

# Important Preschool Notes

## Rest Items

Each child will be given a rest period even if he/she choose not to nap. Every day, a pillow with a pillow case, a blanket, a crib sheet, and a “lovey” should be available to each child. Families may pack these items on Monday and they will be sent home each Friday for laundering. Additionally, we request that all pillows be labeled and small enough to fit in your child’s cubby. This typically is more convenient for families because we can send just the pillow case for washing and the actual pillow can stay in your child’s cubby. In following appropriate sanitary and hygiene practice, large bed sized pillows are not permitted.

## Appropriate Clothing

Your child’s day will be brimming with interactive, hands-on fun! Dress should be casual, non-restrictive, and seasonal. Our outside areas and playgrounds are an extension of your child’s learning environment and we conduct outdoor activities whenever possible. Each day, except in cases of extreme weather, we will venture outdoors to meet the children’s needs to get fresh air, have some large muscle activity, and release energy.

Please check the forecast each morning and prepare an outfit accordingly. If it has just rained, please pack boots for puddles and mud; windy days would call for jackets with hoods or hats; if snow is expected, please include waterproof gloves and pants; hot or muggy weather would necessitate sunscreen, loose clothing, etc.

When choosing indoor and outdoor clothing, please choose items that are durable, comfortable, washable, and easy for your child to put on and take off. This also includes shoes! Crocs, platform, heeled-soles, and flip-flops hinder toddlers learning to walk and often trip or blister older children.

## Preschool Nutrition Guidelines

Nutrition is an important part of healthy development for a growing child. If your child has special dietary needs or any food allergies, please make us aware upon diagnosis.

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.

Our programming encourages nutritionally balanced and wholesome foods. We strongly discourage commercial, pre-packaged lunch meals which tend to be “empty calories” and laden

with preservatives. Unhealthy choices include Lunchables, Chef Boyardee, Hormel, Graduate meals, and other high sodium options.

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.

We will augment lunch that you bring with a variety of healthy choices for breakfast and mid-morning and afternoon snack. Whole milk, filtered water, and 100% real fruit juice are offered at each snack time. Each family will receive a monthly menu of snacks to be served.

Please make sure all lunch boxes, bags, and containers are labeled with your child's name. Due to MSDE licensing, all preschool child lunches are to be refrigerated. We ask that families help us save space in our refrigerators by packing your child's lunch in a brown bag or rectangular shaped Tupperware. Many of our families currently use Bento Boxes and have found them to be useful. For your convenience, we keep a supply of brown bags on-site in the event you don't have one.

#### Peanut Butter/Peanuts Policy (Peanut-Free Classrooms)

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 team is well trained in both 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 a main ingredient be brought to the center.**

