



Keene Day Care Center

Parent Handbook

Keene Day Care Center
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KEENE DAY CARE CENTER – PARENT HANDBOOK

The Keene Day Care Center (KDCC) provides a safe, warm, happy environment that allows for creative and physical growth, socialization and intellectual stimulation while fostering independence and self-esteem. Through the years we have developed a set of basic policies that we hope will help to make your child's time here a positive experience. We ask for your cooperation and understanding in adhering to these policies and we thank you for your support. If you ever have a question about the reasons behind them, please do not hesitate to ask.

PROGRAM WIDE EXPECTATIONS

Be Kind, Be Helpful, Be Respectful, Be Curious, Be Responsible.

We ask that all children, staff, and families part of Keene Day Care Center treat people and themselves according to these expectations.

MISSION STATEMENT

“Inspire nurturing of young children; peace of mind for their working parents.”

OUR PURPOSE – To provide a safe, challenging, supportive environment for children, while assisting families to be active participants in the economic well-being of the Monadnock region.

OUR GUIDING BELIEFS – As a community of staff and families:

We are committed to providing a high quality, educational program to enhance the development of our young children.

We build on a foundation of mutual trust and respect

We foster self-confidence and independence.

We encourage children to wonder and explore in a place where there is joy in learning.

We are developing and learning, just as the children we serve.

COMMUNICATION

PARENT MESSAGES – Each classroom has a system for passing messages back and forth between parents and staff. The teachers can show you the way it is done in your child's classroom. It helps if messages are in writing in addition to being passed on verbally.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION – At all times KDCC must be informed of whom to contact in an emergency. In addition to parent contact information, we keep a back-up emergency contact person and phone number on file for each child. It is imperative that

parents keep this information up to date. If parents are to be out of town during the day, the Center should be informed. If your home or work information changes please inform the office and your child's teacher so we can contact you, without delay, in an emergency.

PARENT BOARDS – There are parent boards throughout the building that share information and need to be checked.

The sign-in-and-out sheets are located inside the main entrance and are organized by classroom. They are to be filled out at the time of drop off and pick up each day and signed once a week by the parent or guardian of the child.

There are parent bulletin boards outside every classroom. You will find a space with your child's name on this board for communication notes. We have a community board inside the main entrance with information about activities and events happening throughout the community that we want to share with our families.

PARENT CONFERENCES – Please feel free to communicate with your child's teacher at any time. A parent-teacher conference can be set up at your convenience to discuss any matter.

BOO BOO REPORT – Whenever a child is injured, we complete an accident form that we ask you to read, sign and leave here for our files. This is our assurance that you have been informed, and it lets you know who to ask if you have further questions. Our common first aid procedures include washing with soap and water, bandaids, icies, and TLC.

SPECIAL NEEDS - The Keene Day Care Center does not discriminate against children and families with special needs. KDCC works closely with the area early intervention agencies and the area school specialists to meet the needs of every child. If you have concerns about your child's development, please talk with your child's teacher and we can make a referral. We at KDCC strive to help our children learn to value diversity and practice caring for each other.

PARENTS ARE WELCOME!

PARENT VISITS – Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time. You are welcome to join your child at a mealtime or during any other part of the day. If you plan to come for a meal, please let us know ahead of time so we can provide enough food.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS – Parents are welcome to volunteer – either in the classroom, on a special field trip, or with some fix-it project. Let us know if you have any special skills or talents you would like to share.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE – The staff must keep track of many children at all times. Please help us by letting the teacher know when you arrive and depart with your child. It is important that you come into the classroom with your child in the morning, both to ensure a smooth transition for your child and to give us a chance to pass on any important messages. To ease your child's transition, we suggest that you try whenever possible to have a consistent drop-off time each day.

