

# Parent Essentials

A family guide to  
**Kiddie Academy®**

KIDDIE  ACADEMY®  
EDUCATIONAL CHILD CARE

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# Introduction

## **Where Children Learn, Parents Connect and Entire Communities Prosper**

Every day is made up of learning opportunities. At Kiddie Academy®, we define educational child care as a way to make the most of the learning opportunities present in every day. Given the right environment and encouragement, children become more curious and collaborative. They discover and accomplish more. Our aim is to empower a love of learning so that children can sustain the momentum—from the classroom, to home and throughout the community.

## **Our Commitment to Your Family**

We realize that every minute has momentum in it—in the classroom, at home and throughout the community. Our approach to innovative early childhood education is built around nurturing and collaborating. From the time your child wakes up until the time he or she goes to sleep at night, there are countless possibilities for learning and growing. Our caring, observant, dedicated educators stay constantly involved in every aspect of your child's day, so they can nurture "teachable moments" at our Academies.

Kiddie Academy's proprietary Life Essentials® curriculum focuses on social and emotional character education, as well as physical and cognitive outcomes that far exceed state education standards.

In our Academy, our highly trained teachers and staff facilitate play and learning in a safe, supportive and stimulating environment. We focus on encouraging your child to engage in activities that help develop age-appropriate cognitive, gross motor and fine motor skills. Throughout the day we make time to teach those intangible yet ever-important lessons, like character development, by emphasizing the importance of patience, respect for others and embracing differences.

## **A National Reputation for Excellence**

Since we opened the doors to our first Academy in 1981, Kiddie Academy has experienced tremendous growth. Our Academies now span coast to coast, and we've become one of the most trusted and respected educational child care providers in the nation. Our community of Academies proudly practices the

philosophy that early nurturing and learning go hand in hand to create educationally focused child care, preparing your child for school and for life.

By enrolling your child in our Academy, you automatically invest in the community in which you live or work. It's simple; children immersed in this positive, stimulating and safe environment, grow into confident citizens. There's a strong sense of community which your child will take with them into your home, your neighborhood and later into their schools.

Parents and caregivers are an important part of our community, too. That's why we welcome your ideas and encourage you to visit with our owner and director regularly and discuss with us what's going on with your child at home or in the Academy. Open communication allows us to build an even stronger community, as each family shares together and grows together, creating a foundation for the future.

We look forward to having you and your family become part of the Kiddie Academy community.



# Admissions & Attendance

## **Enrollment and Tuition**

Your enrollment is completed when you return all requisite forms and pay the required fees for your child. Together, your Enrollment Agreement and the Parent Essentials handbook govern the contractual relationship between your family and your Kiddie Academy location. If you have questions after reading both documents, please feel free to contact the director for an explanation or clarification of any policies or procedures.

We kindly ask that all tuition payments be made in advance of services. Your Enrollment Agreement provides further information on the dates payments are due. We urge you to make payments in a timely manner, as late payments will incur late fees. For your convenience, our computer software system allows you to check your account balance at any time.

## Waiting List

If we cannot immediately accommodate your child when you apply, we will place your child on our waiting list. We consider the following factors when making classroom placements:

- Internal movement of a child from one age group to another based on the child's age and individual readiness, and available openings in the next classroom
- Sibling of a child currently enrolled
- New children, based on date of application, with registration fee

Please note that if you decline an enrollment opportunity, we will extend that offer to another child on the waiting list.

## Forms

Please complete and return the following forms to the director prior to your child's first day.

### ***Enrollment Agreement***

Specific to each Kiddie Academy location, the Enrollment Agreement outlines all terms, including, without limitation: tuition, registration and other fees; and hours of operation.

### ***Immunization Certificate and Physical Exam***

State regulations for child care centers require that a current, completed physical examination form with immunization records must be signed by your pediatrician and placed on file prior to your child's start date. You'll need to update our records periodically.

### ***Emergency Information***

This form contains your contact information as well as those

individuals you authorize to pick up your child. In case of a serious medical or dental emergency you will be contacted first. If you are not available, we'll attempt to reach other emergency contacts per your authorization.

### ***Parent Authorization and Consent***

If we cannot reach you during an emergency, this form provides authorization for our staff to provide basic first aid and/or arrange for medical transport. This form also lets us know whether you authorize specific activities in your child's daily routine.

### ***Personal Childhood History***

This gives us background information on your child, including family life, special interests, likes and dislikes, physical abilities, and social behavior. It also gives us insight into your child's eating, sleeping and bathroom habits.

### ***Behavior Management Policy***

This outlines our policies regarding children's behavior management and discipline.

### ***Publicity Release Agreement***

This gives us permission to photograph your child during our normal daily routine. It also authorizes us to use the photographs for promotional purposes (on official Academy social media pages or with media stories), and to send them to you at your home and/or business. Please note that employees are authorized to provide personal information about your child (name, address, telephone number, school location, etc.) to others only with receipt of your written authorization.



### **First Day Checklist/Parent Essentials Receipt**

We require a signed copy of the First Day Checklist, page 35, on file at the Academy to acknowledge that you have received the Parent Essentials handbook and Handbook Addendum, and that you understand all the Kiddie Academy policies and procedures.

### **Diet Restriction Letter (if applicable)**

This provides us with information on any food restrictions related to allergies, religious observations, personal preferences or other reasons.

