



2021-2022 PARENT HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO **KIDSCOjr.**

Hours of operation- 6:30am-6:30pm

Please refer to the KidsCo Jr. Calendar to become familiar with the specific days during which care is not provided or offered on a modified schedule.

BROWN STATION JR.

851 Quince Orchard Blvd.
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
240-912-4910

FALLSMEAD JR.

1800 Greenplace Terrace
Rockville, MD 20850
301-417-8732

EMORY GROVE JR.

8507 Emory Grove Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
240-686-6280

ROCKWELL JR.

24555 Cutsail Drive
Damascus, MD 20872
301-253-0330

Contact Us

Main Office Contact Information

Phone- 301-740-9600

Fax- 301-740-9611

Director of Operations- Lara Woodruff

Email- LWoodruff@KidsCoOnline.com

Registration Coordinator/Billing Specialist- Kaitlyn Johnson

Email- KJohnson@KidsCoOnline.com



KidsCo Jr. 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

August 16	KidsCo Jr. Closed
August 17	KidsCo Jr. Closed
August 17	Virtual Open House
August 18	First Day Of KidsCo Jr. School Year Program
September 6	Labor Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
November 11	Staff In-Service Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
November 25 & 26	Thanksgiving Holiday: KidsCo Jr. Closed
November 29-December 3	Parent/Teacher Conferences
December 24	Christmas Holiday: KidsCo Jr. Closed
December 27-30	Winter Break: KidsCo Jr. Open
December 31	New Year's Holiday: KidsCo Jr. Closed
January 17	MLK Jr. Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
January 28	Staff In-Service: KidsCo Jr. Closed at 1pm
February 21	President's Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
April 15 & 18	Easter Holiday: KidsCo Jr. Closed
April 29	Staff In-Service Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
May 2-6	Parent/Teacher Conferences
May 30	Memorial Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
June 17	Last Day Of KidsCo Jr. School Year: Closed at 1pm
June 20	Juneteenth Observed: KidsCo Jr. Closed
July 4	Independence Day: KidsCo Jr. Closed
August 12	Last Day Of KidsCo Jr. 2021-2022: Closed at 1pm

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

We are honored that you have chosen us to care for your child. This Parent Handbook has been prepared to answer many of the questions you may have about our policies and procedures. Through reading this handbook and following its guidelines, we can work together to provide a safe and secure environment for your child. Please read this handbook in its entirety and put it in a convenient place for future reference. If you have questions or concerns regarding the material enclosed in this handbook, please speak with the Director of your center, email us, or call our Main Office.

ABOUT US

KidsCo Jr. is a private for-profit Maryland Corporation whose primary purpose is to offer quality child development programs to children in Montgomery County, Maryland. KidsCo Jr. does not discriminate based on age, race, color, national and/or ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, military status, or economic status in the admission of students or staff.

At KidsCo Jr., we are eager to welcome new faces as we create an amazing place for families and team members to call home. Our motivation to provide exceptional care for children has driven us to 'raise the bar' within Montgomery County for what should be expected of a child care provider. For the past twenty years, we have proudly provided wonderful memories for families. Growing from one school year program in 2000, to twenty-two programs currently operating in Montgomery County, KidsCo and KidsCo Jr. have successfully formed links within many local communities through our programs.

KidsCo Jr. centers are licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education- Office of Child Care. We accept subsidies through Maryland's Child Care Subsidy program and the Montgomery County Working Parents Assistance program. Please inquire if you receive a different subsidy, as we accept many other subsidy programs. These programs provide financially eligible families assistance in paying for child care.

We are excited to welcome you and your family to KidsCo Jr. We are glad you are here!

MISSION STATEMENT

Our vision at KidsCo Jr. is to provide a home away from home that fosters growth and learning in a comfortable, nurturing, and consistent environment. It is a place where each child's individual developmental stage will be respected and encouraged. We will tap into each child's natural curiosity, discover and develop his or her unique talents, and inspire creative freedom. Above all, we will learn from and listen to all our families so that we can build a strong community bond. Our goal is to ensure that we care for each child as if he or she is our own.

PHILOSOPHY

KidsCo Jr. is designed to offer kids a unique and comfortable alternative to their home care. KidsCo Jr. is child-directed and guided with an emergent curriculum. KidsCo Jr. is an inclusive program where all children are welcome regardless of ability or background. We thrive on drawing from the energy, curiosity, and creativity of the children involved in the program. All KidsCo Jr. team members will work closely with the children to provide love, stability, and guidance. We believe that it is important to provide a family style atmosphere, where everyone is safe, treated with care and respect, and where kids, parents, and the team members work together as a community. We strive to promote our philosophy through our team members, activities, atmosphere, relationships, and outlook. For all the age groups that we serve, the positive development of a child's self-reliance and self-esteem is paramount. Our program's activities reflect the children's primary language. Our staff show affection and personal regard, acknowledging and accepting the unique qualities of each child. KidsCo Jr. provides many opportunities for each child to experience success, to earn praise, and to develop an "I can" and "Let me try" attitude. Our teaching strategies center around Directed Discovery and focus on the whole child. We build positive relationships with both children and their families, creating wonderful memories and a love of learning!