All children must arrive by 9:00 AM. This allows the class to proceed with the day's programming as a group without further interruption. It also helps us adjust staffing needs for the day. We ask you to call if your child will be late, leaving early, or out for the day. We reserve the right to refuse service for the day if there is no phone call made, and/or the arrival is after 9:00 AM. Inform a teacher if someone other than you is to pick up your child, or if there are any restrictions on who may pick up. For your child's safety, we will ask for I.D. if we do not know the person picking up your child. Please remember to sign your child in and out each day.

CUBBIES & HOOKS – We want your child to develop a sense of belonging at KDCC. They will have a cubby and a hook for personal possessions. In addition, some classrooms have a place for artwork that is ready to go home. Remember to check these special places, and help your child learn to be organized and take responsibility for their possessions.

CLOTHING – Your child will be busy and often messy while at KDCC. Consider this when you dress your child each day. S/he will be most comfortable in play clothes. You will probably want to save special clothes, like the new hand-knit sweater from Nana, for other occasions.

Occasionally the children get wet and/or muddy while playing outdoors, especially in winter and spring. It is recommended that parents leave an extra change of clothes – including underwear. These should be labeled with your child's name and kept in their cubby. If a child is not toilet-trained, then several extra changes of clothes will be necessary.

*If your child wears KDCC clothes during the day, please be sure to wash and return them right away.

OUTDOOR WEAR – We try to have time outside every day, in all types of weather. Therefore, it is important that your child is dressed appropriately for the season. Snow pants, boots and mittens seem to get mixed up easily so please label with your child's name.

If you have any specific requests as to how your child is dressed, either inside or outside, especially during changing weather times, let the staff know. Otherwise, we will use our best judgment.

FOOTWEAR – Children need securely fitting shoes to safely participate in running and climbing activities. Slippers, clogs, flip-flops, or slippery-soled shoes are not recommended. In winter, children need boots for outdoors and shoes for indoors – boots are not comfortable for inside activities.

TOYS FROM HOME – Your child may bring a soft cuddly toy for naptime. It must be small enough to fit into the cubby. We do not allow any other types of toys, as they can get lost or broken. Valuables such as jewelry and money should also remain at home. With so many children to attend to, staff cannot be responsible for damaged or lost possessions.

We appreciate your help in teaching your child to respect the property of others by sharing this rule of thumb – “Bring home only what you have brought from home or made here”.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

NAPTIME – Naptime is from 11:45 to 1:45 daily. To avoid disrupting the quiet atmosphere, children may not arrive during this time. You may wish to leave a small sleeping pillow here, and/or a special blanket from home. In accordance with NH State licensing guidelines, all children participate in naptime. Let us know if your child is to be picked up early.

MEALS – We provide breakfast, lunch, and two nutritious snacks daily under guidelines set by the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Therefore, there is no need for your child to bring food. We use fresh, natural ingredients whenever possible, and seek to minimize the amount of sugar eaten. Gum and candy are strictly forbidden. Parents are always welcome to join us for lunch at 11:15 and we would appreciate advance notice if you planned to come. For your information, menus are posted on the bulletin board outside the kitchen door, as well as the bulletin board to the right of the main entrance.

As required by CACFP, any child who cannot participate completely in our food program must have a physician’s note stating what foods to substitute. We will work with you to accommodate special dietary requirements. In some instances, we may request that you provide special foods needed by your child.

PHYSICAL FORM – A recent physical examination is required prior to entering the program. Children must have a check-up every year thereafter. Pick up a form in the office prior to your child’s appointment. If a current health form is not on file, a child is subject to being withdrawn from the program until it is received.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform KDCC staff if there are any medical changes with their child. If the day care requires documentation, the responsibility to provide it also falls under the parent/guardian.

ILLNESS – Children in group settings share many things – including germs. KDCC staff members make every effort to maintain a healthy environment. We regularly wash

and bleach toys, diaper changing surfaces, tables, etc. We do a lot of nose wiping and handwashing. We teach children to “catch their sneezes and coughs in their elbows”.