### **Medical Order Form (if applicable)**

This form must be completed before we can administer any medication to your child. Please see page 29 regarding our full policy on administering medication.

### **School Age Transportation Plan (if applicable)**

This authorizes us to transport your child either by school bus or by a Kiddie Academy vehicle.

### **Infant/Toddler Schedule (if applicable)**

This provides us with information on your child's eating, sleeping and bathroom habits, as well as other preferences important to a daily routine.

### **Infant Safe Sleep Policy (if applicable)**

This document, for children in our infant room, outlines Kiddie Academy's procedures for Infant Safe Sleep.

**Additional forms may be needed or may differ based on current state regulations.**

## **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Every Kiddie Academy provides services for children with disabilities whose limitations can be reasonably accommodated. With the assistance of families and health professionals, our programming is designed to help meet children's individual needs on a reasonable basis. Please be open and honest with the Academy's administration about any physical or developmental concerns you may have about your child. Only through open communication can we provide the best care and education possible.

## **Vacations/Illnesses**

Your Enrollment Agreement outlines your payment obligations during vacation periods or extended illnesses.

## **Holidays**

Kiddie Academy locations traditionally close for six holidays each year:

New Year's Day  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day

Additional closings, if there are any, are specified in your Academy's Enrollment Agreement. We do charge full tuition for holidays. Should the traditional holiday occur on a Saturday, we will close on the Friday prior to the holiday. If the holiday should occur on a Sunday, we will close on the Monday following the holiday.

## **Severe Weather/Disaster**

Kiddie Academy recognizes that you rely on us to provide care for your child even when there is severe weather, and we make every effort to do so. We are typically open on time—even in the event of severe weather. In the event of a localized disaster or state of emergency, we may close and will notify you via a




predetermined form of communication prior to opening. (i.e. Facebook, Academy website or phone). If an emergency forces a closure while children are in the Academy, we will call you immediately. Please ensure that we always have up-to-date emergency contact information. We do charge full tuition for these days regardless of the closure.

### **Late Pick Up**

Please make every attempt to pick up your child on time. We do charge a fee when children are not picked up on time. If a child is left at the Academy for a half hour or more after closing, and the parent's whereabouts are not known, Kiddie Academy reserves the right to call the proper authorities to pick up the child in accordance with state guidelines. (Please see your Enrollment Agreement.)



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark long-sleeved top, is holding a baby in a colorful striped shirt. She is pointing her right index finger at a computer monitor. The monitor displays a security keypad interface with numbers 1-9, 0, and a red 'X' icon. The time '2:55:33 PM' is visible at the top of the screen. The background is a plain wall.

# Academy Security

Your child's safety and security are paramount. Our facilities and outdoor play areas have secure entries and exits that are carefully maintained and monitored. Please take a moment to review the following policies that, when complied with completely and regularly, offer you peace of mind while your child is in our care.

## **Signing Your Child In/Out**

We use a secure, computerized system for signing your child in and out of our Academy every day. Each parent or guardian will choose a unique four-digit PIN that must be used each time when signing a child in or out. In the unlikely event that the computer is not functioning, all parents or guardians will manually sign in or out.

Rest assured that your children will only be allowed to be picked up by individuals you have listed on the Emergency Information Form.

## **Drop off/Pick Up**

Each morning, please accompany your child into the Academy, sign in and escort him or her to the classroom. For safety reasons, dropping off your child at the front of the building to enter the Academy alone is not permitted. Please greet your child in his or her classroom at the end of each day. To reinforce our security policies and procedures, please avoid holding open the door for anyone you do not know.

Please remind your emergency contacts that any individuals who pick up a child in an emergency situation will be asked to present proper ID and must possess an appropriate-sized child safety seat.

## **Security Precautions**

Kiddie Academy locations have adopted security measures that may include specialized training, identification badges for teachers, electronic security codes, a biometrics system and door alarms. Please do not give the entrance security code to any unauthorized individual.

## **Release Authorization**

Only individuals listed on your child's Emergency Information Form are authorized to pick up your child unless you notify us in writing. We will not,

under any circumstances, release a child to a person not authorized by you. Therefore, we request written notification regarding every individual who is authorized to pick up your child. When picking up a child, each person may be required to show a photo identification before the child is released.

All custodial parents must complete an Authorization and Consent Form and provide it to the director.

## **Privacy Policy**

Academy employees are not permitted under any circumstances to provide any information about your child (including whether the child is enrolled at the Academy or if he/she is in attendance at the Academy on a particular day or at a particular time) unless you have provided written authorization for that person to receive such information. Only you and the other individuals you include on the Emergency Information Form will be provided personal information about your child, unless you specifically tell us otherwise in writing.

## **Parent Custody and Visitation**

If a family member is denied custody of, or visitation rights for, a child, or if those rights are in any way limited by a court order, please provide a copy of the related legal documents to the director. We will store your documents in your child's file and will treat them as strictly confidential. We depend on open communication along with receiving the most current and relevant information in order to provide a secure environment for your child. If we do not receive copies of all relevant legal documents, we may not be able to follow your wishes regarding visitation and pick up.

Please know that we enforce our security policies and procedures to provide the maximum level of safety for every child who attends Kiddie Academy.