CURRICULUM

CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS

All KidsCo Jr. team members have either been trained by a Teaching Strategies professional or have received training on our curriculum, "The Creative Curriculum" by Teaching Strategies. The Creative Curriculum is a state recommended curriculum that provides a wonderful foundation of learning where children are encouraged to learn based on their interests and at their own pace. Teachers create lessons that are developmentally and age appropriate, accessible to all children, represent multiple modes of exploration and learning, and reflect the children's interests and support abilities of all children.

We have weekly themes where teachers then create lesson plans that support children with:

- Science and discovery projects
- Reading and print concepts
- Early mathematics
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Dramatic play
- Food activities and nutrition
- Toys and games
- Music and movement
- Arts and crafts
- STEM

Children will also be given the opportunity for daily outdoor time and gym activities, as weather permits. Within each preschool classroom, time is allocated to whole group, small group, and some individual instruction that supports the weekly themes. Teachers assess children both formally and informally to help guide their planning. Lastly, we promote the social-emotional growth of each child through our themes, teacher instruction, and relationship building with other students.

TRANSITION PLAN & CONTINUITY

Consistency & continuity play an essential role in helping children successfully manage transitions. We recognize that transitions can be difficult for children, they may experience a sense of loss; we believe this process should be handled with care. Our goal at KidsCo Jr. is to have all children experience smooth transitions to minimize emotional concerns for the child & family while maximizing the child's prior progress to provide a continuity of learning. When working with a family during this transition period, we will take into consideration issues for all children, including children with special needs. Such areas may include:

- Ways for the family to facilitate the child's health and learning needs
- Written or verbal communication between program staff that provide children's strengths, needs, and interests.
- Preparing the child and family for the transition.

MD EXCELS, CREDENTIALING, AND ACCREDITATION

All KidsCo Jr. programs participate in Maryland EXCELS, a program which ensures that child care programs meet various quality standards. As a part of being in the Maryland EXCELS program, all KidsCo Jr. employees participate in MSDE Credentialing. Additionally, all KidsCo Jr. programs are either MSDE Accredited or going through the MSDE Accreditation process or renewal.

SCREEN TIME POLICY

KidsCo Jr. follows the American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations on Screen Time:

- Children under 2 should have no screen time
- Children age 2 and over should watch less than 30 minutes per week at child care, and less than 2 hours per day total.

KidsCo Jr. understands that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing, and interacting with others, which encourages learning and healthy physical and social development. Therefore; we will restrict screen time by:

- Allowing a maximum of 30 minutes total per week of educational material directly related to facilitated learning experiences that are age appropriate screen time (television, video, and DVD).
- Having zero screen time (TV, video, and computer) for children under the age of two.
- Screen time that is shown is related only to what children are currently learning about in class.

REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION PROCESS

All KidsCo Jr. programs are open to all children regardless of race, color, national and/or ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, or economic status.

Children are enrolled in the order of which registrations are received. For centers located at MCPS school buildings, MCPS employees are eligible for priority enrollment which occurs during the month of February.

Online Registration

All registrations are completed online using our KidsCo Jr. Parent Portal. Once a registration has been submitted, our Registration Coordinator will review and approve the application, if there is space available in the program. A confirmation email will be sent once the application is approved, followed by our welcome email that contains the child file forms to be completed before the child can start in our program. All new accounts will be billed a one-time \$100 non-refundable registration fee once the application is approved.

Orientation

Once the registration has been approved, your child's teacher will reach out to schedule the child's orientation. Orientations are a great way for new children to meet their teachers and fellow classmates before their first day. Additionally, parents are given the opportunity to speak with the classroom teachers and share any relevant information about their child. This is also a great time for parents to ask any specific questions they may have. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and new safety protocols, all orientations will be done virtually through Zoom.

Deferred Admission

There may be times when a family wishes to enroll, however there are no openings for their child due to our classrooms being at capacity. A parent can complete the online registration and if there are no openings for the desired classroom, an email will be sent regarding the deferred admission and the child will be added to our waitlist. When a spot does open, the family next on our waitlist will be called and given a time frame in which to decide if they still would like to enroll.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

At KidsCo Jr., we will make every effort to work with families to help make a child's enrollment successful. Seldomly, there are children who require more individualized attention than we can provide. In the event we are unable to meet a child's needs, we will work with the family to help find alternative care options.

Changes to Enrollment

If a family needs to make a change to their child's enrollment, please contact our Main Office. To withdraw a child from our program, parents must inform our Main Office in writing, giving us at least two weeks notice. If two weeks notice is not given, the family will be billed two weeks from the last day of care or two weeks from the time notice was given to the Main Office.

Summer Opt-Out

KidsCo Jr. understands that some families do not need care during the summer months. Therefore, families do have the option to "opt-out" for summer without a fee. The start of "summer" is determined by the first Monday of summer for MCPS. Once a family opts-out for the summer, they will forfeit their space until the new school year begins in late August, if they are re-enrolled. When registering, families have the option to check off the summer "opt-out" box. Prior to the summer session beginning, we will remind families of their summer enrollment based on their registration, in which changes can be made if needed.

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE OPTIONS

KidsCo Jr. strives to accommodate our families' schedules by allowing flexibility with a variety of plans for each child. Below are the different schedules and hours that are offered.

