



# 2026 Family Handbook

*Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Psalm 127:3*

# Contents

Welcome!	5
Center History:	5
Mission Statement	5
Non-Discrimination Policy	5
Philosophy and Purpose	5
Reasonable Accommodations	5
Vision Statement	6
Attendance	6
Children's Arrival and Pick-Up Procedure:	6
Days & Hours of Operation:	6
Professional Development Days	7
Curriculum	7
Field Trips	8
Nap Time	9
Sex Education	9
Toilet Training	9
Transitions	9
Walking Field Trips/Playground	9
Developmentally Appropriate Practices	10
Positive Discipline	10
Screen Time	10
Enrollment	11
Admission:	11
Enrollment Forms:	11
Registration	11
School-Age Children	11
Waiting List	11
Withdrawal:	11
Financial Matters	11
Collection Fees	11
Default Accounts	12
Enrollment Based Tuition	12
Enrollment Fees	12
Fundraisers	12
Late Payments	12

Late Pick-Up .....	12
MSDE Family Childcare Scholarships .....	12
Non-Payment .....	12
Non-Payment of MSDE Family Childcare Scholarships .....	12
Recurring Payments .....	13
Referral fee .....	13
Registration Fee .....	13
Special Fees .....	13
Tuition .....	13
Tuition Discounts .....	13
Tuition Due Date .....	13
Withdrawal Notice .....	13
Family Engagement.....	13
Birthday Party Celebrations: .....	13
Cell Phone Use During Pick-up and Drop-Off.....	14
Communication.....	14
Custody Agreements.....	14
Lines of Responsibility:.....	14
Open-Door Policy .....	15
Parent Advisory Committee .....	15
Parent/Staff Conferences: .....	15
Social Media .....	15
General Policies.....	16
Reminders for Parents .....	16
Exclusions:.....	16
School Uniforms:.....	16
Sign-In and Sign-Out: .....	16
Supplies:.....	16
Health and Safety.....	17
Baltimore City Health Department Regulations .....	17
Child Injury .....	17
Choking Hazards:.....	17
COVID-19.....	18
CPR, First-Aid.....	18
Emergency Contact Form.....	18
Emergency Contacts .....	18

Emergency Phone Numbers.....	18
Handwashing.....	18
Inclement Weather Policy:.....	18
Illnesses.....	19
Immunizations.....	19
Medical Conditions.....	19
Medication Administration.....	19
Breakfast & Snacks:.....	20
Peanut Free Zone:.....	20
Special Dietary Needs:.....	20
Toys From Home:.....	20
Transportation.....	21
Attendance Exceptions.....	21
Bus or Van Assignments.....	21
Bus/Van Rules.....	21
Boarding the Bus or Van:.....	21
Breaking the rules:.....	22
Change of Address.....	22
Discipline Procedure.....	22
Eligibility:.....	23
Leaving the Bus:.....	23
Riding the Bus/Van:.....	24
Route Timing:.....	24
School Attendance:.....	24
School Notification:.....	24
Stops:.....	25

# Welcome!

Welcome to KidzStuff Child Care Center. We are so happy to have your family here with us and cannot wait to start caring for and educating your child(ren).

With sincere gratitude, we thank you for allowing KidzStuff to provide your family with childcare services. We realize many decisions go into choosing a childcare center that best fits your family's values and needs. We hope that our services surpass your expectations.

Childcare works best when you as the parent/guardian and the provider work together during every stage of your child(ren)'s developmental stages. When you see changes in your child(ren) at home, please communicate those changes with your child(ren)'s teacher to ensure they are developing at an appropriate pace.

Please take some time to thoroughly read the parent handbook and let us know if you have any questions.

To educate and enhance the lives of children ages six weeks to 12 years through exposure to cultural arts. To support the growth of families by creating a supportive and enriching environment grounded in Biblical principles. To foster children's natural love of learning through enriching play and positive reinforcement.

## Center History:

KidzStuff Child Care Center was re-established under the ownership of Scarlet Covering, Inc. in 2012. We are licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care (OCC)

## Mission Statement

KidzStuff mission is to provide the best foundation for children birth to five through a Christian education with a focus on closing the school readiness gap in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

We will not discriminate based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, or sex.

## Philosophy and Purpose

KidzStuff Child Care Center is a Christian childcare center sharing the love of Christ with children and families while working to close the gap for school readiness in Maryland. All families are welcome to explore the wealth of our program for their young learners.

We believe that each child is uniquely special. Our goal is to provide children with a safe, nurturing environment that offers activities for language and communication, creative arts, social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development to enhance and support the whole child's development.

We believe healthy teacher-parent relationships help create exciting programming opportunities around individual student interests, primary languages, and cultural diversities.

We service any child whose accommodation can be rendered within the staff's state-recognized certification and the MSDE OCC student ratio regulation.

## Reasonable Accommodations

KidzStuff Child Care Center will make reasonable accommodations for children with health care needs, special needs, and disabilities. We must have all pertinent information, such as but not limited to IFSP/IEPs.

With written parental permission, outside agencies qualified to assist any child in our care are welcome to offer services to our building during operating hours.

When necessary, we may refer families to community programs in the hopes of making a meaningful connection for needed or recommended services.

## Vision Statement

Prepare generations of resilient young leaders to be school ready, equipped with faith like Caleb, fearless like David, and leaders like Deborah who excel in their educational pursuits.

## Attendance

### Children's Arrival and Pick-Up Procedure:

Children must be signed in and out by a parent or another assigned adult.