Children need to be fever free for 24 hours or have a doctor’s note to return to the Center. Children should not return to the Center if they are contagious. If they are taking antibiotics, it is usually 24 hours from the first dose. Sneezing, a discharging nose, red or watery eyes, sensitivity to light, sore or inflamed throat, cough, headache, vomiting, malaise, fever of 101 or higher or rash should be looked upon as signs and symptoms leading to suspicion of communicable disease. If you have any suspicion that your child may be ill, s/he should not be brought to the Center.

We do not exclude children simply because they have any of these symptoms, but if a child is not well enough to participate in all aspects of the program – including outdoor activities – we will ask that you come to pick up your child. Your child’s comfort and well-being are our number one priority.

When at the doctor, be sure to mention that your child is in a group childcare program, and then follow the advice given. This may include keeping your child home while recuperating, so have a plan in mind, especially if it is hard for you to miss work. Please notify us if your child has a communicable disease, so that we can inform the rest of our families. We follow the guidelines for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

MEDICATION POLICY – In order for your child to receive medication, you must fill out and sign the medication form. In some cases, a doctor’s note and signature will be required. All medication must be in its original container and be labeled with the child’s name and dosage s/he is to receive. The medication will be stored out of reach of children. Never leave medication in your child’s cubby, backpack, etc., but hand it directly to the lead teacher. We encourage you to share any health problems your child may have, so that appropriate care can be given.

INCLUSION AND EXPLUSION POLICY

INCLUSION AND EXPULSION POLICY – Children often struggle as they are learning to be part of a group and get along with others. At times their behaviors can present significant challenges. We are committed to the success of each child, and therefore we do not expel children from our program because of concerns with behavior. Such disruption to their lives would not be productive.

Behavior concerns tell us that children need more time, support, and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. It is our responsibility to provide this within the safe, nurturing environment of our program. We are committed to supporting all children in any way we can to meet their needs and build their skills. As children learn and practice social and emotional skills, it gives them the foundation needed for academic and life success.

Our Goals:

- i. Promote healthy social and emotional development of all children in our care.
- ii. Create an environment where all children can be successful.
- iii. Offer children the opportunity to experience warm, positive interactions with adults.
- iv. Support children in learning how to get along with others and how to be a friend.
- v. Help children learn how to control their feelings, impulses, attention, and behavior.
- vi. Support families' understanding of social/emotional development & children's behaviors.
- vii. Weave Pyramid Model strategies into every aspect of our work to support these goals.
- viii. Provide children with materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age, and respectful to them as individuals.
- ix. Develop schedules to meet their needs, provide thoughtful smooth transitions, and avoid long periods of wait time.
- x. Are flexible in our schedule and follow the interests and needs of the children.
- xi. Are guided by the children – they tell us if what we are doing is working for them, and if not, we make adjustments.
- xii. Work to develop a relationship with each child.
- xiii. Encourage peer relationships by creating social opportunities and working with children to resolve conflicts.
- xiv. Speak to children in a calm tone, especially during redirections or in heightened emotional situations.
- xv. Put words to children's emotions - help them develop emotional literacy.
- xvi. Strive to understand the underlying causes of behaviors, to guide us in better meeting the needs of each child.
- xvii. Communicate regularly with families and work together as partners for the benefit of the children.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere.

Plan to be better tomorrow than today, but don't plan to be finished.

Children are not for molding as much as unfolding.

There is no such thing as failure – it is all feedback.

Very rarely does pent-up frustration explode into a coherent and meaningful message.

You are a human being, not a human was or will be.

The secret to patience is finding something else to do in the meantime.

What we see depends on what we look for.

There is nothing that can help you understand your beliefs more than trying to explain them to an inquisitive child.

There's usually an "inside" story to every "outside" behavior. Though we may not be able to know that "inside story," there's generally some inner reason for what children do.

Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened.

No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship.