively.
- We utilize research-based curriculum resources.
- We seek to understand and support family needs.
- We encourage feedback and seek continuous improvement.
- We provide families with opportunities to be involved in the program.

Kids Place follows the rules and policies of Baltimore County Public Schools. You will receive a Student Handbook from the school with these rules and policies.

Kids Place Vision

Our vision is to be recognized by the Maryland State Department of Education by meeting high standards of quality in key areas through Maryland EXCELS. These areas include Licensing, Staffing and Professional Development, Accreditation, Developmentally Appropriate Learning and Practice, and Administrative Practices and Policies.

Staffing Practices

The Kids Place staff meets or exceeds all the requirements set forth in the Code of Maryland Regulations issued by the State Department of Education. These requirements include annual professional development in best practices for the care of children. Staff is trained in First Aid, CPR, Medication Administration, Emergency Preparedness, and Basic Health and Safety.

Parent's Guide to Regulated Care

The Parent's Guide to Regulated Care is an Office of Child Care pamphlet which provides information about child care. It explains who regulates child care, the requirements for facilities, and other important information. The pamphlet also informs you about your rights and responsibilities as a child care consumer. You will find a link to this pamphlet on the Resources page of www.kidsplacebaltimore.org and posted at your child's center.

Communication

We encourage open communication between home and Kids Place.

- It is necessary that parents read all notices that are posted at and distributed by the center.
- Notify the Director of any changes in your child's normal routine or home life.
- **Please make necessary changes on your child's Emergency Form when applicable.**
- To ensure your child's safety, we must account for each child at the end of school. Notify the Director before the start of the after school program if your child will not be attending after school when he/she is scheduled. You may call the center and leave a voice mail message if there is no one to take your call. A note can also be left in the Kids Place mailbox in the school office. Time spent trying to locate your child takes time away from the other children in the center. **Therefore, a \$5.00 fee will be charged each time you fail to notify us of your child's absence.**
- Notify the Director if your child has a communicable disease such as head lice, ringworm, pink eye, etc. Please refer to the Communicable Disease Chart in each center and our Sick Child Policy on page 9.
- Please notify the Director of any allergies your child has and list them on the Health Inventory. This is especially important with food allergies.
- Notify the Director in writing if you would like your child dismissed to a person who is not on the Emergency Form.
- Kids Place will offer periodic surveys. We also welcome parent feedback throughout the year.
- Pick up and drop off times are good for quick communication, but anything lengthier may require setting up a time to conference. Conferences can be requested by center staff or parents to discuss child progress or concerns regarding the child or the programming. The child's teacher may also be included in this communication if applicable, with the parent's permission. A parent or guardian may request a conference by asking the Director at the center (in person or by phone) at any time during the school year. The parent or guardian may also call or email the main office and speak with an Administrator to request a conference. A mutually agreeable time will be arranged as quickly as possible.
- We welcome input about how we can best meet your child's specific needs.
- Kids Place communicates to parents through:
 - ✓ Quarterly newsletters
 - ✓ Parent Board at the center with updated information and resources
 - ✓ www.kidsplacebaltimore.org

Enrollment Procedures

- In order to enroll in one of our programs, a Registration Form must be completed and returned to the Kids Place office. The non-refundable registration fee and a deposit, which will be applied to the June tuition*, must be included. Completing the registration process will reserve your space in the program or place you on the waiting list. (* See Financial Policy).

- The following forms must be on file before your child may attend.

Health Inventory Part I	Completed by the parent
Health Inventory Part II	Completed by the child's physician
Emergency Form	Completed by the parent
Emergency Closings Form	Completed by the parent
Medication Admin. Auth. Form (if applicable)	Completed by parent or physician
- You will receive a letter of confirmation and payment information book in the mail.
- Re-registration for the next school year, for children already in our program, will take place each March. There will be a re-registration fee and deposit due at this time.
- Kindergarten registrations will take place in each school in the spring for the incoming Kindergarten class.
- Open enrollment will take place from June 1st to August 15th. No enrollments, including returning families, will be accepted between August 15th and the first week of school.
- The specific days you have chosen upon registration are non-transferable. If Kids Place is closed or your child cannot attend on his/her designated day, we do not offer a make-up day. However, if you would like your child to attend on additional days, you must call the Kids Place office at least 24 hours in advance to determine if space is available. There is an additional fee for this service.
- If your child has an IEP, we would like to have a copy so we can best serve your child.

