

Kids Kountry Parent Handbook

LICENSING/CERTIFICATION

Kids Kountry is:

1. ★ Licensed by the Department of Human Services and our certificate is posted in the lobby.
2. A member of the PACCA (Pennsylvania Child Care Association). This certification is also posted in the lobby

Our mission statement:

We Believe:

- *Children come first*
- *All children have the right to quality care*
- *Children have unlimited potential to contribute now*
- *A safe, mutually kind, nurturing environment is important for success*
- *In high expectations, striving for excellence and personal best*
- *In fairness and equality*
- *Parent and community involvement is vital to a child's learning and growth*
- *In the importance of learning, accepting and respecting our diversities*
- *In responsibility and accountability*
- *Learning is an interactive, life-long process*
- *Effective instruction and learning are interesting, challenging and fun*
- *We need each other*

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

★ Kids Kountry will be closed on the following Holidays: New Years day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and an additional holiday determined annually.

Holidays occurring on Saturday are observed on Friday and Holidays occurring on Sunday are observed on Monday. There are no tuition reductions for Holiday closings.

Kids Kountry will post a Holiday schedule in the Lobby during January which will provide closing times & days not in operation.

OTHER CLOSINGS

Kids Kountry may close early at various times throughout the year to ensure that our staff can attend trainings and/or seminars as required by DHS. You will be advised of any change in closing time at least 2 weeks prior to the event.

★ We may also close for weather issues and they will be announced on WGAL Channel 8.

PAYMENT AND PROCEDURE

★ Payment is expected weekly throughout the year. Payment is due in advance and should be made by end of business Thursday for the upcoming week. Please indicate the dates of the weeks paid in the memo portion of your check. Tuition payments are processed on Friday morning.

Tuition payments will be considered past due if not received by 5:00 pm on Thursday and a late fee could be assessed if not received at that time.

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THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE TAKEN IF AN ACCOUNT BECOMES DELINQUENT:

1. Written notice/invoice
2. Second Notice — You will be provided the opportunity to discuss payment options with Connie Gibbons
3. ★ Management will make a determination as to whether your child will be suspended/terminated until the account is paid in full
4. Final Step — A civil suit can be filed against you to collect all amount due + court costs.

NO DEDUCTION IN TUITION OR REIMBURSEMENT IS GIVEN FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Holiday closings; Illness or Absence; Inclement Weather, Part-time client vacations, Full-time client vacation if the vacation coupon has not been submitted (see “Vacation Coupon” below), school closings
- You will be provided a notice at least one month in advance if tuition fees change.
- There will be a \$30.00 service fee for all returned checks
- Thirty percent (30%) interest will be due for all accounts past due with the second notice
- There will be a \$1.00 per minute per child overtime fee if your child is dropped off before the stated agreement time or picked up at the time stated on the agreement contract

DISCOUNTS

There will be a 10% discount for families enrolling two or more children for full-time care. Ten percent will be deducted from the oldest child. There is no discount for part-time clients or clients on subsidized enrollment.

VACATION COUPON

Full-time clients, after 3 months continuous enrollment, will be provided a coupon good for 50 percent off one week of child care for one child per year. Multi-child families will receive 50% off for the oldest child. This coupon is not available for part-time or subsidized enrollment. The child(ren) may not be in attendance for the entire vacation week(s). A 4-week notice is required or the coupon **will not be** honored. Coupon will not be honored if withdrawal notice has been provided to Kids Kountry.

KIDS KOUNTRY REFERRAL PROGRAM

A friend of a friend is someone we would like to know. If a friend or family member of yours needs child care you can earn a \$25 gift card simply by referring them to Kids Kountry.

Give our contact information or business card (see management for a business card) to your friends and family. Your referral must provide your name at enrollment for you to become eligible for the reward. After your referral enrolls their child(ren), you must complete a simple form and we will give you a \$25 gift/visa card! Note that there is no limit on the number of referrals.

It's that simple and it's our way of saying “Thank you for your service and your vote of confidence.”

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KIDS KOUNTRY RATES

On enrollment you will be provided with a rate schedule providing you with the current rates, updated as necessary as well as notification of any fee changes.

TUITION INCLUDES:

Breakfast—(children must arrive before 7:40 am), Snacks (morning and afternoon), Beverages, kindergarten readiness educational activities and child care as agreed to at enrollment.