Upon arrival, families must sign their children in, walk them directly to the classroom, and be left in an adult's care. Children must never be left at the center without an employee being present.

Parents are asked not to bring children after 9:00 a.m. as doing so can be disruptive. Children who have scheduled appointments (i.e., doctors, dentist, and WIC appointments) will be allowed to enter the center up until 11:00 a.m. with prior approval or proper documentation.

Parents are asked to arrive for pick up no later than 5:30 p.m. Remember to sign children out each day. Any parent arriving after their scheduled pick-up time will be charged a late fee (\$2.00 per minute per child).

### Pick-Up Restrictions:

Children will not be allowed to leave with

- A minor.
- Any adult not named on the child's enrollment forms, or
- Anyone not listed on the Emergency Form without written permission from the parent or guardian.

### Days & Hours of Operation:

The center is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 5:30 pm, year-round but will close on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Juneteenth
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Independence Day (July 4 <sup>th</sup> )
President's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day and the day after
Easter Monday	Christmas Eve
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Election Day	New Year's Eve

If a holiday falls on Saturday, the center is closed on Friday prior, and if a holiday falls on Sunday, the center is closed on the Monday following.

The Company will be closed for one full week for Christmas break. Management will announce the inclusive dates each year.

## Professional Development Days

Each year our employees are required to earn 24 hours of continuing education credits through training from educational conferences, seminars, and workshops. The center will close once a year for a professional conference and once a month for continued curriculum training to support this requirement.

We feel very strongly that it is in the best interest of our children that we provide formal education days for our staff. These dates will be announced at least one month in advance.

## Curriculum

KidzStuff Child Care Center has chosen and approved MSDE early childhood education curriculum, InvestiGators Club. This curriculum is separated into four components to meet the developmental needs of all children, Little InvestiGators, InvestiGator Club Just for Threes, and InvestiGators Club Pre-Kindergarten.

### Infants

Each infant's schedule is individualized based on the infant's needs coupled with the parent's desires. The infant classroom provides an environment that stimulates the senses, creative expression, socialization, and small and large muscle coordination. Infants are provided with experiences that will develop their sensory perception and fine/gross motor skills. While infants build trust, we consistently respond to their needs with respect and nurturing, thus creating trust routines.

### Toddlers

Toddlers are encouraged to develop caring relationships and independence through activities structured to enhance their fine and gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, language, and communication skills, according to the set developmental milestones and their individual needs.

### Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4

The InvestiGator Club covers all domains of learning: Language and Literacy, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, The Arts, Physical Development, and Social and Emotional Development.

- Language & Literacy: Supports language skills by identifying and reinforcing vocabulary and strengthening conversation skills.
- Mathematics: Builds a foundation for later mathematical competence, including number, geometry, and measurement concepts.
- Science and Social Studies: Addresses all areas of development with exposure to rich science and social studies, including hands-on exploration.
- The Arts: Promotes children's sense of competence, curiosity, and creativity through creative exploration, discovery, and imaginative play.
- Physical Development: Builds large motor skills through free outdoor play and keep fit activities. Fosters fine motor skills through hands-on activities across the content areas.
- Social and Emotional Development: Helps children develop social skills. Builds children's awareness of their feelings, and those of others

Examples of activities we provide to support Developmental Milestones:

- Small muscle development: puzzles, blocks, artistic activities (drawing, painting, etc.).
- Large muscle: crawling, marching, running, jumping, dancing, stretching, and general exercising.

- Creative play: (stimulate child(ren) 's imagination and language skills) play areas may include; kitchen, store, doctor's office, post office, dress up, and puppets.
- Arts Activities: Through various artistic activities, children are encouraged to express creativity and feelings.
- Music: Fingerplays, singing, participating in expressive dancing and action songs.
- Science: Experiences that encourage questioning, investigating, observing, discovering, and problem-solving (cooking, growing a plant, bug hunts, etc.)
- Math: Incorporating daily experiences to help children understand math concepts such as volume, size, shape, and measurements (sand/water play, sorting/counting objects).
- Spatial Concepts: Helping children to understand the concept of in, out, over, under, besides, in front of, etc. through movement and interaction
- Language Arts: Children are consistently engaged in conversations to encourage self-expression by participating in group social conversations, storytelling, puppet play, role-play, etc. taking turns, and being an attentive listener
- Outdoor Play: This is a part of our daily schedule, weather permitting (please be sure your child is dressed appropriately). Outdoor activities are planned to support large muscle development and coordination and include water play, bike riding, planned group games, running, jumping, etc.

#### Routines:

- Children are encouraged to participate in setting the table for meals or snacks (family-style eating) and wiping tables after meals
- Other jobs include line leaders (rotated daily or weekly).

#### Classroom Responsibility:

- Children learn to be responsible by sharing and caring for the classroom. Daily jobs include but are not limited to cleaning up during choice time, putting away personal belongings, scraping dishes, and throwing away trash after meals.

#### Introduction to the computer:

- Children will be taught basic computer skills beginning in the pre-k program through the curriculum prompts. Please see the Screen Time rules for computer lesson guidelines.

## Field Trips

Unless otherwise stated by center management, ALL field trips are center-wide for children ages 2-12. If a child is not attending a field trip for any cause, they will not be able to come to the center on field trip days; all classroom teachers will be on the field trip to ensure the safety of our friends when they are out of the building.