Jr. Babies Program- catering to children ages 6 weeks – 24 months

- Full Day Plan – 6:30am-6:30pm, Monday – Friday

Preschool Program- catering to children ages 2 years – 5 years

- Full Day Plan – 6:30am-6:30pm
- School Day Plan – 9am-3pm
- Half Day Plan – 9am-1pm

- Our preschoolers have the option to attend 5 days a week (M-F), 3 days a week (M,W,F), or 2 days a week (T,Th).

DAILY SCHEDULES

KidsCo Jr. is proud to raise the bar by following Teaching Strategies' Creative Curriculum in all of our classrooms. This supports our progressive program through stressing the importance of self-esteem, self-reliance, and fostering a love of learning to guide young children into a successful Kindergarten year. By introducing children into a developmental continuum based on social, emotional, physical, and academic goals, a learning plan is customized for each of our families in a loving, safe atmosphere. Join our excitement in sharing this dynamic initiative with your family! Our schedule is flexible, allowing opportunity for uninterrupted play and an environment conducive to emergent themes and discussions. Additionally, this flexibility permits children a "learning curve" in preparing for transitions and practicing life learning.

Infant Schedule (6 weeks – 18 months)

At KidsCo Jr., we recognize the importance of a young child's routines and incorporate them into their care. Each day our infant room is balanced with opportunities for individual exploration. Our infant daily schedule is based on Center Rotation, which offers interest within different developmental stages and promotes individualized growth. Therefore, there are no beginning and ending times for our activities; rather, experiences are pre-planned and made available for our entire day. When each child is ready and his/her schedule allows, he/she may experience our centers! A 1:3 staff to child ratio or better will be maintained.

Toddler Schedule (18 months – 2 years old)

Our toddler schedule resembles many similarities of our infant schedule. We continue to offer center rotations that focus on social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth through a mixture of child and teacher directed activities. At this age, we break away from an individualized schedule to a group schedule for center rotation, meals, and rest time. A 1:3 staff to child ratio or better will be maintained.

2 Years Old

This incredible age group is absorbing something new every day! KidsCo Jr. will create a stimulating environment to nurture a two-year-olds innate love of exploration and learning. Meaningful experiences for which they can relate are used to bring the curriculum to life. We believe that by providing both child-directed and teacher-directed emergent experiences, two-year-olds expand their language, physical ability, social skills, and build a healthy positive self-image. Through intentional teaching, their desire for independence will be respected and supported by creating opportunities for success. We teach by modeling appropriate hygiene, caring for others, and the value of friendships. Concentration is placed on recognizing and defining personal feelings by making positive choices in an effort to shape intrinsic discipline. A 1:6 staff to child ratio or better will be maintained.

3-5 Years Old

At KidsCo Jr., we believe that preschool aged children learn through purposeful play with an emergent curriculum, a generous supply of varied, child-centered experiences, and positive interaction with other children and healthy, responsible adults. We allow children to be children by providing a safe and healthy environment for them to openly explore and increase their curiosity. Our active learning program offers choices and encourages children to think outside the box. Family-like environments offer young children an atmosphere of comfort, love, and freedom to explore their world. Our classroom environment is set-up to be as comfortable and 'homey' as possible. This snug space will be augmented with interest area/center rotation which cultivates individual choice and social interaction. Interest areas will vary according to season and theme and will also build upon teachable moments that occur. Our interest areas will include Blocks, Dramatic Play, Toys & Games, Art, Science & Discovery, Sand & Water, Music & Movement, and Cooking and will incorporate literacy, math, science, social studies, and the arts. A 1:10 or better staff to child ratio will be maintained.

DAILY PRESCHOOL SAMPLE SCHEDULE:

6:30-8:30	Open Centers (w/ Read Aloud & Potty Party as needed)
8:30-8:55	Handwashing & Snack Time
8:55-9:00	Transition from Snack to Open Interest Areas
9:00-9:25	Open Interest Areas
9:25-9:30	Clean-Up & Transition to Circle Time
9:30-9:45	Morning Circle w/ Music & Movement
9:45-9:50	Transition to Guided Interest Areas
9:50-10:50	Guided Interest Area Choices w/ Small Group Instruction
10:50-10:55	Clean-Up & Transition to Potty Party
10:55-11:15	Potty Party, Handwashing & Snack Time
11:15-11:20	Transition to Outside Exploration
11:20-11:50	Outdoor Exploration/Creative Movement
11:50-12:00	Attendance, Transition Inside for Handwashing & Prepare for Lunch
12:00-12:30	Lunch Time
12:30-12:50	Read Aloud Time
12:50-1:00	Transition to Cots for Rest Time
1:00-3:00	Rest & Relaxation
3:00-3:30	Snack Time & Goodbyes to School Day Friends
3:35-3:50	Gather Everyone at Big Circle
3:50-4:00	Transition to Outdoor Exploration
4:00-4:30	Outdoor Exploration/Creative Movement
4:30-4:35	Attendance & Transition Inside
4:35-5:05	Project/Activity/Craft/Interest Area Choices
5:05-5:15	Potty Party, Handwashing & Transition to Snack
5:15-5:35	Snack Time
5:35-6:30	Good Evening/Open Choice Interest Areas

SUMMER PROGRAMMING

During the summer, KidsCo Jr. continues to offer monthly care for children ages 6 weeks – 5 years old. Although we continue to follow the Creative Curriculum, our summer programming adds additional elements to it such as; waters days, fitness activities, and vendors.