## Transportation

Some Kiddie Academy locations offer transportation services where our staff may transport children to and from school or on field trips through the use of either a Kiddie Academy vehicle or public vehicles. We require a signed and fully completed School Age Transportation Plan form that allows us to transport your child. If the Academy does not receive a completed form from you, no transportation can be provided for your child.

School-age children are placed on the school bus/Kiddie Academy vehicle by qualified staff. Staff members mark the roster once a child is placed on the bus/Kiddie Academy vehicle, and again upon returning. Please notify the director if your child will not be returning to the Academy at the end of the day. If a child is not brought to the Academy in the morning, please let the director know whether your child will or will not be attending the Academy after school. If your school-age child does not return to the Academy in the afternoon—regardless of morning attendance—you will be notified immediately.

## Webcams

Webcams were designed to help today's families stay in touch with their children's day-to-day activities and precious moments

that would otherwise be missed. With webcams, you can watch live video of your child from any computer with a standard web browser. From work, home or on the road, you can stay connected to the Kiddie Academy community, monitor your child's daily activities and interaction with other children, and follow your child's learning progress. Please be sure to protect your password. Ask the director for more details on webcams, as not all locations offer this service.



## Smoke-Free Environment

Kiddie Academy maintains a smoke-free environment. When dropping off or picking up your child, please do not smoke in view of children.





# Learning Environment

When it comes to learning, Kiddie Academy is committed to educating the whole child: cognitively, emotionally, socially and physically. We teach children developmentally appropriate concepts and integrate them throughout each day—even during play. This method inspires children to discover their individuality and become confident in their understanding of the world.

The Kiddie Academy system maintains a full-time Education Department. Our Life Essentials philosophy and curriculum, which is the foundation for our approach to everything that occurs in the Academy, helps to develop a strong foundation for future learning and is adjusted by our teachers to meet the needs of each child. We fill lessons with hands-on learning experiences, introducing your child to a wide variety of educational materials and activities. To ensure the best and most relevant curriculum for children, we are consistently updating and revising our curriculum.

## Center-Based Learning

Kiddie Academy believes that the best way to encourage learning through play is through a center-based learning approach. Research shows that center-based room arrangements help children establish classroom routines, make greater connections to the outside world, and develop more ownership over new skills and milestones.

Center-based teaching provides needed opportunities for children to find solutions, to solve problems, and to accomplish tasks based on their individual strengths and needs. Every Kiddie Academy classroom is specifically designed to facilitate each child's intentional play. The classrooms have an array of age-appropriate centers to motivate children to discover and learn. Center-based teaching is an approach to instruction that allows children to participate in the process of identifying and following their interests, while introducing and reinforcing essential skills. This method aligns perfectly with

children's natural curiosity. While the center-based teaching approach is evident in each classroom, so is attention to the specific needs of individual age groups; each classroom is designed to meet the growing needs of those particular children.

## Classroom Learning Centers

Our well-defined learning centers contain a variety of developmentally appropriate, hands-on materials that are accessible to the children. Learning center themes include blocks/transportation, library, technology, math, science/discovery, dramatic play, music, art and writing. Each center is designed to allow children to work at their own pace as they develop necessary skills in all areas of development. We vary the materials available in the learning centers to coincide with the different themes being presented. We encourage you to review the lesson plan posted at each classroom's Family Information Board and talk with your child about what he or she has been learning each day.



## Classroom Transitions

Kiddie Academy wants all children to be comfortable and feel successful in their respective classrooms. That's why we carefully consider children's development before moving them on to the next level. Set guidelines have been established for each classroom, including chronological age and the development of their social and self-help skills.

# life essentials®

## Life Essentials Curriculum

Each Kiddie Academy location demonstrates our mission through the implementation of Life Essentials: Kiddie Academy's educational philosophy as well as our curriculum and supporting programs, methods, activities and techniques that help prepare children for school and for life. Kiddie Academy's Life Essentials philosophy is based on four pillars of education: Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum, Character Education, Technology Education, and Health and Fitness. Through Life Essentials, Kiddie Academy teachers support each child through critical stages of cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. Our goal is to make learning a fun and rewarding experience so that it develops into a lifelong passion that children can carry with them into their homes, communities and their futures.

## Kiddie Academy® Life Essentials® program provides experiences in:

**Language Arts:** Early literacy skills (auditory and visual memory and discrimination, left-to-right progression and letter recognition), basic reading skills, fine motor

development for pre-writing skills, listening and verbal communication skills

**Science:** Observation, comparison and exploration of living things and the environment

**Math:** Developmental experiences in pre-number concepts, size and shape relationships, number concepts and activity with numbers

**Art:** Creative processes that allow for choice, exploration and imagination using a variety of materials

**Creative Movement/Drama:** Role-playing, puppetry, dance, story dramatization and music activities

**Health and Safety:** Body awareness, nutritional health habits and safety habits

**Foreign Language:** Knowledge and understanding of Spanish and sign language

**Social and Emotional:** Participating in group routines, relating with peers and adults and learning to solve problems

**Technology:** Activities to introduce children to today's technology

## Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Each Kiddie Academy location offers developmentally appropriate, education-based child care programs designed by our Education Department. The programs promote each child's intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth as presented in the Kiddie Academy Life Essentials curriculum. In addition to the traditional areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and creative arts, the curriculum supports complementary programs in foreign language, sign language and character





education. The Kiddie Academy Life Essentials curriculum consists of over 8,000 pages incorporated into nine volumes. The following programs are included within the Kiddie Academy Life Essentials curriculum. In addition, our Character Education program provides monthly themes which are incorporated into planning for all age levels.