Financial Policy

- Kids Place is a non-profit organization whose budget depends on tuition fees and registrations.
- All tuition is due by the first of each month.
- There will be a charge of \$15.00 for any tuition received after the fifth of the month.
- Failure to keep monthly payments up to date can result in denial of participation in the program. Children will not be allowed to attend the program when the outstanding tuition becomes two months overdue.
- Checks and credit cards returned for any reason will be re-billed to your account with a \$25.00 NSF charge.
- Refunds for days absent, school vacations, suspension, inclement weather, and withdrawal from the program without sufficient notice will not be allowed. If your child is absent from school five consecutive days due to illness, however, a credit may be issued. A doctor's note may be requested stating that your child is free from communicable disease.
- **Kids Place requires two weeks' notice of your intent to withdraw your child. You must call the Kids Place office at 410-484-6220. You are responsible for payment of tuition during these last two weeks.**
- If your child's last day in the program is prior to May 1st, and two weeks' notice has been given, your deposit will be applied to your final payment. If your child's last day is after April 30th, your deposit will be forfeited.

- If you are interested in paying your bill by automatic withdrawal or credit card, please contact the billing office at 410-484-8777.
- Child care vouchers must be signed and mailed, faxed, or emailed to the Kids Place office.
- Forms for flexible spending reimbursement must be mailed, faxed, or emailed to the Kids Place office.

If you have any questions regarding billing, call Sue at 410-484-8777.

All payments and correspondence should be submitted to the Kids Place office:

Kids Place Baltimore, Inc.
P.O. Box 32453
Baltimore, MD 21282
info@kidsplacebaltimore.org
Fax: 410-602-8869

Late Fee Policy

- The staff of Kids Place may not leave the school until all children have been picked up. Please be considerate of our staff and their families by arriving on time to pick up your child.
- Parents arriving after the center's designated closing time will be charged a late fee at the rate of \$1.00 per minute per family.
- The late fee is due within 24 hours and shall be paid to the staff person on duty as his/her fee for being responsible for your child.
- If you have not picked up your child five minutes after the center's closing time, we will begin calling the emergency contacts on your child's Emergency Form. If we have been unable to contact anyone to pick up your child within 30 minutes of closing time, we will take the appropriate steps which may include contacting the police.
- Repeated late arrivals may result in denial of participation in the program. There will be no tuition credit for the suspension period.
- **If, for any reason, you are called to pick up your child (illness, emergency closing, etc.), you must pick him/her up within 45 minutes.** If you are unable to do this, you must have an emergency person who can pick up your child within 45 minutes. A late fee will go into effect if the child is not picked up within 45 minutes of notification.

Attendance and Pick-up Procedures

- **Your child must be signed in and signed out every day as confirmation of the transfer of care.** Continued failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.
- Children will be released only to the adults authorized on the Emergency Form. Kids Place must be given written permission by the parent/guardian who enrolled the child to release the child to another adult. Staff members will ask for verification of the identity of anyone they do not recognize.

- If you or the person authorized to pick up your child appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, we will be unable to release the child into your care. For the safety of your child, you will be required to find alternate transportation.

Medication Policy

- Licensing guidelines state that a Medication Administration Authorization Form must be completed by a doctor and/or parent before we administer any prescription or non-prescription medication.
- **If your child may require emergency medication while in our care, that medication and a completed Medication Administration Authorization Form must be at the center prior to your child's first day.** We do not have access to medications stored with the nurse.
- Only staff who has completed the Medication Administration Training will administer any medication.
- A parent must administer the first dosage of any medication in order to observe any adverse reactions the child might have.
- The medication must be in the original prescription box/bottle and be properly labeled by the pharmacy and be within the expiration date.
- Any expired or unused medication will be returned to the parent.

Closing Policy

- When school closes three hours early for a Professional Study Day, Kids Place will open when school closes and remain open until 6:00pm unless otherwise noted. There will be no charge for the extra hours for those children on regular roll. If you need care but your child does not regularly attend on that day, you must contact the Kids Place office at least 24 hours in advance to see if space is available. There will be an extra fee for the afternoon.
- If school is closed for emergencies such as power outages or lack of heat or water, Kids Place must also be closed. Please make alternate arrangements for these emergency situations.
- If an emergency occurs during Kids Place hours, you will be notified and must pick up your child within 45 minutes. A late fee will go into effect if the child is not picked up within 45 minutes of notification.
- In the event that school opens late or closes early due to inclement weather, including for heat related closings, under direction of Baltimore County Schools, Kids Place may not open. In cases where schools close at their regularly scheduled times, but the statement issued by the Superintendent specifically states that all afternoon and evening activities are cancelled, Kids Place centers will be closed.
- When school is closed all day for Professional Development, Kids Place will open full day programs at magnet sites.
- Kids Place follows the BCPS calendar. We are closed during school vacations and for federal holidays.

- Get alerts about Kids Place emergency closings by enrolling in RAINED OUT. Go to www.kidsplacebaltimore.org and click on the link to enroll.

Sick Child Policy

- If your child becomes ill at Kids Place, you or your emergency contacts will be notified. You must then pick up your child or have someone else do so within 45 minutes. Your child will wait for your arrival isolated from the other children so as not to spread the illness. Remember that a late fee will be charged after 45 minutes.
- Notify the Director if your child will not be attending the after school program when he or she is scheduled. You may leave a message on the voice mail. A note can also be left in the Kids Place mailbox in the school office. Time spent trying to locate your child takes time away from the other children in the center. **Therefore, a \$5.00 fee will be charged each time you fail to notify us of your child’s absence.**
- Please refer to the chart below to find out if your child should be in child care with his or her illness:

SYMPTOM/ILLNESS	CONTROL MEASURES
Vomiting/diarrhea	May return 24 hours after symptoms have resolved
Fever	May return 24 hours after fever is gone
Strep throat	May return 24 hours after antibiotics begin, if fever free
Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)	May return 24 hours after treatment begins with a Dr.’s note
Chickenpox	May return after blisters are dry and crusted
Ringworm on scalp	May return 24 hours after treatment begins
Ringworm on body	No exclusion. Ringworm must be covered
Head Lice	May return after being cleared by the school nurse

For communicable diseases not listed, please refer to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Disease Control Program. You may also ask the Director at your child’s center.

Parent Involvement

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to spend time with their children in the center. Spending time in the center shows your child that it is a comfortable, acceptable, and fun place to be. The staff appreciates your involvement.
- If you have a special talent or interest that you would like to share with the children at the center, please arrange a time with the Director.

Behavior Guidance Policy

- Our staff uses behavior guidance techniques which help children stay safe and develop self-control and problem-solving skills. We have expectations for behavior developed with input from the children. These expectations are reviewed with the children in a positive way on a regular basis. If a child does not respond to our behavior guidance techniques, he/she may be removed from the group so expectations for behavior can be clarified and self-control can be gained. Acts of aggression that endanger children, staff, or property will result in immediate removal from the group. If the behavior continues, a parent may be asked to pick up the child, and he/she may not return until a conference has been held. If disruptive behavior continues, the child may be dismissed from the program. With parental permission, Directors can meet with school staff and other health professionals and take advantage of other available resources. Everyone benefits when we work as a team. Our complete Behavior Guidance Policy is posted in the center.

Outdoor Play

- All children will go outside everyday unless the weather conditions are absolutely unsafe (i.e. lightning, heavy rain or snow falling, temperature above 95 degrees or below 20 degrees Fahrenheit.)
- Please check the weather forecast each morning and send appropriate clothing for outdoor play. The decision concerning what outdoor clothing is required for your child is between you and your child.
- **If your child is well enough to come to Kids Place, he/she is well enough to go outside.**
- The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends children have at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Kids Place supports this guideline by providing at least 30 minutes of outdoor play daily.

Homework Policy

- Each center has a table or area set aside for children who want to do homework.
- Kids Place staff is available to answer questions and offer guidance. We ask that parents continue to follow up on homework assignments with their children on a daily basis.
- Kids Place staff cannot be responsible for requiring your child to do homework. This matter is between the parent and child.

Before/After School Activities and Classroom Helpers

- In order to permit a child to attend school activities or assist teachers in classrooms during Kids Place hours, a permission form must be completed and signed by the parent. This form can be obtained from the Director.

Snack/Nutrition Policy

- Kids Place provides snacks in our before and after school programs. A monthly snack menu is posted at the center on the Parent Board. These snacks are nutritious and

follow the CACFP guidelines. The daily snack is available to supplement any snacks brought from home. Fresh fruit and/or vegetables will be offered at least three times per week. Water is always available and, when milk is served, it is 1% or nonfat.

- We emphasize that this is a snack and is not intended to replace a healthy breakfast.
- Children are welcome to bring their snacks from home to eat at the center during snack time.

Items Brought From Home

- Kids Place staff cannot be responsible for any items brought from home. If your child wants to bring something to Kids Place, he/she is responsible to see that it does not get damaged or lost. Children who bring items from home are not required to share these items; however, other children may be curious and inquisitive. Because we are frequently away from the room, it is not a good idea to bring in items which are valuable or cannot be easily replaced. We do not have facilities to secure personal items while we are away from our room. Please also note that we do not allow toys that promote or encourage violence.
- If permitted by the school, handheld electronic devices may be used by children during Kids Place up to 2 designated days per week. Time spent on these devices is limited to indoor, free play times.
- If cell phones are brought to school, they must be turned off and remain in your child's backpack during Kids Place. Please remember we cannot be responsible for loss or damage.

Child Abuse Policy

- Child care staff is required by Maryland law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of abuse or neglect is immune from any civil liability or criminal penalty.

Technology Policy

- Use of "passive technology" (non-interactive television and videos) is limited to special occasions such as celebrations or extended days. "Interactive technology" includes programs, apps, non-commercial television programming, videos, and e-books. Use of this technology is limited in order to support, but not replace, creative play, physical activity, hands-on exploration, outdoor experience, social interactions, and other developmentally appropriate learning activities. Use of technology is supervised by staff to provide protection from exposure to inappropriate sites. Even while some children choose to use technology, all regular supplies, materials, and activities remain accessible to all children at all times.

Emergency Preparedness

- All staff has been trained in the center's Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- Two emergency evacuation drills will be conducted each year.

- Fire Drills will be conducted monthly.

Inclusive Child Care Practices

- In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), our program does not discriminate based on a child’s disability or special health care need. We strive to offer reasonable accommodations to enable all children, including English Language Learners, to become fully included in the program.
- Materials and equipment are appropriate and adapted for children of varying abilities, interests, and needs.
- We partner with outside agencies to benefit children. Please visit our website to see a list - www.kidsplacebaltimore.org.

Denial of Participation

- Kids Place reserves the right to deny your child participation in the program if any Kids Place policies are violated.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Kids Place Centers:

Chatsworth	410-833-8676
Church Lane	410-922-7426
Glyndon	410-833-7476
New Town	410-581-1408
Reisterstown	410-517-1937
Seventh District	410-357-0291
Summit Park	410-653-9014

Main Office	410-484-6220
Billing Office	410-484-8777
Protective Services	410-853-3000
Child Care Subsidy (CCS Central)	866-243-8796
Office of Child Care	410-583-6200

Sample Daily Schedule

Before School:

- Center opens – children arrive to a warm greeting, store their belongings in a basket, and choose from many self-selected activity choices that are available
- Wash hands for snack
- Snack is open
- Clean up activity centers, children gather belongings
- Group activity
- Dismissal to classrooms

After School:

- Children are greeted as they arrive from classrooms, attendance is taken, children store their belongings in a basket, and choose from many self-selected activity choices that are available, including homework
- Wash hands for snack
- Snack is open
- Tidy up the center, children prepare to go outside, attendance is taken
- Outdoor play
- Children prepare to go inside, attendance is taken
- Wash hands
- Planned activity for children who wish to participate, self-selected activity choices are also available
- Clean up, center closes at 6:00pm

Self-selected activity choices include, but are not limited to: Games, Puzzles, Dramatic Play, Library, Construction Zone, Arts/Crafts, and Computer (limited to 10 minutes per child).

Snacks – Our nutritious snacks contain at least two food groups and are served along with milk (skim or 1%), 100% juice, and/or water.

Planned activities include teacher-led activities based on the interests of the children. They include areas of Language and Literacy, Scientific Thinking, Mathematical Thinking, Physical Development, and the Arts.