Below is an example of our summer schedule:



SAMPLE CAMP THEME SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Great Outdoors WEEK 1	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Petting Zoo
Mad Science WEEK 2	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Science Fair
Super Hero WEEK 3	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Super Hero Party
Build It WEEK 4	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Build It Day
Carnival WEEK 5	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Carnival
Safari Adventure WEEK 6	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Safari Hunt Day
Reptile WEEK 7	Water Day	Craft Day	Reptile Show	Water Day	Fit & Fun
Beach WEEK 8	Water Day	Craft Day	Fit & Fun	Water Day	Luau Party

CLOSING POLICIES

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

KidsCo Jr. will make every effort to be open despite inclement weather, but will close or operate on a modified schedule if driving or walking conditions pose a risk to the safety of the children, their families or our team members. Parents are advised to call the center before leaving home on snowy days to confirm our schedule.

Generally, the KidsCo Jr. policy for inclement weather is as follows:

If MCPS Administrative Offices are closed or delayed, KidsCo Jr. will be closed or delayed.

If MCPS are delayed/closed due to weather, KidsCo Jr. will make a decision depending on the weather. During inclement weather, all updated information will be available in the following ways:

- Voicemail Announcement by 6:00am 301-740-9600
- Facebook Fan Page by 6:00am
 - www.facebook.com/kidscojr
- Email to each family's primary email address

OTHER EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event that an emergency closing occurs for any reason (power outage, no A/C or heat, pandemic, etc. we will notify families of closings by email. If the closing occurs during the school day, parents will also be notified by telephone. No refunds are given for any closings on these days. If families would like to de-enroll, they must give two weeks notice and pay during that time.

REFUND/CANCELLATION POLICY

Given the current state of the COVID-19 virus, we must all work together. Our team members are here for working parents during this time and we would like to be there for them in return if for some reason the center has to close for any reason. It is important for us to be able to pay our team members in the event of any closure. KidsCo Jr. must strongly enforce our two-week cancellation policy. If the center is shut down for any reason (including COVID-19 families will have the option to cancel their enrollment; however, they will be required to give two-week's notice and fully pay tuition during this time even if the center is closed. Additionally, if any family cancels, they will still need to pay during the two-weeks and will lose their enrollment priority spot and will go to the end of the waiting list, if there is one.

HOLIDAYS

KidsCo Jr. typically follows all MCPS Administrative Office holidays; however, please refer to our calendar for any additional holiday closings or modified schedules.

STAFF IN-SERVICE DAYS

Each year, KidsCo Jr. provides in-service days for our staff. These days are used to complete trainings, to prepare for parent-teacher conferences and transition to the new school year. Please refer to our calendar for closings and modified schedules on these days.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Monthly Newsletters

Our team is just as excited as your family for upcoming activities! Each month, we will email a center newsletter. The newsletter will provide an updated calendar and schedule of events, as well as interesting information about our staff, children, and center events.

Each time your infant is fed, a separate, unused bottle should be provided. Your child's bottle should be plastic and include a cap/lid, and each piece to each bottle should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Once a child has begun to drink from a bottle containing formula or breast milk, the contents will be discarded within 60 minutes to avoid contamination. Containers of baby food may be kept at the center, but once opened, the unfinished contents will be returned home that evening. All bottles, sippy cups, dishes, and utensils will be rinsed and returned for sterile cleansing each evening. Solid foods and possible food allergens will not be introduced for the first time to any child while in KidsCo Jr.'s care. Please make our team aware of any symptoms that are noticed when a new grain, vegetable, fruit, or protein source is introduced. We will continue introducing foods at a parent's discretion and will also be observant of any abnormal reactions. *Note: Solid food should not be fed to an infant in a bottle, unless a clear, specific directive is described in writing by the child's physician. Solid food in bottles models incorrect eating habits and can present a choking hazard.

Preschool

All children enrolled over the age of two will need to bring their lunch each day. Each classroom does have a microwave to reheat items, but we ask that lunches requiring preparation be packed only on occasion, so that we have ample time to assist all children and to spend time with them at the lunch table. KidsCo Jr. provides 1% milk and filtered water at lunch times. Our programming encourages nutritionally balanced and wholesome foods. Packing a balanced variety of healthy options is important! Cookies, chips, or treats should be accompanied by fresh fruit and vegetable baggies. We have found that most children like "finger foods" as an alternative to a traditional "lunch box" meal. Plastic food containers are a great idea for packing fruits and vegetables, cheese, chicken pieces, pasta leftovers, and more. All food should be ready to eat, cut into manageable pieces, and easy to swallow. Please make sure all lunch boxes, bags, and containers are labeled with your child's name. All of our lunches are kept in the refrigerator, so we suggest that you use a brown bag or Bentgo-style container.