***“New Beginnings” Infant Program:***

Our teachers work individually with each child, accommodating their physical, cognitive and psychosocial stages of development. During the early stages of development, we provide infants with toys and materials to stimulate fine motor skills. Once infants master early skills, we introduce them to new challenges that enhance and foster skills at the next level.

***“Discovering Me” Toddler Program:***

This program promotes social, emotional, physical and language development. We provide fun and educational materials to encourage children to explore, experiment and gain an understanding of the world around them. We include individualized and group activities in the program.

***“Exploring My World” 2-Year-Old Program:***

We encourage children to develop their language skills through interactive communication and other activities. Daily activities may include story time, learning games and independent choice activities. All activities in this program are designed to accommodate the short attention spans and developmental needs of 2-year-olds.

***“I Can Do It” 3-Year-Old Program:***

This program promotes the development of imagination and language. Children are encouraged to speak in full sentences, listen to short stories, identify shapes and colors and begin to recognize individual letters of the alphabet. The program further promotes independence, cooperation and mutual respect.

***“Ready, Set, Go!” 4-Year-Old Program:***

This program focuses on the development of pre-reading and writing skills. We continually develop motor skills through indoor and outdoor activities and place an emphasis on each child’s readiness for school.

***“On My Way” 5-Year-Old Program:***

This program enables children to apply concepts, thought processes and skills during planned learning experiences. We emphasize recognizing upper- and lowercase letters, developing phonetic awareness and identifying letters by their sounds. Throughout the program, we also emphasize preparing the children for elementary school.

***“Creative Explorers” School-Age Program:***

The Creative Explorers curriculum is designed to offer school-age children a choice of after school academic clubs. The club format is such that children will be challenged to solve problems and learn cooperatively in a safe and fun environment in the afternoon hours following the school day.

The program includes activities in arts and crafts, science and discovery, dramatic play and constructive building. The program encourages children to socialize in an age-appropriate setting.

***“CampVentures®” Summer Camp Program:***

The Kiddie Academy summer camp curriculum is designed to provide children with the opportunity to spend their summers exploring their connections to the world around them through a project-based approach. The CampVentures curriculum is divided into sections by age level, so that children’s developmental needs can be addressed through fun and engaging activities. The youngest CampVentures participants will enjoy many hands-on, self-directed activities relating to familiar themes. Preschoolers through school-age children will participate in various projects that they are encouraged to help shape.

CampVentures offers authentic experiences in which all areas of learning are integrated. Through teacher facilitation, each child will take ownership over his or her daily activities and collaborate with other children through project-based group investigations.

***Literacy and Numeracy Essentials Manual:***

Kiddie Academy’s Literacy and Numeracy Essentials program supports classrooms in providing developmentally appropriate language and math experiences. Teachers use this program to create materials and learning experiences for children that teach pre-reading, writing, and math skills by employing methods and materials that are hands-on and play based.

## **Character Education**

The Kiddie Academy Life Essentials philosophy is designed to nurture and educate the whole child. Through our Character Education program, we help children develop socially and emotionally as they learn the essentials of becoming members of a community.

Our Kiddie Academy community begins in the classroom, where children first learn to work together and to share. Our Character Education program is designed to support a child's appropriate development as a positive member of his or her social group. Each month, we focus on different values, such as cooperation, humor and citizenship, while reinforcing those values previously discussed. Teachers integrate Character Education into typical classroom activities, conversations at lunch time while the class enjoys family-style dining, and behavior-management techniques.

Children learn to relate to each other and to adults in a positive way, through a consistent focus on developing good character; and are prepared with the essentials for interactions with their peers and with adults.

## **Technology Education**

We recognize the importance of providing children with the instruction and practice they need to develop technological literacy.

Teachers are given the support and have many opportunities during the day to integrate technology into the daily classroom activities. Children explore technology through learning center activities as well as whole group activities. Technology Education is an integral part of our Life Essentials philosophy curriculum.

## **Health and Fitness**

### **Family Style Dining**

At Kiddie Academy, meal time means more than nourishment for your child. We believe it is an excellent time to instill a variety of important life lessons. Meal time is an essential part of Life Essentials. Once your child is able to sit at a table, family-style meals are enjoyed with teachers and friends. Your child learns to serve food, to taste and enjoy a wide variety of foods and to use good table manners. Meal time is an important time for teachers to sit and talk with children and to implement the character education concepts of sharing and cooperation. Your child will build language skills and learn the basics of healthy eating while enjoying this time with peers and teachers.

### **Outdoor Play**

At Kiddie Academy, we believe physical exercise is an integral way to enhance children's health, motor skill development and social skills. At Kiddie Academy, children go outside every day unless it is raining, very cold or excessively hot. If your child has a medical condition and is unable to participate in outdoor play, please provide a doctor's note containing specific instructions on our Parent Authorization and Consent form.







# In the Classroom

## In The Classroom

Every time a new child enrolls in Kiddie Academy, our community grows a little more. Those first few days and weeks are an exciting time for us and we hope for your family too. Naturally, you'll have a lot of questions, from the practical, like "What should my child wear?" to the personal, such as "How will my child handle the transition?" This section of the handbook was developed to respond to your questions, and to help best prepare your family for becoming a member of our thriving community.

To assist you, our *First Day Checklist* on page 23 and page 35 is a helpful reference that will prepare and remind you of the items that you will need to bring from home. Keep those pages marked and handy for easy reference.

## Preparing for the First Day

It's normal for children to feel anxious when they enter a new situation. As a parent, you can help tremendously to make this transition go as smoothly as possible. Here are some of these helpful tips we've compiled to help your child adjust to a new environment.

### Talk to your child about what will be happening

Talking in advance to your child about going to child care can help make his or her first day go smoothly. Talk about all the fun that will take place during the day and about how at the end of the day, your family will reunite and talk about all the activities your child has participated in, and all the new friends he or she has made.

### Share a positive attitude about child care

Children often sense the attitudes of the adults around them and take them on as their own. If you show a positive attitude about child care, chances are your child will as well. Remember to give your child reasons to be excited about child care; refer to the positives, like making new friends, having fun at playtime and exploring new activities and toys.

### Communicate

We understand that leaving your child in the care of someone else may be hard for you. You may worry about your child making new friends. You may wonder how much attention and stimulation your child will get throughout the day. We understand that each child has different needs. By sharing with us in advance as much as possible about your child, we can best attend to these individual needs. Tell us your child's habits regarding

napping, eating, bathroom, likes and dislikes and information about your child's general development. That way, we can take into consideration these unique characteristics as we help your child adjust to this new situation.

## Tips on easing your child into the new child care situation

- Spend time in the classroom on your child's first day. Most children will be more at ease exploring new surroundings when a parent is present.
- Be aware that all children will begin to interact with the teacher and other children at their own pace. Often, "pushing" a child to socialize backfires. This is particularly true for those children who are shy or need time to observe a social scenario before jumping into it.
- Always make sure that your child knows when you are leaving. Say goodbye and offer a hug and a kiss—but don't make the farewell too long. Also, be sure to state that you will be back later in the day. Avoid sneaking away, while it might seem easier in the short term, it could confuse your child and make him or her wonder if you are still in the building. Tears at departure time are normal and, in most cases, stop soon after parents leave.
- While very young children may not have the concept of time, they do associate with routines. For that reason, we suggest consistency around drop-off and pick-up schedules. Communicating any significant change in your child's drop-off and pick-up routines will





help the Academy staff in meeting your child's individual needs. This will help build your child's trust and may help ease the separation when you leave each day. When you arrive for pickup at the end of the day, locate and say hello to your child first before talking to the teacher about how the day has gone. This shows how happy you are to see your child. These positive feelings are likely to carry over into positive feelings about child care and, consequently, lead to cooperative behavior.

- Many children find comfort in special toys, a family photo or accessories from home. If you think that having a special item from home would ease the transition, please feel free to talk with the director about what items may work best.
- Recognize that every child adjusts to new situations at different rates. Some children will adjust to a new child care situation almost immediately. Others will take longer. Some will seem to adjust to the situation quickly, but then experience setbacks a few weeks or a month later. Watch for signs of adjustment and be prepared to offer your child extra support and encouragement whenever needed. Please know that we are always available to work with you and your family to make your child feel welcome. Never hesitate to discuss your child's needs with us.



# First Day Checklist

To ensure that we have all the items from home your child will need on a daily basis at Kiddie Academy, please drop off the following items before their first day at the Academy. Please label all personal belongings. Some items will need to be taken home daily (to be washed and reused the next day), or weekly (to be laundered and brought back with you the following week):

## Infants and Toddlers:

- Diaper wipes, powders, ointment, sunscreen, etc.\*
- Formula, bottles, food (labeled with child's first and last name and date)
- Diapers
- Change of clothes
- Family Photo
- Required forms

## Preschool and School Age:

- Rest time items
- Diapers, if applicable (blanket and sheet)
- Sunscreen\*
- Change of clothes
- Family Photo
- Required forms

## Forms:

Once you have been notified of acceptance for enrollment, please complete your enrollment by taking the following steps:

1. Complete and submit all necessary forms, listed below.
2. Submit your child's required proof of immunization and physical exam report form, completed and signed by a physician. Please note that immunization requirements must be met in full before your child may participate in any Kiddie Academy activity.

Please sign and date the copy of the Parent Essentials Receipt found on page 35 and return it to the Academy director by your child's first day.

Please reference pages 7-8 for an explanation of each form that is required to be returned prior to your child's first day. Depending on the State, there may be additional forms required.

- Enrollment Agreement
- Immunization Certificate and Child Health Record
- Emergency Information
- Parent Authorization and Consent
- Personal Childhood History
- Behavior Management Policy
- Publicity Release Agreement
- Signed copy of the First Day Checklist
- Infant/Toddler Schedule (if applicable)
- Medication Order Form (if applicable)
- School Age Transportation Plan if applicable)
- Infant Safe Sleep Policy

\*requires parent/guardian signature

## Dress Code

Children engage in a lot of active indoor and outdoor play at Kiddie Academy. For the comfort of your child, please dress your child in clothing that is functional, practical, and kid-friendly. Choose play clothes that are easy to put on, encourage mobility for running and play times, allow independence in the bathroom, and permit your child the freedom to draw, paint and engage in activities. Please refrain from dressing your child in expensive clothing or bringing fragile personal items to the Academy. We cannot accept responsibility for damage to clothing or personal items.

Please note that we require children to wear secure closed-toed footwear year-round to prevent injury from running, jumping and climbing. Socks and tennis shoes are the best footwear for kids on the go for both comfort and safety. We also permit Velcro® or slip-on style shoes. For safety reasons, sandals, flip-flops or jellies are not allowed.

## Bring a Change of Clothes

Accidents happen. We recommend bringing a seasonally appropriate change of clothes (including socks and underwear) in a paper bag marked with your child's name and place it in your child's cubby or give it to the teacher. Be sure to replace this extra set of clothes as seasons change and your child grows. Elementary school-aged children will benefit from the same suggestion—even older kids sometimes have accidental spills at lunch and during art class.

## Personal Belongings

In most instances, we discourage bringing personal toys and games from home, but there are exceptions. Children do bring in toys or other personal items from home for "Show and Share" days. They also may bring in stuffed animals that act as a "sleep aid" during rest

periods. And we always welcome books from home to be shared at circle time. Please mark all personal items with your child's name, and also remember that we cannot accept responsibility for damage to, or loss of, personal items.

## Day-to-Day Routine

Posted at each classroom, the Family Information Board maintains daily schedules, menus, lesson plans, notes, and other pertinent information as required by state regulations. We encourage you to refer to this board so you know your child's daily activities. You may want to use this as a reference point when having conversations with your child about what will happen at the Academy that day.

## Rest Time

Each day, children are given a period to rest quietly on their cots with their blankets brought from home. Your child may also bring a small stuffed animal from home for rest time. We send home all blankets, pillows and stuffed animals weekly to be washed. Check with the director regarding state regulations about bedding. We will never force children to sleep, but we do encourage respect for those children who are sleeping. Each class schedule reflects the amount of sleep time appropriate for that particular age group.

## Toilet Training

To gather information about your child's toilet-training habits and routine, we ask all parents to complete a Personal Childhood History Form. We are happy to work with you and your child to promote consistency in toilet training between home and the Academy. Please know that we will not force any child to use the toilet, nor will we punish children for not using the toilet.

## Positive Guidance and Re-Direction

All Kiddie Academy locations operate under the following policies:

- Physical punishment will never be used. No child will be subjected to cruel or severe punishment or verbal abuse.
- No child will ever be shamed, frightened or humiliated.
- No child will be denied food, toileting or rest privileges as punishments.
- No harsh or profane language or implied threats promising physical punishment will be used.
- No child will be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

*Positive Guidance* focuses on acknowledging children’s feelings and emotions, as well as focusing on the positive aspects of children’s actions and interactions with one another. It’s a technique that allows teachers to guide children through difficult social situations, rather than separating the children from a group or disregarding their feelings.

Our teachers and staff praise and recognize children for appropriate behaviors and their attempts at solving problems. By providing children with social scripts, problem-solving techniques, self-calming activities, and choices and activities geared toward their interests, Academy teachers give children the tools they can use for lifelong success in every situation.

## **Behavior Management**

In the event that a child displays inappropriate behavior on an ongoing basis, the director will observe the classroom and the child’s behavior, then set up a meeting with parents and staff and develop a specific program—agreed to by all parties—to implement during daily programming. If those efforts do not improve behaviors, disenrollment of the child may occur. One week’s notice will be provided for disenrollment, unless

the inappropriate behavior jeopardizes the health or safety of other children or members of the Academy’s staff. In such cases, immediate disenrollment or suspension may occur. (Please read your Enrollment Agreement.)

## **Biting**

Child care experts agree that biting is not uncommon among young children, primarily because of their lack of communication skills. Children who engage in this behavior usually stop through the guidance and direction of family and teachers. Our staff handles biting incidents by redirecting children from the situation. If another child is bitten, we immediately wash the site with soap and water, complete a Biting Report, and notify the parents. If biting behavior continues, a parent conference will be scheduled to discuss ways to work toward correcting the behavior. Disenrollment may occur if there is no improvement in the behavior.

## **Field Trips and Special Visitors**

To enrich and enhance the day-to-day learning experiences in the classroom, we occasionally will have special visitors to the Academy or plan a field trip for the children. Buses provide transportation for field trips. All permission slips must be signed by parents or guardians and returned, along with any fee, prior to attending the field trip.

Children look forward to these special trips. We encourage you to serve as a volunteer assistant on field trips to experience these special days with your child firsthand.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular programs such as dance, computer skills, soccer and gymnastics may be available at the Academy for an additional fee. These programs allow your child to participate in extra learning opportunities that may be difficult to



accommodate during limited weekend or after-school hours. We post information about any extracurricular programs that are available through the Academy several weeks in advance of their start dates.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very special for your child and we want to help celebrate the day. Due to health regulations, please contact your director in advance regarding the Academy's snack policy.

### **Photography**

During the school year, individual and class pictures will be taken by a professional photographer and made available for purchase. We will let you know the dates of these pictures in advance. We also request that you complete, sign and return a photo release in advance. This allows us to photograph your child and permits us to use the photographs to highlight the Academy's activities. If you have questions or concerns about the use of photography, please contact the director for further information.