- Children must have a signed permission slip to attend field trips. Every field trip requires its own permission slip.
- All field trip money is due on the due date stated in the field trip announcement and must be paid in cash (exact change) to the front desk or via Zelle to the center's bank account. DO NOT pay any staff member for field trips.
- If your family has an outstanding tuition balance, your child(ren) will not be able to attend the field trip.
- All field trip money is non-refundable.
- Uniforms are required for ALL field trips.

- All chaperons outside of the child(ren)'s parents must be listed on the child(ren)'s emergency form and present an ID to be copied on the day of the field trip.

## **Nap Time**

Infants nap on their own schedule. The center provides crib sheets for all infant cribs. Infants are to nap in their assigned cribs only. No blankets will ever be used in infant cribs.

Toddlers - Pre-k students nap between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. Parents are responsible for providing nap time sheets/blankets (a crib sheet is the appropriate sized sheet), children will remain dressed including their shoes during nap time, children will sleep head to toe on their individual cots. Sheets are to be taken home every Friday for washing and returned on Monday. KidzStuff does not provide extra sheets, please do not forget your child's sheet at the beginning of each week.

## **Sex Education**

KidzStuff staff will not teach sex education, or anything related to sex education. We believe children in the early education setting are too young to understand sex education of any kind. We further believe it is not the staff's responsibility to include sex education as a part of the curriculum.

## **Toilet Training**

We use positive encouragement to promote toilet training. All children enrolled in our full-time day program are taken to the bathroom every two hours and praised when they are successful.

Children will give parents signals when they are ready to become toilet trained. When parents feel their child is ready, staff members will assist with toilet training. Parents will need to bring extra clothing and the brand of toileting products they prefer (Pull-Ups with the side straps, etc.). This is often a frustrating time for everyone. Remember, Patience! Patience!! Patience!!!

- All two-year-olds must be in pull-ups as we transition into toilet training. We will ask that they be transitioned into underwear/panties at the appropriate time.
- All three/four-year-olds MUST be in underwear/panties for toilet training.
- No onesies are allowed.
- Pull-Ups with side straps in the manufacturer's sleeve.
- Loose fitting clothing.

## **Transitions**

Children will experience multiple transitions from one classroom to another during their enrollment in the center. Parents will receive transfer slips during these times from management. Slowly transferring children will help them succeed in the next classroom. Transfers from one class to the next will begin about 30 days before the transfer date.

## **Walking Field Trips/Playground**

Outdoor time is a part of our daily schedule, weather permitting (please make sure your child is dressed appropriately). Outdoor activities are planned to support large development muscle and coordination. Outdoor activities include water play, planned group games, running, jumping, etc. All children must wear tennis shoes with rubber soles to minimize tripping.

Infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds will only play on the small age-appropriate playground equipment and the blacktop areas.

We go outside every day - children need to be dressed accordingly. We often do messy activities, and clothes may get dirty.

Parents are encouraged to bring extra outdoor clothing such as hats, mittens, lightweight coats, etc., to keep at The Center.

## Developmentally Appropriate Practices

### Positive Discipline

Children at KidzStuff Child Care Center will demonstrate appropriate behavior in a way that is consistent with their health, safety, welfare, and individual developmental levels.

When developing classroom rules at the beginning of each school year, teachers will have the students join in on the process. Classroom teachers and students will set no more than seven classroom rules at any given time.

The staff will promote acceptable behavior, using positive and preventative discipline techniques:

1. Age-appropriate expectations for children
2. Reinforce by praising and rewarding
3. Develop a consistent set of rules for their developmental level
4. Ignoring misbehavior that is an attempt to get attention
5. Redirect the child away from the problem causing the situation to another activity or toy
6. Allow the children to problem-solve among themselves, providing them with words to use if necessary while staying close by if the interactions become aggressive.
7. Positively phrase the directions, telling children what they should be doing rather than what they should stop doing.

The staff can address inappropriate behavior through:

1. Redirecting children to another choice of activity that will help them regroup or toy.
2. Providing alternatives to any dangerous activity the children may choose by demonstrating a positive choice in a safer method. (I.e., if a child is using scissors to cut their clothes, they will be provided with art paper to cut instead. Providing paper for the child to cut demonstrates to the child that the scissors are not "bad," but their choice of what to cut is what should be considered.)
3. Giving the child time away from everything to calm or start over. Teachers will offer a positive individual activity to children who have difficulty interacting with others.
4. Various activities are offered throughout the day to help children learn and grow in a positive environment.
5. "1, 2, 3, Magic" technique:
  - a. When a child misbehaves, the teacher tells the child to cease or begin, along with "That's one."
  - b. If the child continues, "That's three," along with the consequence
  - c. The teacher may institute a second round
6. Providing choices throughout the day and allowing the children to express their likes and dislikes in a Positive way

If the child continues with inappropriate behavior, the Director/Floor Supervisor will be notified, and a determination will be made about the child's enrollment at the Center.

### Screen Time

KidzStuff Child Care Center 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:

1. Infants/Toddlers under two years of age will not engage in any form of screen time

2. Two to five-year-olds will only engage in a maximum of 30 minutes of educational age-appropriate screen time per week except screen time directly related to the center's curriculum.
3. Allowing no more than 15 minutes of educational computer time per day for curriculum-related instruction.
4. Not allowing any screen time during meals and snacks.

## Enrollment

### Admission:

Families with children six weeks through twelve years of age can apply for enrollment. Using the child's registration date, Kidzstuff fills classes on a first come/first-serve basis.

Children will demonstrate appropriate behavior in a way that is consistent with their health, safety, welfare, and individual developmental levels.

### Enrollment Forms:

Families must submit completed enrollment forms before the child's first day of care and renew them yearly as required by the MSDE Office Of Child Care. Failure to comply may result in denial of care.

### Registration

Each child is required to register before entering the center. Registration fees are to be paid before the beginning of care. Discounts are given to parents with two or more children. Registration fees are non-refundable and will be used toward the last two weeks of care.

### School-Age Children

Once the school year has begun, and children are attending a public school, private school, charter school, or head start, etc., they cannot come to KidzStuff during daytime hours for any reason other than scheduled school closings.

### Waiting List

If the classes are full, families may request that KidzStuff add the family's name to the waiting list. As vacancies arise, we will contact parents in the order in which the names appear on our waiting list to fill the vacancies. The waiting list fee is \$50.00.

### Withdrawal:

We require a written two-week withdrawal notice. Families will be responsible for child care fees for two weeks after submitting the withdrawal notice. See your family contract for more details.

## Financial Matters

### Collection Fees

Should the collection of past due tuition be warranted after a child's withdrawal, parents or guardians will be responsible for all fees associated with collecting any outstanding debt owed to KidzStuff. Families are also responsible for reasonable attorney's fees, court costs, plus any other costs and charges necessary for the collection of any outstanding debt. Under this agreement, past due amounts owed will accrue interest at an annual rate of twenty-one percent (21%) and will be added to tuition due.

## **Default Accounts**

As part of enrollment, families authorize KidzStuff, our agents or attorneys to verify or investigate your credit and your credit file(s), either directly or through a third party such as a credit bureau or a credit reporting agency if your account defaults.

## **Enrollment Based Tuition**

Kidzstuff offers enrollment-based tuition, this means that tuition remains the same regardless of attendance. We do not reduce tuition for inclement weather, emergency closings, holiday closing, etc. Please refer to your family's contract for more details.

## **Enrollment Fees**

Upon enrollment In the program all families are required to pay the registration fee, curriculum fee, first and last week of tuition.

## **Fundraisers**

One of the ways that we maintain reasonable tuition rates is through fundraisers. We will sponsor several fundraisers each year. Parent participation is the key to successful fundraising, and we appreciate your support.

## **Late Payments**

Kidzstuff will charge \$5 per day Late Fee when paying tuition after the due date.

Late tuition payments may result in your child's dismissal from the program. Tuition payments in arrears two weeks will result in automatic termination of services.

## **Late Pick-Up**

We will assess a late fee of \$2.00 per minute per child if a parent arrives after their assigned dismissal time. This fee is to be paid in cash the next day the center is opened to compensate the teacher caring for your child/children. Repeated lateness can be a reason for termination.

## **MSDE Family Childcare Scholarships**

Copays may be broken into weekly or bi-weekly payments; however, the KidzStuff administrator must approve payments. If the State of Maryland does not pay for your child's care, you as the parent will be responsible for the total amount of tuition for the time your child was in the care of KidzStuff Child Care Center(s). Suppose a parent pays for care before receiving a voucher and later receives a voucher covering the weeks the parent paid for care. In that case, they will receive credit on their account for future co-payment obligations. Refunds will be issued under special circumstances and by approval of center management only. If a credit is approved, it will not be issued prior to receiving payment from MSDE.

## **Non-Payment**

Suppose a child is suspended for nonpayment and does not return to the center within two weeks. In that case, the child's space is considered forfeited, and an additional two weeks of tuition and co-pay will be attached to the parent's financial obligation.

## **Non-Payment of MSDE Family Childcare Scholarships**

If the voucher issued to a family is not paid, the child's parent will be responsible for the cost in full for any/all services rendered.

## Recurring Payments

Family can schedule reoccurring tuition payments using a credit card, debit card, or bank account. We do not accept cash, checks, or money orders.

## Referral fee

Parents who refer a child to the center resulting in enrollment for 30 days or more, will receive a one-time \$50.00 deduction from their tuition.

## Registration Fee

KidzStuff charges a one-time, non-refundable registration. This \$75 fee is per family, not per child. If family voluntarily or involuntarily leaves the program and is gone 30 days or more the family is required to begin the enrollment process again and is required to pay the registration fee again upon re-enrollment.

## Special Fees

- Part-time care: \$65.00 per day (3-5-year-old children ONLY). A minimum of three days is required for part-time care.
- Curriculum: \$100.00 per child yearly, payable every September and upon registration.

## Tuition

Child's Age	Weekly Tuition
6 Weeks to 23 Months	\$417.00
3-5 Years Old	\$299.00
6-12 Years Old	\$241.00

## Tuition Discounts

Center management will determine family discounts on a case-by-case basis and deduct the value from the total tuition due from the family.

## Tuition Due Date

Tuition is due before childcare services are rendered. Therefore, Tuition is due by 5:00 p.m. each Friday for the following week. Payments made after Friday are late, and a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be added to unpaid childcare bills. Parents are advised to add this fee when payment is made.

## Withdrawal Notice

The center must be notified in writing two weeks before withdrawal from the program.

## Family Engagement

### Birthday Party Celebrations:

KidzStuff Child Care Center welcomes small celebrations of birthdays with store-bought cakes, cupcakes, cookies, etc. bake goods must be peanut-free (e.g., not cooked in peanut oil or peanut-based products). SAMS' Club or Giant brand products are typically not peanut-free; therefore, they are prohibited. All birthday celebrations will take place at 3:00 p.m. snack time.