PEANUT POLICY

Peanut Butter/Peanuts

Throughout our tenure at KidsCo Jr., we have successfully accommodated children who have many different food and environmental allergens. We have maintained egg, tree nut, dairy, legume, gluten, and peanut allergies present in our students. Our practice has been to separate a child with allergies by either seating him/her across from instead of next to a friend at lunch, or even designating an "allergen-free" table at lunch time. Additionally, we have posted allergy signs, avoided nut products when ordering snack foods, and requested labeled alternate food supplies. Our entire team is well trained in exposure prevention and symptom identification. Injectable epinephrine (Epi-Pen) training is also given to teachers with allergic students. We kindly ask that no foods that have peanuts as an ingredient be brought to the center. We appreciate your support in this matter. We know that some children identify their favorite lunch item as peanuts or peanut butter; however, listed below are some peanut butter alternatives:

- Cream Cheese
- Hummus or Bean Dips
- Guacamole
- Soy or Seed Butters
- Cranberry Sauce
- Different Nut Butters

HEALTH & SAFETY

CLEANING PROCEDURES

- All KidsCo Jr. programs will intensify all cleaning protocol due to COVID-19.
- All classrooms will be routinely cleaned multiple times a day (at least every 2 hours or sooner, if necessary) including surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This will also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap cots, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Our facilities will use appropriate sanitizers that are approved by the MSDE Office of Child Care.
- Cleaning products will not be used near children, and staff will ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling fumes.

CHILD ABUSE

All KidsCo Jr. team members are trained to identify and report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the police or the Department of Social Services.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Working within this industry demands a flexible model to accommodate children with special needs as best as we are able to. KidsCo Jr. uses Teaching Strategies: The Creative Curriculum within our classrooms where children are “learning by doing” and our interest areas (centers) offer a variety of activities that are scaffolded to meet different children’s learning styles and abilities. This model has been found to be successful with children who have special needs and families who require individualized learning plans. At KidsCo Jr., we actively promote inclusive practice in order to best meet the needs of the children, families, and staff at our center. Children are welcome to attend regardless of ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender or economic circumstances. We value the partnership we have with Montgomery County PEP programs, Montgomery County Infants & Toddlers Division, and other entities of MCPS to ensure that we are able to provide the best services and education to our enrolled children. KidsCo Jr. is also open to working with pediatricians or other specialists not named above to do whatever is needed to help a child succeed. In the event that we are unable to accommodate a child, we will work with the family to suggest and seek alternative care.



ALLERGIES

Please make the Director aware of any allergy issues that pertain to your child. For quick reference, all known allergies will be posted next to a photo of each child in food preparation areas.

HAND WASHING & HYGIENE

Knowing the best way to wash hands is the first step in staying healthy! Children are taught the proper way and times to thoroughly wash their hands. Our schedules are flexible to allow time to promote healthy habits. Children who are unable to wash are assisted by a staff member and have their hands and faces wiped at each changing. Skills that ingrain beneficial routines are also practiced daily. Keeping clean, picking up after playing, wiping a nose, cleaning up, and neatness are demonstrated.

DIAPERING & TOILET TRAINING

Parents are required to supply KidsCo Jr. with diapers and wipes for each child. Our team will notify families if supplies begin to run low. All of the children's diapers are checked periodically and changed as needed in a sanitary routine. KidsCo Jr. is also committed to working in conjunction with parents on toilet training their children. Children are never forced or punished when toilet training. We use positive reinforcement and encouragement as our strategy. In order to provide a consistent model, our staff members will make every effort to communicate with parents in order to compliment the efforts and tactics used at home. MSDE licensing prohibits portable toilets from home or the use of food as a reward item when toilet training.

ILLNESS & MEDICATION POLICIES

EXCLUSION FROM CARE

It is in the best interest of both your child and the center to keep sick children at home. Illness spreads easily, so please be courteous to everyone and don't bring your child to KidsCo Jr. if he/she is ill. Please use the following guidelines in assessing your child's health and determining if he/she is able to attend school. Generally, your child should not attend school if:

- He/she does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in daily indoor and outdoor activities.
- The level of care would necessitate attention by staff that may compromise the health or safety of other children in attendance.
- Symptoms or indicators are typical in illnesses for which exclusion for care is recommended.

SIGNS OF ILLNESS IN CHILDREN

Illnesses at KidsCo Jr.

If, after being dropped off, your child complains of feeling sick or symptoms are noticed, we will provide temporary isolation while contacting you to require that you come and pick him/her up. We will notify other parents if your child experiences any of the above symptoms. Respectfully, to reduce risk of contamination, we request that your child be picked up within one hour of calling. In the event that you are unable to come to the center, a designated alternate person listed on your child's Emergency Information Card will be contacted.

Required Notification of Illness

In addition to the regular notification you provide if your child will not be attending KidsCo Jr. on a regularly scheduled day, we ask that you notify us should your child be absent due to illness.

Signs of Illness in Children as Provided by the CDC Guide

If a child in your care exhibits any of the following common signs of acute illness, you (provider) should contact the child's parent immediately and try to keep the child separated from the other children until the parent arrives.

Fever & Behavioral Change

Please keep your child home if he/she has a temperature that is 100 degrees or higher when taken under the arm. A child should not attend if he/she has a fever (of any temperature or grade), or if a change in behavior is present along with other signs of illness such as:

General Appearance

- Excessive crying, clinginess, fussiness
- Doubled over in pain, unable to move
- Listless, lethargic, unresponsive
- Vomiting, diarrhea
- Feverish
- Seizure (although child has no history of seizure disorder)

Breathing

- Fast, shallow, gasping breaths
- Difficulty breathing, wheezing
- Sucking in around ribs
- Flaring nostrils
- Persistent or uncontrollable coughing

Skin

- Pale, grayish, flushed, yellowish skin
- Hot or cold and clammy skin
- Skin rashes, sores, swelling, or bruising
- Body rash
- Diarrhea
- Earache
- Excessive crying
- Individual's pain indicators
- Lethargy or listlessness

Your child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to KidsCo Jr. This time period should begin when the fever breaks with no medicinal assistance.

Vomiting

Policy pertains to vomiting, regardless of cause or trigger, after first incident of vomit during the day (exceptions for infants - may be due to diet). Your child must not have vomited for 24 hours before returning to KidsCo Jr. This time period should begin when vomiting ceases with no medicinal assistance.

Diarrhea/Constipation:

- More than two loose stools during the school day
- Presence of runny, watery, and/or uncontrolled, and/or unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet
- Stools containing blood or mucus
- Any stools that cause discomfort or pain when passing or are impacted

Your child must not have diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to KidsCo Jr. This time period should begin when diarrhea ceases with no medicinal assistance.

Skin continued...

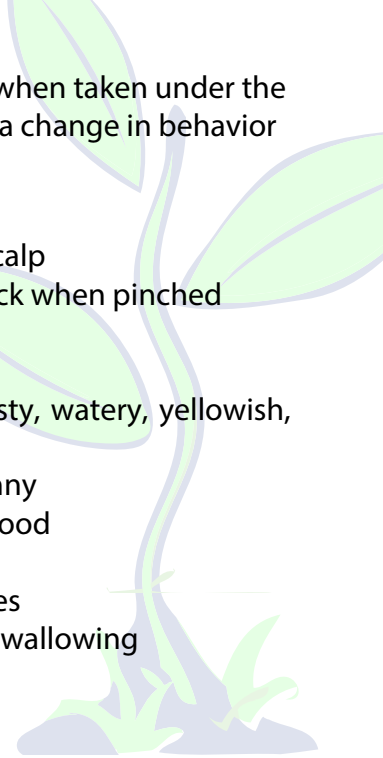
- Scratching at skin or scalp
- Skin doesn't spring back when pinched

Eyes, Nose, Ears, and Mouth

- Eyes swollen, red, crusty, watery, yellowish, or sunken
- Nose congested or runny
- Ears draining pus or blood
- Pulling at ears
- Mouth or lips with sores
- Sore throat, difficulty swallowing
- Excessive drooling

Appearance of Urine/Stool

- Gray or white stool
- Black or blood-flecked stool
- Unusually dark or tea-colored urine
- Restlessness or agitation
- Sore throat
- Swollen glands
- Vomiting
- Wheezing



Colds & Flu

Being the most probable illness in young children, we ask that you use your best judgment when considering whether or not to bring your child to KidsCo Jr. Please remember that full participation in programming should be an enjoyable experience for children. Here are some facts to consider:

- The contagious period with a cold or flu is during the initial onset of symptoms. Additionally, your child's resistance to germs is reduced, which makes him/her more vulnerable to other infection.
- Colds often begin with consistent, clear nasal discharge (actually the most contagious period) and then move into a thick, creamy yellow or green color.

Eye Discharge

- Any mucus or pus draining from the eye.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge
- Excessive or bothersome itchiness or discomfort

Please note: Viral Conjunctivitis usually has a clear, watery discharge and may not require medication or exclusion, but does need a diagnosis from your pediatrician.

Coughing or Wheezing

- Severe coughing or wheezing that causes a child to get red or blue in the face or causes a loss of breath
- After coughing, a high-pitched whooping sound is indicated
- Any respiratory distress that causes an inability to rest comfortably or participate in daily indoor and outdoor activities

Head Lice or Nits

- Any observed lice (living or dead) or nits (eggs) on a child's scalp or hair.

Your child may not return to care until his/her hair and scalp have been treated with a medicated shampoo that is indicated for the treatment of head lice, and all nits have been removed with a specialized comb. No symptoms should be observed.

Communicable Disease

Children with a communicable disease will not be allowed at KidsCo Jr. during the contagious period. Please notify the Director upon diagnosis. Examples include:

- Chicken Pox
- Pinworms
- Fifth Disease
- Poliomyelitis
- Giardiasis
- Ringworm
- Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease
- Rubella
- Hepatitis
- Salmonella
- Impetigo
- Scabies
- Measles
- Scarlet Fever
- Meningococcal Disease
- Streptococcal Infection
- Mumps
- Tuberculosis
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Parents will need to complete authorization for the Administration of Medication Form for each and every type of medicine to be administered. These are printable from the KidsCo Jr. website and are available at the center. All medications need to be personally given to a staff person with verbal instruction. For safety, no

medication should be kept or stored in cubbies, lunchboxes, or backpacks. A designated staff person shall administer medications according to the Five Rights of Medication: 1) Right Child 2) Right Medication 3) Right Dose 4) Right Time 5) Right Method. Each time a medication is given, a record will be kept, detailing dose, time, and any reaction.

Prescription Medication

“As needed” medications to treat symptoms at their onset must be provided to keep and store at the center. This includes EpiPen, Albuterol, nebulizer treatments, seizure medications, etc. All medications must have a valid expiration date and should be replaced before expiration.