Kids Kountry is open to any child between the ages of 6 weeks to age 13, without discrimination to sex, race, color, or creed. Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis.

To hold a spot for child care, the parent must pay the full cost of tuition, even if the child is not present.

MEAL, SNACKS & BEVERAGES

Kids Kountry provides breakfast, a morning and afternoon snack with beverages. Parents are responsible for providing lunch and are welcome to eat lunch with their child by notifying Kids Kountry that morning.

For those times that the parent forgets the child's lunch, the child will be provided with breakfast food and the parent/guardian will be charged a minimum of \$2.00 for lunch.

Birthday, holiday treats, or special treats are permitted. Please check with your child's teacher so you know how much to bring and what is an acceptable treat. Treats must be approved by the teacher or Director due to possible food allergies of other children.

ARRIVAL and PICK-UP

★Hours of operation are 6:30 am – 6 pm. The total time a child can be at the center is limited to 10 hours.

There may be times when a staff member is at Kids Kountry before 6:30 to prepare for the day; however, we ask that you do not enter the center before 6:30 am. Kids Kountry staffing schedule is based on the hours of care stated on the agreement/contract therefore, it is important to stay within those hours.

Drop-off and pick up times are very important and you are expected to maintain the same hours daily. If needed, you can make arrangements to change your scheduled times. Kids Kountry is staffed according to the number of children in the center at any given time. An early drop off or late pickup fee will be charged if children are in care longer than the scheduled hours on the agreement contract

If you find that you must change the hours of care, you must complete a new agreement/contract two weeks prior to the change.

It is required that all children be escorted to and from their respective classroom or other designated area within Kids Kountry. The arrival/departure time and signature are recorded by the parent on the sign in/out sheet. No child may arrive or depart without an authorized individual. Once the child has been signed in and released to their classroom, the care of the child is the responsibility of the teacher. When

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the child has been signed out the responsibility reverts to the individual picking up the child. Please do not leave children unattended in your vehicle, we are required, by law, to call police and report the incident. Please do not leave children unattended in the classroom.....wait until a teacher is present in the classroom.

PLEASE BE SURE TO ASK THE DIRECTOR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY. RATIOS, CHILD SAFETY, AND CENTER POLICIES ARE IMPORTANT FOR THE WELFARE OF YOUR CHILD(REN).

PROGRAMS

INFANT: (6 weeks – 12 months)

This age group is provided with cuddling, singing, reading, TLC and other activities to help your child grow. Children in this age group learn through hands-on, visuals, and imitation. We work on the child's development by incorporating tummy time each day and involve the infant in other gross motor activities to encourage rolling, crawling, walking, etc. A daily report will be given to the parent about their child's day.

Infants require special care; therefore, we will need your cooperation to ensure that they receive the care needed and in accordance with the following:

- (1) Parents will provide diapers, wipes, bottles, formula, cereal, babyfood, finger foods, juice, clothing bedding, bibs, and burp cloths.
- (2) A written statement giving formula and feeding schedule shall be obtained from the parent.
- (3) New foods shall be introduced only after consultation with the child's parent/guardian.
- (4) Parents are asked to provide bottles and in those instances where a bottle is not provided Kids Kountry will use a bottle that has been washed in a commercial dishwasher.
- (5) All items listed above shall be labeled with the child's name
- (6) Bottled formula may not be heated in a microwave oven; therefore, a crockpot will be used to heat your child's bottles
- (7) Transitioning from the infant room requires both parents and teachers to work together to ensure that the infant is ready to go to the next level. In preparation for Toddler I, the child must be able to communicate simple needs such as more, eat, drink/milk, use a sippy cup instead of a bottle, use pacifier/binky only at nap time or not at all (preferable), feed themselves using their fingers or utilities.

TODDLER one: (1 year – 2 years)

The children in this age group will use manipulatives to build motor skills, free play to enhance creativity and socialization, and use of our playground will help to build large motor skills. They will also develop fine motor skills by doing simple puzzles, do arts/crafts and develop language skills by direct conversation with the teacher or aide, reading a variety of books and singing. A daily report will be given to the parent about their child's day.

Parents will be advised as to how many changes of clothing needed for each day. The parent must also provide a sheet & blanket for nap time...the sheet & blanket will be sent home each week for cleaning.

★Transitioning from the Toddler 1 room requires:

- Walking

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- Able to sit on a chair, communicate verbally – simple words such as potty, me, coat, mine

TODDLER two: (2 years – 3 years)

Children in this group will build on the skills used in Toddler 1. They will be more involved in selecting their reading material, social and emotional development by doing tasks such as cleaning up their toys, putting on clothing, sharing and taking turns. A daily report will be given to the parent about their child's day. The teacher will work with them to learn name by sight, learn colors, shapes, numbers, fine motor skills, being independent (i.e. using tissues by themselves) and assist with potty training.

Parents will be advised as to how many changes of clothing needed for each day. The parent must also provide a sheet & blanket for nap time...the sheet & blanket will be sent home each week for cleaning.

★Transitioning to pre-school requires:

- Potty training almost completely done
- Able to communicate verbally

PRE-SCHOOL/PRE-K (3 years – 5 years)

Children at this level will be learning most of what they need to enter kindergarten at the appropriate age. Each child will learn at their own speed and capabilities. We will help them to learn to recognize letters and numbers, practice writing their name, fine motor skills like using scissors and puzzles. They will work to build gross motor skills, social problem solving, family values (honesty, sharing, kindness, empathy). They will be encouraged to verbally express their emotions. They will participate in pretend play. Music and movement activities are always a fun time for the children. They will also explore math and science concepts, and counting to 10. They should begin to recognize small words. Our pre-school program was developed to prepare the children for Kindergarten.

Parents will be advised as to how many changes of clothing needed for each day. The parent must also provide a sheet & blanket for nap time...the sheet & blanket will be sent home each week for cleaning.

Clothing

We will be taking your children outside every day, weather permitting---this will include days when it is cold. Please dress your child according to the weather with appropriate hats, mittens, boots (when it has snowed or snow is forecast) and coats during the winter months. Mark all items with your child's name. Be sure your child has indoor shoes to wear. This helps keep our center clean!

Dress your child in appropriate clothing so that they feel free to participate in all activities. We believe in "hands-on" learning so your child will get dirty and messy. We are not responsible for damaged clothing.

SPECIAL NEEDS (any age)

If a child has an IEP or IFSP we will need a copy so that we can be sure to provide the care the child needs. Any visitors to the center TSS, speech or mobile therapists will be required to adhere to all policies and procedures as our employees.

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Withdrawal

If you desire to cancel enrollment you must give two weeks written notice. If a notice is not given as described, you will be charged for two weeks of fees, based on an average week or at the Director's discretion. Subsidized clients will be responsible for the full tuition rates in effect when the child is withdrawn without notice.

Kids Kountry will provide you with a copy of your child's records if you are moving your children to another facility or moving on to Kindergarten.

Transferring Child Records Policy

★ At times you may need a copy of your child's records for a health provider (such as Early Intervention or the Stevens Center). In order to have a copy of your child's records you must provide a 3 week advance written notice to the Director. Please understand that the documents provide to you will be copies of information in the file. DHS regulations require that Kids Kountry must keep all children's files for 1 years regardless of their active/inactive status.

1. The records will contain:
 - a. The child's health records;
 - b. Developmental checklists, assessments, observations and conference information
2. We will include incident and/or accident reports only upon specific written request from the parent/legal guardian that the documentation includes such information.

Custody Agreement

★ If you have a custody agreement in place that will affect the drop off/pick up of the child we ask that you provide us with a copy so that we remain in compliance with all laws or statutes regarding such custodial agreements. This includes a court order indicating that the parent MAY NOT pick up the child. We need to ensure the safety of the children of Kids Kountry.

Health and Well Being

The State of Pennsylvania requires that there be two medical forms in your child's file.

1. Medical examination/Health Assessment. Must be signed and dated by your physician
2. Immunization record. Completed, up to date and signed by the physician and yourself, these forms are intended to protect your child. We will appreciate your cooperation in keeping them current.
3. If your child requires an IEP, we will need a copy to keep in the child's file.

Illness

We strive to prevent the spread of illness, and your cooperation with our policies will be of great help. If your child has any of the following we ask that you keep the child/ren at home until fully recovered or a doctor's note that clears the child of a contagious illness:

- A fever of 100 or greater before child care, fever accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
- Symptoms or signs of possible severe illness, such as; uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, unusual lethargy, wheezing, or other unusual signs

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- Strep throat; Impetigo
- Diarrhea; runny, watery, or bloody stools within the last 12 hours
- Vomiting 2 or more times in the last 24 hours
- Rash with fever or behavior change
- Scabies or other infestations (lice, etc.)
- Chicken pox 5-7 days after blisters appear
- Pertussis, mumps, rubella, shingles, herpetic gingivostomatitis
- Eye discharge (white or yellow) or pink eye
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Respiratory illness
- spots or sores on hands, feet, and/or mouth
- Child is irritable, continuously crying or requires more attention from a caregiver than what they can provide without hurting the health and safety of other attending children

Your child may return when:

1. They are fever or symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to daycare
2. They have been treated by a doctor and a doctor permits them to return to Kids Kountry. The child may return with a signed doctor's note.
3. If your child becomes ill while at Kids Kountry, you will be called to pick up your child within one hour.

Exposure to communicable diseases and any infectious illness should be reported promptly to Kids Kountry, so our staff can look for any early symptoms. Kids Kountry will notify parents when a child has been exposed to an infectious disease.

Kids Kountry has the final say about when your child can return. We reserve the right to have precedent over the physician.

Medication Policy: We DO NOT administer oral medication at Kids Kountry.

Allergies:

All parents are required to notify Kids Kountry of any allergies their child may have regardless of the severity. Kids Kountry staff will do their best to ensure that the child is not placed in a position that could cause an allergic reaction in the child. All Kids Kountry staff hold Pediatric First Aid training and most are certified in CPR (adult and pediatric) administration.

Since extreme hypersensitivity to food or an insect sting is a potentially life-threatening situation, students with these conditions often require an adrenalin (epinephrin) injectable emergency kit to be readily

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available. These kits must be provided to Kids Kountry by the parent/guardian. Kids Kountry will follow these guidelines for treating students with severe allergic reactions.

1. Medication orders, signed by a physician are required to store/administer emergency injectable kits. Kits are stored in locked cupboard or container
2. Students who have severe allergic reactions to insect stings or food will be identified at enrollment and individual emergency plans will be discussed with the parent.
3. Students should be instructed by their physician on how to self-administer the adrenalin injection. When a student is too young or otherwise unable to administer the injection, Kids Kountry staff will do so.
4. The local emergency services will be called to transport students to the emergency room if the adrenalin emergency kit has been administered. Parents will be notified. The used adrenalin kit will be sent to the emergency room along with the student so that the emergency medical personnel can verify dose given & dispose of properly.
5. ☆If a self-administered adrenalin injection (epi-pen) has expired the epi-pen will be returned to the parent for disposal.

☆**NOTE:** All staff has been trained in the use of epi-pens

Child Accident Form

Our staff takes every effort to ensure the safety of your child. Unfortunately accidents do occur. In case of such event, an accident form will be filled out by Kids Kountry staff for every detected injury that occurs. A copy with your signature will be retained for your child's file. A child coming into Kids Kountry with injuries may require an accident form, so that both the parent and Kids Kountry's staff are aware that it did not occur at Kids Kountry.

Child Incident Form

An incident form will be filled out by Kids Kountry staff if your child exhibited behavior that is not acceptable and who does not adhere to the classroom discipline policy. A copy of this form with your signature will also be kept in your child's file.

Your child's records are confidential and will be stored in a locked cabinet. Staff members and management may not disclose, per regulation 3270.283 of PA code, information concerning a child or family, except in the course of inspections and investigations by the Department of Human Services. Release of information in a child's records, other than for reasons listed above, may be made with written parental/guardian consent.

Child Abuse Policy

☆Kids Kountry staff and management are trained as a Mandated Reporter which assists in recognizing potential child abuse. As such we are required, per PA Code & the Department of Human Services Regulations to report any possible or known signs of child abuse to the proper authority. This regulation is in place to protect the welfare of the children in Kids Kountry care.

Authorizing Individuals to pick up your Child

On the emergency contact form, you will find a line asking for the names of the individuals who are authorized to pick up your child. You may authorize as many individuals as you wish in writing on your form. You must leave a written note in the morning or tell the staff member if such a situation arises. We will not allow your child to leave with an unauthorized person, this is for the safety and protection of your child.

We will check the ID (picture ID required) of the person listed to pick up your child. Please remember to keep this information updated with your current phone number and address changes as well as picture IDs of any individual authorized to pick up your child.

Donations

Kids Kountry wants to be affordable for all parents. It also wants to maintain good caregivers to provide for your family. Kids Kountry opens its doors to donations of toys, books, etc. in good, clean condition as well as monetary donations. All donations will be noted and appreciated.

Fundraisers

From time to time Kids Kountry may do fundraisers to raise money for needed toys, supplies, and educational materials. Kids Kountry hopes for your support during our fundraisers. Fundraisers are a positive way to show community support and family support for early childhood education.

Emergency Plans

★ Emergency exit routes are posted in each classroom and fire drills are practiced every 60 days, so that your child is familiar with the drill and not alarmed in case of a real emergency.

In case of a real emergency the children will be removed from Kids Kountry and parents will be contacted immediately. If relocation to another facility is necessary, we will relocate to another facility and will do this as safely as possible. The parents will be notified by Kids Kountry on where to go and when it is safe to pick up their child.

Other plans such as intruder, intoxicated parent, are practiced routinely and/or they are gone over by staff. This prepares them in case the need should arise.

In the case of a medical or dental emergency the parent of the child will be notified.

Waiting List

In an event that an age group should be full at any time, the child's name would be placed on a waiting list. As vacancies occur, pre-registered children would have first priority. In an event that an expectant mother is pre-registered and there is an opening prior to her starting, the opening may be filled by a temporary child or you may hold the spot with payment. Full-time children have priority over part-time children when space is limited or full.

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ATTENTION PARENTS

The following are a few practices that should be adhered to for the safety of the children and in order for Kids Kountry to comply with Department of Human Services regulations:

1. All containers with drink or food for children must have the child's name on it. Markers and tape are in the rooms for your convenience. We cannot keep track of items that are not labeled.
2. Any food must be placed in a non-breakable serving dish. According to State Regulations we cannot serve from a glass jar or keep leftover food if it was served from the same container.
3. All bottles must have lids on them and be labeled with the child's name. Both lid and bottle must be labeled.
4. No plastic bags should be brought into the center containing the child's food or clothing...they could cause suffocation. The exception to this is Ziploc or sandwich bags for lunch items.
5. Check your child's book bags or diaper bag for anything toxic or very small. Children could accidentally get into the bags.
6. Children need to be signed in and out daily with parent/guardian signature and arrival/departure time. Please write or print legibly.

CHOKING HAZARDS!

1. Young children may choke during meals or during playtime because they use their mouths to explore and experiment with unfamiliar objects.
2. Objects smaller than 1 ¼ inch in diameter should not be accessible to children who mouth items (Lego pieces, beads, coins, and small pieces of paper). If it can fit into a toilet paper roll, it is too small.
3. Check toys and equipment regularly for small parts that may break off, such as eyes and noses on stuffed animals, button on doll clothes or plastic hats and shoes on small dolls. Remove or securely attach these items
4. Hard candies, gum, and cough drops also can be choking hazards

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Referral agencies:

- **CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program):** <http://www.chipcoverspakids.com/home/>
- **Sadler Health Center,** 100 N Hanover St, Carlisle, PA 17013 (717) 218-6670
- **Stevens Center:** 33 State Ave, Carlisle, PA 17013 (717) 243-6033, <http://www.nhsonline.org/>
- **Women Infants & Childrens:** 401 E Louther St, Carlisle, PA 17013 (717) 243-0523
- **Rape Crisis Services:** 301 G St, Carlisle, PA, 17013, 717-258-4324
- **Cparc:** 71 Ashland Ave., Carlisle PA 17013, 717-249-2611
- **Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland & Perry Counties,** Carlisle PA 17013 800-852-2102
- **Violence Intervention Program VIP,** 190 Dorwood Dr., Carlisle PA 17013
- **Central PA Food Bank,** <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/agency-support/>;
 - Mt. Holly Springs Church of God
Mt. Holly Springs, PA
(717)528-7028

Food Pantry
Hours: 2nd Thursday 12pm - 1pm & 6pm - 7pm; monthly
Please call agency for additional information on hours of operation, etc.
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters,** 1 W High St., Carlisle PA 17013, 717-258-4417
- **UCP Central PA,** 36 N Hanover St., Carlisle PA 17013, 717-258-8005