## **Cell Phone Use During Pick-up and Drop-Off**

Parents are asked not to talk on their cell phones while in the center. Drop off and pick up times are very emotional and can be traumatic for children. Parent attention during both times is essential.

## **Communication**

Communication between home and school is essential. Please feel free to speak with the staff and share anything that may be affecting your child(ren) 's behavior to assist us in appropriately caring for your child(ren) while in our care. If communication between your home and the center remains consistent together, we can provide a stable, loving, healthy, and safe environment for your child(ren).

Parents are encouraged to speak with teachers by calling the center during the teacher's planning period to avoid an Interruption of learning, sending a message to your child's teacher through the Brightwheel app, or emailing the classroom teacher at their company assigned email to receive the answers to questions, to Inform the teacher of any changes with their child(ren), or to express concerns.

Families of Infants/toddlers can expect daily reports about their child's day through the Brightwheel system. Families of Pre-k students can expect at least three days of activity posting In the Brightwheel system. Families are encouraged to keep up to date with all center activities by reading and adhering to the quarterly newsletter send via email and posted In the Brightwheel system.

## **Custody Agreements**

KidzStuff, Child Care Center, will not become involved in custody disputes. We must have a court order on file to comply with parent requests.

## **Lines of Responsibility:**

Open communication between parents and staff is essential for us to serve better the needs of you and your child(ren). Also, parents and teachers must work together to provide a safe and secure environment for their children.

The Center Director is responsible for:

- Planning (in conjunction with her staff) a balanced program of developmentally appropriate activities.
- Supervising the children enrolled in the program and ensuring their safety and wellbeing.
- Maintaining accurate documentation of attendance for each child and current forms and records on all children enrolled.
- Ensuring that parents know and follow the schedule and procedure for dropping off and picking up children.
- Maintaining regular and open communication with parents.
- Addressing all procedures and inquiries regarding registration, enrollment, grievances, or any issue that a parent may wish to discuss.

The Administrative Office is responsible for:

- All procedures and inquiries regarding payment concerns, grievances, or any issue a parent may wish to discuss.
- Selection of Center Director
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of the center.

The Parent is responsible for:

- Accurately completing all required forms for the child(ren) and ensuring that these are kept current and on file at the center.
- When dropping off infants/toddlers, the Parent is responsible for ensuring our friends are clean and dry. If a child is soiled upon drop-off, the Parent must change them before leaving the center.
- Informing the center's staff of all scheduled and unscheduled absences. Letting the center's staff know as far in advance as possible when your child(ren) will be absent is greatly appreciated.
- Payment of all childcare tuition/fees before services are rendered and notifying the Administrative Offices in advance when payment will not be made on time.
- Coming into the center when dropping off and picking up a child and walking your child(ren) to and from their designated morning/afternoon classroom.
- Establishing a backup plan for the child(ren) in the event of illness or late pick-up.
- Making sure an authorized adult listed on the daily pick-up or emergency forms picks up the child(ren) no later than 6:00 pm daily and notifying the center's staff if the child(ren) will be picked up late.
- Notifying the center staff of any changes in the home life that may impact the child(ren)'s behavior in the center.
- Making oneself available to center director/staff so that regular communication can occur.

## **Open-Door Policy**

KidzStuff Child Care Center believes that family involvement is essential to quality care. We encourage parents to visit our center to discuss problems, issues, questions, concerns, or ideas.

## **Parent Advisory Committee**

We invite families to participate in our Parent Advisory Committee scheduled bimonthly. This is a forum to ask questions, make suggestions and voice any concerns you may have. Guest speakers are scheduled periodically on learning styles, discipline, sibling rivalry, and many other topics of interest to families.

## **Parent/Staff Conferences:**

While we encourage parents to communicate with staff consistently, KidzStuff Child Care Center will conduct formal parent/staff conferences semi-yearly in November and March. During at least one of these meetings, a child assessment will be reviewed with parents.

## **Social Media**

We are committed to responsibly using social media as a form of marketing and awareness for our parent community.

We want to protect all the children in our care and ask parents not to put pictures of other children in care on their personal social media pages.

We won't vent about you on social media and ask that you not vent about us on social media. Social media is not the place to express your concerns and resolve them.

If there is a concern about the center, its staff, or policies and procedures, please see center management to resolve these matters.

We strongly encourage staff and families not to become friends on social media, which causes unnecessary conflict occasionally.

## General Policies

### Reminders for Parents

- Establish an emergency backup plan
- Provide advance written notification of a change in authorized adult pickup/drop-off
- Accompany child into the room at drop-off and pickup
- Provide a court order for custody disputes
- Provide explicit notification of anyone who is prohibited from pickup up or seeing your child, even temporarily
- Label everything that you send into the center.

### Exclusions:

Children in early childcare facilities are far too young to understand exclusion from activities for family preferences, we will not be responsible for making them “sit out.” You are more than welcome to keep them out of school during any celebration/activity you do not want them to participate in.

### School Uniforms:

All children ages 2-5 are in uniform for the school year, Navy Blue tops, and Brown/tan Khaki bottoms. Uniforms are worn Monday – Thursday, Fridays are “Freedom Fridays” the children are encouraged to dress themselves. Children can and will be sent home if they do not arrive in their uniforms. KidzStuff Child Care Centers sells uniform items with their logo on it. Parents do not have permission to use the center’s logo to create their own uniform items.

### Sign-In and Sign-Out:

The State’s policy states all parents/guardians MUST sign their child(ren) out of the childcare program daily. Electronically and manually sign your child(ren) out of the program at the front desk and daily in his/her classroom.

### Supplies:

Each child will have a designated space for their personal belongings. Please label all your child(ren)’s belongings. When bringing items into the center, please complete an inventory sheet to be signed by you and the teacher. KidzStuff Child Care center is not responsible for misplaced or stolen clothing. Not providing adequate supplies for your child could result in suspension or termination of care.

Please supply the following items:

1. Change of clothing (2 sets – weather appropriate)
2. Diapers, wipes, cream for children who are not potty/toilet trained
3. Nap time sheets/blankets for sleeping (Infants excluded)

# Health and Safety

## Baltimore City Health Department Regulations

By law, we are required to meet the Baltimore City Health Department regulations for Group Day Care:

1. Before your child can be admitted to our program, a Health Inventory, Immunization Record, and Emergency Forms must be on file in our office.
2. Medications will be administered only upon written instruction from the child's physician and with the written permission of the parent/guardian.
3. A child appearing at the center with evidence of any infectious disease will be refused care services.
4. No child may return to the center until after five days of absence caused by an infectious disease (i.e., chickenpox, hand, foot, and mouth) without doctor's written authorization and must be fever-free for at least 24 hours.
5. If your child becomes sick during the day, we will contact you, or subsequently, those persons indicated on the Emergency Form.
6. Parents must provide proper clothing for their children (i.e., underwear and garments suitable for climate and season). A change of clothing should be left at the center for "emergency" purposes.

## Child Injury

Center staff will inform you if your child is injured at the center. A parent needs to be available by phone in case of an emergency. When a parent cannot be reached, the child's Emergency Form will be used to contact the person identified by the parent as a contact person. Without a parent's presence or permission, Doctors and hospitals will not treat a child (except in life-threatening cases).

In case of an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, program staff is required to:

- Make the child comfortable
- Call an ambulance
- Notify parent
- Notify KidzStuff Child Care Center's Director
- Accompany child to hospital

Parents should ensure their child has personal medical coverage and accident insurance.

In case of an accident NOT requiring immediate medical attention, program staff is required to:

- Administer appropriate First Aid
- Notify parent and request parental direction
- Observe and monitor the child's activity

An Accident/Incident Report is completed, signed by the staff and receiving parent, and placed in the child's file in all situations.

## Choking Hazards:

Please do not send your child to the center with small barrettes, beads, or other hair adornments that children can easily swallow.

Jewelry on small children looks nice but can be a choking hazard. We recommend you don't allow children to wear jewelry to school. Further, we will not be responsible for lost or stolen jewelry.

Please be advised that KidzStuff management reserves the right to remove all jewelry from children and place it in a Ziploc bag for safekeeping if the jewelry becomes a danger.

## **COVID-19**

KidzStuff screens each person that enters our building using COVID-19 protocols. We may exclude based upon this screening. The Health Department may order that our program close if there is a documented or suspected outbreak of COVID-19 in the building.

## **CPR, First-Aid**

Employees are always certified in CPR and First Aid, Emergency Preparedness, and Medication Administration.

## **Emergency Contact Form**

Parents are responsible for all information necessary for the protection of their children. Please keep staff informed accordingly.

The entire Emergency Form must be updated each quarter. This form is vital and provides prompt communication between the center's staff and the parent/guardian of the child(ren).

## **Emergency Contacts**

Adults listed on the child's emergency form must present a valid ID. KidzStuff staff will copy the ID and place it in the child's file. Visitors cannot walk to the classroom. They can sit in the front waiting area and wait for the child to be brought to the lobby.

## **Emergency Phone Numbers**

Use the following contact information if an emergency should occur outside of center hours and you must speak with the director of the center: (443-690-3986): Margaret Jenkins, Director (Broadway location); (443-690-2084): Yvette Belser, Director (Alameda location)

## **Handwashing**

We know the best way to prevent the spread of germs is through thorough and frequent hand washing. For this reason, we require children to wash their hands before eating, after toileting, and at other times throughout the day.

KidzStuff employees must wash their hands after toileting, before and after meals, after each changing, and after caring for a sick child. They will also wear gloves where appropriate.

## **Inclement Weather Policy:**

KidzStuff Child Care Center recognizes that weather conditions caused by snow, ice, or other weather emergencies can create a situation that makes it unsafe for children, parents, and staff to travel to or from daycare. The Center will be closed when Baltimore City Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather. This may not apply to all weather conditions/situations.

Parents will be notified through the Brighwheel system of all center closings.

## Illnesses

KidzStuff Child Care Center is not an acute illness facility and cannot provide sick children the attention they need and deserve when they are ill. We require that children be excluded from care if any of the following conditions.

- Fever of 100.4 or more
- Severe diarrhea (more than three (3) episodes a day)
- Unexplained rash (child will not be allowed to come to the center until a medical exam has indicated it is not a contagious disease.)
- Vomiting
- Pinkeye or eye drainage
- Chickenpox - until all blisters have dried and formed scabs, about six days after the onset of the rash.
- Hand, Foot, & Mouth – until all the blisters have dried and formed scabs, about 8-10 days after the onset of the viruses.
- COVID-19 - until contagious period expires, 10 days from a positive test
- Flu - until contagious period expires, 10 days from positive test
- Coughing
- Runny Nose

Suppose a child has any of the symptoms listed below. In that case, KidzStuff will not permit the child to attend daycare until 24 hours after the last incidence of fever, vomiting, and severe diarrhea or until 24 full hours after medical treatment has begun as prescribed by a physician. Physician notes violating center policies will not be honored.