# Parents: Partners in our Community

At Kiddie Academy, we believe that strong parent and teacher communication is critical to building your child's self-confidence and ensuring your family's continued satisfaction. Through our Parent Satisfaction Surveys you will have opportunities to let us know how you feel we are doing. Please take the time to complete them; we take your feedback very seriously. Also, look for important family information displayed on our Community Information board.

## **Open Door Policy**

Kiddie Academy endorses an open door policy. We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions at any time. We also encourage families to visit at any time to participate in Academy activities or join your children for lunch.

We also encourage you to participate in classroom activities. You can volunteer to read stories; be a field trip chaperone; or share with your child's class your occupation, travels, cultural information or special talents.

## **Family/Teacher Conferences**

We schedule family/teacher conferences each year to discuss your child's progress. In addition, families, teachers or the director can request a conference at any time.

## **Newsletters**

We make newsletters available to families on a regular basis. Please take the time to read them, as they offer an overview of upcoming classroom activities, Academy-wide activities and general reminders and information.

## **Parent Communication Portal**

Communication between our school and the families we serve is a priority at Kiddie Academy. We utilize a web-based communication application that uses mobile technology to provide parents with real-time visibility into their child's daily activities.

As a parent, you will receive information directly in your email and you can view photos, watch videos and read classroom notes right from your smart phone or from your computer, free of charge. There is an optional "Parents' App" available in the App store. All information captured using this parent portal is considered private communication between the school and our families. No personal information is shared with any external parties. Please ask the director for more details on the Parent Communication Portal, as not all locations offer this program.



# Our Staff

At Kiddie Academy, we take pride in providing your child with an inspiring, motivating and nurturing staff. As a highly respected child care provider, our rigorous hiring and training programs ensure that our educators always provide the highest quality care possible. Additionally, all our educators are required to participate in ongoing professional development programs. These comprehensive internal training programs hold our staff to standards that on average exceed state requirements for child care providers.

We require background checks through local, county, state and/or federal agencies prior to employment. We obtain medical history information for staff members and keep it on file in the director's office. It is available for review by local health and licensing officials.



## **Meet the Staff**

To help you become familiar with our Academy's staff, we maintain a Meet Our Staff board. The board includes a picture of each staff member, along with his or her qualifications, the number of years at Kiddie Academy, and any professional development courses completed.

## **Equal Opportunity Provider**

The Kiddie Academy system, and every Kiddie Academy location, is an equal opportunity child care provider. We accept applications for admission without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or any other status protected by law.

## **Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect**

Our personnel are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse (physical, sexual or emotional) or neglect to the proper authorities. All investigations are confidential; therefore, staff members are not at liberty to discuss them, even with parents. Our staff attends training classes to become more aware of indicators of abuse or neglect.

## **Outside Babysitting Services**

Upon hire, our staff members agree not to accept offers for babysitting engagements from families who have a child enrolled at the Academy. This includes families seeking to hire a Kiddie Academy staff member on a full-time basis or to babysit or transport children in their personal vehicles. Because of this policy, we ask that all families refrain from asking staff members to enter into such an arrangement.



# Health & Safety

## Health and Safety

Kiddie Academy recognizes that a healthy environment is essential to your child's growth and development. From nutrition to sick children to first aid, we have policies and procedures in place to make certain your child is cared for. We have a fully equipped kitchen and a trained food service manager on staff, so that we can serve a nutritious and well-balanced lunch as well as a morning and afternoon snack. All children get sick from time to time, and our Sick Child Policy helps to maintain the environment for all the children in our care.

## **Infants**

You determine your infant's feeding schedule. During feeding times, we hold and talk to babies. Please provide us with freshly prepared bottles and food daily, until your child is ready to begin eating Kiddie Academy menu items. Always label bottles and food containers with your child's first and last name and the date.

## **Food from Home**

Because our family style dining program is such an integral part of our curriculum and learning, we discourage parents from bringing lunch or snack items from home. With the exception of infant formula and breast milk, health codes prohibit parents from bringing dairy products from home.

## **Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions**

We recognize that food allergies are common among young children. To be able to accommodate every child's special dietary restrictions, we ask parents of children with food allergies to document—with the help of their pediatrician—all necessary and related information on our Dietary Restriction Letter. We substitute food items on our menu for those children who are allergic. Due to the large number of children with peanut allergies, we do not serve peanut products.

If your child will need substitute food items due to religious or cultural preferences, please provide this information on the Dietary Restriction Letter.

Information about any allergies or religious/cultural food preferences is entered into our computer system, and prints out on our rosters along with an updated allergy list.

## **Sick Child Policy**

If your child becomes ill, we will call you or a designated adult included on your Emergency Information form as soon as possible so that your child can be picked up from the Academy. While your child waits for you or another trusted adult to arrive, he or she will rest quietly away from other children.

## **Specific Symptoms and/or Conditions**

To maintain the healthiest environment for all children, we ask that parents please be respectful of the other attendees and staff members, and refrain from bringing children to the Academy when a child exhibits any of the following:

- A contagious or communicable disease
- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Heavy nasal discharge that is yellow or greenish in color
- A persistent cough
- Draining eyes, ears, nose or any open sore
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Lack of proper immunizations
- Inability to participate in play, both indoors and outdoors
- Strep throat (child must be out of the Academy for a minimum of 48 hours and must be taking prescription medication)
- Unknown questionable rashes and impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc. Highly infectious conditions will require a physician's written approval before returning to the Academy. Kiddie Academy reserves the right to require a physician's written approval to return to the Academy due to any illness.

Note: children who have been sick must remain fever-free for 24 hours before returning to the Academy. All children must have a current and complete record of immunizations before attending the Academy.

## **Medications**

In keeping with state regulations, Kiddie Academy may not dispense any medication to your child without your written authorization via a Medication Order form completed by both you and your pediatrician. By filling out this form, you give our designated, trained staff permission to administer the medication. The Medication Order form must include dosages, start/end date, and possible side effects. This form also serves as a record of dosages given to your child. All medication must be in its original container, labeled with the child's complete name, address, physician's and pharmacy's name and phone number, recommended dosage, and times and method of administration. When children complete prescribed treatment, we return any remaining medication to parents.

Over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin, cough syrup, etc., will be dispensed in accordance with the state child care regulations. If in doubt, please discuss the policy for administering medicine under your state's regulations with the director.

Sunscreens and topical lotions may be applied as needed under written parental instructions. A Medication Order form may be needed based on each state's requirements.

## **Accidents and Incidents**

It's not uncommon for children to receive bumps and bruises on occasion. The staff will use basic first aid procedures to care for bumps and bruises. If more care is needed for the injury, we will ask that you follow up with a physician's visit or seek emergency medical care.

Sometimes children are involved in various "incidents" worth documenting. You will be notified of these events through an Incident Report form that will be provided to you when you pick up your child. The form requires your signature, thereby letting us know you have been made aware of your child's accident/incident. We place these reports in the individual child's file. Parents whose children are involved in an incident may request a conference to discuss strategies to prevent future occurrences.

# Emergency Procedures

Every effort is made to keep your child safe during the day at our Academy. Though rare, emergency situations do sometimes occur. Please know that as our staff members respond to emergency situations, your child's well-being remains their top concern. In emergency situations, our priority is to control the situation and communicate your child's status to you as soon as possible. We welcome your specific questions regarding the training of our staff in response to emergency situations. Contact the director to learn more.

## Parent/Guardian Emergency Notification

We will notify you immediately if your child's injury or symptoms of illness require professional attention. If the injury is of a serious nature, we may call emergency personnel to transport your child to a hospital before you arrive. An Academy staff member will accompany your child to the hospital in an emergency situation. All attempts will be made to promptly notify you by phone, according to the information provided on your child's Emergency Information form.

## First Aid

We maintain a completely stocked first aid kit in the Academy at all times. If the children leave the Academy for a field trip, the teachers are required to carry

copies of the children's Emergency Information form and a first aid kit with them. All staff members attend training for health and safety issues instructed by qualified, registered trainers. In addition, we require staff members to be certified in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for children and adults.

## Fire Drills

We conduct fire drills a minimum of once a month.

## Emergency Situations, Natural Disasters, Loss of Utilities, etc.

If an emergency situation occurs, we will notify you to pick up your child as soon as all children and staff are safe and secure. Emergency situations include hazardous conditions or situations that may impact the welfare of children and staff, or those that prevent us from complying with health and safety regulations necessary for the appropriate care of children. These conditions may include a natural or man-made disaster, loss of utilities, and any other circumstances that compromise the safety and security of your child.

# First Day Checklist

To ensure that we have all the items from home your child will need on a daily basis at Kiddie Academy®, please drop off the following items before the first day of attendance. Please label all personal belongings. Some items will need to be taken home daily (to be washed and reused the next day) or weekly (to be laundered and brought back with you the following week):

## Infants and Toddlers:

- Diaper wipes, powders, ointment, sunscreen, etc.\*
- Formula, bottles, food (labeled with child's first and last name and date)
- Diapers
- Change of clothes
- Family Photo
- Required forms

## Preschool and School Age:

- Rest time items
- Diapers, if applicable (blanket and sheet)
- Sunscreen\*
- Change of clothes
- Family Photo
- Required forms

## Forms:

Please reference pages 6 through 8 for an explanation of each form that is required to be returned prior to your child's first day. Depending on the state, there may be additional forms required.

- Enrollment Agreement
- Immunization Certificate and Child Health Record
- Emergency Information
- Parent Authorization and Consent
- Personal Childhood History
- Behavior Management Policy
- Publicity Release Agreement
- Signed copy of the First Day Checklist
- Infant/Toddler Schedule (if applicable)
- Medication Order Form (if applicable)
- School Age Transportation Plan if applicable)
- Infant Safe Sleep Policy (if applicable)

## All Enrollees:

Once you have been notified of acceptance for enrollment, please complete the admissions process by taking the following steps:

1. Complete and submit all forms necessary for enrollment.
2. Submit your child's required proof of immunization and physical exam report form, completed and signed by a physician. Please note that, before your child can participate in any Kiddie Academy activities, immunization requirements must be met in full. This is for the health and safety of all children at the Academy.

## Parent Essentials Receipt:

I have received a copy of the *Parents Essentials* handbook and the *Handbook Addendum* on

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

I have reviewed and understand all of the Kiddie Academy policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Full Name (printed)

\*require parent/guardian signature