Non-Prescription/OTC Medications

For all medications, parents must provide the following:

- A completed Authorization Form, specifying the name of drug, reason for administration, time to be given, dosage, treatment start and end date, and method of administration. Physician signature is required. We suggest that families take the medication authorization form with them to the pediatrician to complete
- Medication in the original container that has the current pharmacist label and instructions. Child's name, dosing instructions, drug name and manufacturer, current date, and contact information for the prescribing doctor. Current expiration date must be clearly displayed.
- A spoon or measuring device for any liquid medication. Please clearly label this, along with the medication box with your child's name.

RETURNING TO CARE

Medication Requirements

- No child may return to KidsCo Jr., unless they have been symptom free without the aid of over-the-counter remedies (Tylenol, Imodium, Benadryl, Robitussin, etc.)
- If a fever is present during a flu/cold like illness, no child may return to KidsCo Jr. until they have been fever-free (without OTC remedies) for 24 hours.
- Any diagnosed illness requires a 24 hour period of antibiotic treatment before returning to care.

Doctor's Notes

Doctor's notes must include:

- The date of appointment
- What has been diagnosed
- Why the child is not contagious and is able to return to care
- What is the treatment or antibiotic
- When we should notice an improvement in symptoms

Families will need a doctor's note to readmit a child in these circumstances:

- If a child suffers from the same above illness indicators for two days or more, we will request the parent to pick up and to provide a doctor's written statement.
- If your child is medically absent for 3 days or more, a note from your physician is required before returning to care.

Additionally, communicable diseases will require exclusion from care during their contagious period. If applicable symptoms are observed, we will call you requesting that you pick up and provide written release from your doctor before returning. Please refer to the illness indicators for examples of communicable disease (page 26). In addition to your family doctor, KidsCo Jr. refers to the Communicable Diseases Summary, which is produced exclusively for Health Services in Group Care. You may refer to a copy at the MD Community Health Administration at www.edcp.org. This resource, as well as MD approved Medication Administration Training, is the foundation for all of the above mentioned policies.

EXCLUSION OF CARE & RETURNING TO CARE (COVID-19)

- Child care programs require the complete exclusion of any staff or child that has tested positive for COVID-19 or is symptomatic, until cleared by a medical professional and full compliance with all the following CDC recommendations for quarantine and other safeguards:
- Individuals that have not been tested but have shown symptoms may return to the program after:
 - Healthcare provider has deemed that a COVID-19 test is not necessary and
 - 72 hours with no fever (without taking medication to reduce a fever) and
 - Symptoms improved and
 - 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- Individuals that have tested positive and are not exhibiting symptoms may return to the program after:
 - No fever, remain symptom free, and after receiving two negative tests in a row at least 24 hours apart
- Individuals that have tested positive and are exhibiting symptoms may return to the program after:
 - 72 hours with no fever (without taking medication to reduce a fever), symptoms improved, 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and after receiving two negative tests in a row at least 24 hours apart.
- Individuals with conditions that weaken their immune system and have exhibited symptoms might need to stay home longer than 10 days. These individuals must consult with their healthcare provider for more information on appropriate quarantine guidelines.

MISC. POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SECURITY

The safety of your child is our number one concern. The following procedures are how we can work together to ensure the safety of your child:

PARENT DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

For the safety of our staff and children during the COVID-19 pandemic, we kindly ask that parents refrain from entering our facilities at drop off/pick up. We also ask that all families take their own and their child's temperature prior to coming to our center.

- A parent will need to bring a thermometer to the center and take their child's temperature in front of one of our team members.
- All parents must practice social distancing when dropping off and picking up their children.
- A KidsCo Jr. team member will be standing outside and will greet you and your child. In the afternoon, our team members will bring your child out to you.
- A team member will have the sign-in/out tablet and will enter your child's PIN number each morning and afternoon to "check" your child in and out.
- If there are multiple families dropping off at the same time, please ensure that you are standing at least 6ft. away from other families. Our team will place spacing markers on the ground as a reminder of social distancing.
- Infants may be transported in their car seats.



Entering the Center Screenings

- Prior to any child or team member entering the center, he/she's temperature will be taken in a designated area. Persons who have a fever of 100.4 or above or show other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. We encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and keep them home when they are sick. Additionally, if someone at your home is sick, we kindly ask that you not send your child.
- We will be asking families screening questions upon arrival to ensure the safety of all children and staff.
- Team members are also asked to be mindful of signs of illness in themselves and persons whom they live with. Team members will also be asked screening questions prior to entering the facility.
- Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands when they enter. We will provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Children and team members will then go to the nearest sink and wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap.

Persons Authorized to Pick Up Your Child

You will be asked to list individuals who are authorized to pick up your child from our center. If someone other than the child's parents or legal guardian will pick up, please have him/her prepared to show a picture ID upon arrival. Your child will not be released to someone not listed as authorized to pick up your child. If there is an emergency, and someone other than those authorized will be picking up your child, you must call the center and inform a KidsCo Jr. team member. For the safety of your child, please let us know if there are issues pertaining to the legal custody of your child.

Custody Issues

If there are any custody issues between the parents/guardians, we must have legal documentation on site that specifies the custody agreement. If we do not have legal documentation, KidsCo Jr. will have to grant access to both legal parents/guardians listed on the account.

Emergency Cards

You will be asked to fill out an Emergency Card for each of your children enrolled in our program. Please make sure that the information on this card is kept up-to-date. It will be the first place we look to locate you in case of an emergency, so make sure that it is accurate.