The Director has complete discretion to exclude children from care due to illness.

If a child becomes ill while at daycare, the teachers will notify the child's parents. The parents must then pick up the child within one hour of notification.

We will not readmit a child who has been absent for three or more days without a written statement from the physician that the child may return to a regular schedule.

## Immunizations

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Division of Early Childhood Licensing Division mandates that we maintain up-to-date immunization records for each child. Parents are required to keep these records updated.

## Medical Conditions

If your child has medical conditions (i.e., subject to seizures, on daily medications, severe allergies) which may be a problem during the bus or van ride, please call the Transportation Office to request a form. This completed form will be carried on the bus (es) your child rides and used if a medical emergency occurs.

## Medication Administration

MSDE Office of Child Care mandates that all medication administered to children while at school be prescribed by a doctor, labeled by a licensed pharmacy, and remain in its original package, box, or container.

MSDE Division of Early Childhood Licensing Division mandates that over-the-counter medication can be given to a child one time per illness with the permission of a parent.

An MSDE Office of Child Care Medication Authorization form MUST be completed by both the parent and the physician of the child(ren) in need of medication administration daily or as needed.

Families must:

1. Bring medication in a clear Ziploc bag for proper storage.
2. Sign in and out each day with front desk personnel.
3. Never leave the medication on our premises overnight
4. Notify us when the medication administration has ended.

### **Breakfast & Snacks:**

Kidzstuff provides nutritionally balanced breakfast and snacks. The children are offered food and encouraged to taste it. We do not force or bribe children to eat.

We will post monthly menus.

Meals and Snacks are served at the following times:

- 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. Breakfast.
- 10:30 a.m. – Morning Snack
- 3:00 p.m. – Afternoon Snack

No outside breakfast or snack food is permitted. No fast food is permitted.

Parents are responsible for providing lunch for their child(ren). Lunches are to be brought to the center in a lunch box and stored in children's cubbies. The staff will heat lunch for children. The center will not refrigerate lunch food. Extra food cannot be stored at the center. Peanut products are strictly prohibited.

### Infants and toddlers

Infants and toddlers who eat food prepared and served by Kidzstuff Child Care Center staff will eat meals upon demand and at their own pace.

Infant Food and bottles must be labeled with the child's name, date of service, and refrigerated when necessary.

### **Peanut Free Zone:**

At no time will food or snacks containing peanuts be allowed on the premises for the safety of all children with food allergies.

### **Special Dietary Needs:**

It is the responsibility of all parents to notify the center's staff of their child's food allergies. Please refer to the center's food allergy policy (in development).

### **Toys From Home:**

We provide toys for all age groups. Children should not bring toys from home unless asked to do so for "show and tell." Show and tell time will be scheduled for each class at different times during the year.

The center does not assume responsibility for lost or broken toys.

## Transportation

### Attendance Exceptions

Students with exceptions to attend a school other than the one they are assigned may NOT be eligible for transportation.

### Bus or Van Assignments

KidzStuff Child Care Center only provides transportation from the center to schools, from schools back to the center. Everyone's van assignment is the same.

### Bus/Van Rules

For a safe and pleasant ride:

1. Immediately follow the driver's directions, do not delay loading/unloading procedures.
2. Always sit, face forward, and do not move around.
3. Talk quietly, be courteous and use appropriate language.
4. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
5. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
6. No fighting, harassing, intimidating, or horseplay.
7. Do not throw any objects in or out of the bus or van or damage the bus.
8. No eating, drinking, matches, or use of tobacco.
9. At railroad tracks, be silent.
10. No verbal and physical sexual harassment.

### Rules at the Bus or Van Stop

11. Students should get to their bus or van stop 5 to 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
12. Students should respect the property of others while waiting at their bus or van stop.
13. Students must stay away from the street when waiting for the bus. In the winter, they should never walk or play on the snowbanks.
14. Students that must cross the street should always cross in front of the bus or van where the driver can see them. Students should wait for the drivers' signal before crossing the street.

REMINDER: Parents/guardians are responsible for the discipline of their students at the bus or van stop. It is NOT the responsibility of the bus or van operators or the school district. Severe problems should be directed to the Police Dept.

### Boarding the Bus or Van:

1. Stand several feet back from where the bus or van will stop.

2. Line up and wait your turn. Please wait for the bus or van to stop before moving forward to board it. Pushing and shoving causes accidents.
3. Use the handrail when boarding the bus.
4. Take a seat quickly. Delays in getting seated may cause buses and vans to be late.
5. Do not save seats for friends.
6. Students must sit two to three to a seat on many buses and vans. Move over so each student can be seated.

### **Breaking the rules:**

1. Students will be verbally warned.
2. Students will be issued a pink slip.
3. School bus or van Incident Report will be issued, transportation will be denied.

NOTE: Dangerous or destructive offenses will result in the IMMEDIATE suspension of busing privileges with NO warnings given.

### **Change of Address**

If you move during the school year, please inform the school your student attends at your earliest opportunity.

### **Discipline Procedure**

If a student does not follow the rules on the bus, the driver will try to resolve the problem as explained in the “Rules on the Bus” section. If the driver cannot cooperate with the student, a discipline report will be filed. Telephone conversations and written notifications will be made to the student and parent/guardian concerning all incidents.

Consequences for breaking the rules are as follows:

First Offense: Recorded as a verbal warning.

Second Offense:

1. Students will be given a pink warning card and denied transportation, beginning the following day, until the card is signed by the student and their parent/guardian and returned to the driver.
2. A copy of the signed card will be kept on file.
3. Parents/Guardians will receive a copy of the signed pink form warning card along with a copy of the Bus or van Riding Rules and Regulation from the KidzStuff office.

Third Offense:

1. A School Bus or Van Incident Report will be issued
2. Students will be given a 3-5-day suspension of bus or van privileges, depending on the degree of the offense, beginning with the following day.
3. The incident report will be kept on file.
4. The KidzStuff Director or Assistant Director will verbally notify parents/Guardians.

5. Parents/Guardians will receive a copy of the Incident Report along with a copy of the Bus or Van Riding Rules or Regulations from KidzStuff Transportation Office.

#### Fourth Offense

1. A School Bus or Van Incident Report will be issued.
2. Students will be given a 10-day suspension of bus or van privileges beginning with the following day.
3. Same notification procedures as a third offense.

#### Further Offenses

Each case will be considered individually. The student may be suspended for extended periods, including the remainder of the semester or school year.

Dangerous or destructive offenses will result in the suspension of busing privileges. The length of the suspension will be determined by the degree of the offense. Students damaging school buses and vans will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages within two weeks will result in the loss of bus or van privileges until damages are paid to the bus or van company.

#### **Eligibility:**

KidzStuff will transport a student to and from a childcare facility to meet the criteria listed below.

1. The childcare center is within 1 mile and half of your child's school.
2. The childcare center, in cases of pre-kindergarten/kindergarten students, has the same AM/PM assignment.
3. The school your child attends is amenable to transportation services

Requests for transportation from childcare must be made EVERY school year by using the Mini School Age Transportation Form. Requests should be made to the Transportation Office by calling (410) 728-0652.

Safety is the primary concern in transporting students. Safety on school buses and vans is the shared responsibility of students, parents, school staff, bus or van contractors, and bus or van drivers. Parents/guardians should read and explain these rules to their children. We ask your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and pleasant ride for all students by impressing upon your child(ren) the importance of bus or van safety and courtesy at the bus or vans top and on the bus.

#### **Leaving the Bus:**

1. Do not get up until the bus or van stops.
2. Pushing or shoving will not be allowed.
3. IMMEDIATELY move away from the bus.
4. If you drop something, DO NOT pick it up. Please wait until the bus or van leaves and ask an older person to get it. Have a teacher staple your papers together so they cannot blow away easily.
5. If you must cross the road, walk in front of the bus or van about ten giant steps so you can see the driver's face. IF YOU CAN SEE THE DRIVER'S EYES, THE DRIVER CAN SEE YOU!
6. If you do not have to cross the road, stay away from the side of the bus.
7. ALWAYS REMEMBER- if you can touch the side of the bus, then you are TOO close.

8. Absolutely no "skitching"—holding onto the back of the bus or van while it is moving on snowy and icy roads. Skitching is dangerous and illegal.

### **Riding the Bus/Van:**

1. No radios, boom boxes, large musical instruments, or other large items you cannot hold on your lap.
2. Do not carry articles such as guns, gas cans, fireworks, sharp instruments, animals, or any other objects of a dangerous or objectionable nature onto the bus.
3. Do not throw things on the bus or out of the bus or van windows.
4. Immediately report to the driver any damage to a bus.
5. Use the bus or van for transportation to and from school only.
6. In cases of emergency, follow the driver's instructions.
7. Drivers will pick up and drop off students only at designated bus or van stops.

### **Route Timing:**

When school opens in the fall, inconsistencies in route timings are often experienced. Fortunately, the weather during that time is usually quite pleasant, and we appreciate your patience as drivers get familiar with their routes and riders. As the year progresses, the times should be more consistent, but it is still a good idea for children to be at the bus or van stop no more than 5 (to 10) minutes ahead of the scheduled pick-up time. The weather, traffic, and students not riding can affect the timing.

KidzStuff Child Center can only spend 5 minutes at each school picking up children. If your child(ren) are not at the designated pick-up location on time. We will notify you of our departure. Every child must get picked up on time. We must keep the bus/van moving at an appropriate pace to accomplish this.

### **School Attendance:**

Parents should notify the center immediately if:

- A student did not come to the center in the morning but are in school and need afternoon pick-up
- A student does not attend school on any given day and does not need transportation.
- A student has an early dismissal from school and does not need transportation on any given day.

If transportation goes to a school to pick up a child, not at the school, parents will be charged a \$25.00 inconvenience fee. To be paid before the child can receive transportation again.

### **School Notification:**

Parents are responsible for notifying their child's school concerning transportation rules/regulations. Please inform the school staff we are NOT your child's parent and will NOT receive messages for you.

If for any reason, a school staffer holds a child in the classroom beyond the regularly scheduled dismissal time, parents will be responsible for picking up their child(ren) as the bus/van will have to continue its route.

**Stops:**

Bus or van stops are determined by need and location of the bus or van riders and may change from year to year. Students must use the stop assigned unless the Transportation Office approves another stop. Bus or van drivers are NOT required to stop if no students are waiting, so students need to be at the stop a few minutes before bus or van time, waiting to board.