Emergency Policies and Preparation

We have an extensive staff orientation at the beginning of the school year, during which staff are trained on KidsCo Jr. emergency policies and procedures. They also attend a brief orientation at their center where they are given important information on locations of phone numbers, fire drill meeting locations, attendance pro-cedures, and any other site-specific information. In addition, monthly staff meetings are held to keep them updated on current issues. Team members have been trained in a MD Certified Emergency Preparedness course and are also equipped with a Crisis Kit.

Fire Drills

KidsCo Jr. and the state of Maryland require that every center conduct a mock fire drill every month. The Director will designate meeting places and will assign individual responsibilities for all team members. These drills will also be recorded in a labeled logbook and kept on file. In addition, emergency exit procedures will be posted at every exit.

Media Release

While participating in classroom activities, field trips or special events, it is possible for photographs, audio, or video to be taken by our team. Pictures or quotations from enrolled children may appear in the classroom, center displays, or newsletters. Such media is also required for documentation purposes as part of our accreditation through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE. When enrolling in the program, parents

accept that this is a normal part of the child care program. In addition, for training, marketing, or promotional purposes, KidsCo Jr. may use photographs, audio, or video in which enrolled children appear, without limitation, reservation, or compensation. At the time of enrollment, parents will be asked to sign a contractual agreement, which includes our media release.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Positive Guidance

The goal of our policies is to help each child develop recognition of positive self-worth, individual competence, and mastery. Discipline at KidsCo Jr. is in line with the age and needs of each child. Teaching by example, positive reinforcement, redirection, and one on-one discussion are strategies that provide resolution. We provide an opportunity for children to learn problem solving techniques and to think through actions by providing consistent and logical consequences. We set realistic limits for the children to follow and provide a wide variety of positive choices to give each student the greatest chance to succeed. We believe it is important to help the children understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable choices. KidsCo Jr. team members provide all children with clear rules and expectations for how one should act at KidsCo Jr. Team members review the expectations daily before, during and after activities and at times when a child is not acting appropriately.

Steps to Success

All staff are trained on and informed of our discipline policy at our staff orientation. Parents and staff will receive written copies of this policy within their respective Handbooks.

- Step One: Assess the situation by kneeling down to the child's level and asking clarifying questions in a calm and even voice.
- Step Two: While practicing active listening, allow the child to use words to express his feelings about the situation.
- Step Three: Use positive words to remind the child what is an acceptable action and reaction and give them verbal cues on ways to fix the problem if it should occur again.
- Step Four: Redirect the child to an acceptable activity. Allow the child to make a new positive choice.

Communication is the key to each child's progress! If there are changes in the home or with a child's routine, we encourage families to let the Director know. Likewise, our team will keep parents up to date with any situations that we feel should be addressed. We are committed to working with families to remedy any issues or circumstances that may arise. However, KidsCo Jr. does reserve the right to ask parents to find an alternate source of care, either on a temporary or permanent basis, should our team deem it necessary.

THE KIDSCO JR. TEAM

OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE

Each team member was hand chosen to work with our children. We pride ourselves on our exceptional staff, as they truly make KidsCo Jr. a great place to be. As part of our continued dedication to raise the bar, we compensate our staff members at well above the average rate within Montgomery County. All team members are valued, appreciated, and encouraged to have input on the program, which fosters a sense of ownership. We continually strive to create a fun, rewarding, and solid place for our staff to call "home!"

Background Checks

Each staff member is required to pass a background check before working at one of our centers. All staff must submit finger prints to the State of Maryland and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. KidsCo Jr., as well as the Office of Child Care, also receives written notification of the results.

Selection Process

All potential team members will successfully demonstrate a passion for children, a positive upbeat attitude, a commitment to our philosophy, and a willingness to go above and beyond to raise the bar within our industry. We schedule an extensive interview process that includes an in-office interview with KidsCo Jr.'s owner and an on-site interview with the center Director and staff. Prior employment and personal reference checks are thoroughly examined. Newly hired employees are assigned to an experienced team member for training. A 30-Day Formal Review is conducted; all new staff are on a 60-day probationary period thereafter. After completion of the probationary period, they are reevaluated by the center director. Throughout the year, our center directors continuously monitor and assess all employees; a formal Mid-Year Review is also conducted.

First Aid/CPR Requirements

The state of MD requires that, for every 20 children, one staff member is certified. KidsCo Jr. provides First Aid/CPR training to most senior staff and some assistants, even if we surpass state requirements.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Team Meetings

We expect all staff to attend monthly team meetings. Each center will cover upcoming projects, themes, events, observations, curriculum planning, and overall daily plans. We want to include all staff members' in-put into the program because their ideas are important to us and participation will promote a well-organized and unified team.

Continuing Education

Here at KidsCo Jr., we pride ourselves on our ability to hire and retain talented, top-notch team members! To maintain cutting edge strategies, rejuvenate and introduce new skills and ideas, we provide twenty four hours or more of current and interesting continuing education to all of our lead staff members. Assistant Teachers receive twelve hours' worth of courses. Additionally, each of our team members is MD State Credentialed, which mandates double the amount of continuing education!

Resource Center

KidsCo Jr. will have a professional staff resource center within the center's staff area. These resources will include the following: up-to-date professional journals, suggested reading lists, curriculum guides, current articles of interest, supply catalogs, motivational and educational books; resource idea books to further staff development and provide daily assistance

