

## **Welcome to Little Kids, Active Learners Preschool Program at Cardel Place.**

A licensed facility, Little Kids, Active Learners offers preschool classes for children three to five years of age yearly from September to June. Registration is ongoing throughout the year based on availability. Our mission is to continuously provide affordable, high quality child care in a supportive and nurturing environment. As a parent, you are part of the Little Kids, Active Learners community and your support is crucial to our success. We offer many opportunities for you to get involved throughout the year, providing a front seat to watch your child grow, develop, create, and explore.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

At Little Kids, Active Learners, we provide opportunities for children to grow and develop to his or her fullest potential. The program highlights social, emotional, cognitive and physical development, with the guidance of qualified and experienced staff. Cardel Place is a multi-functional facility, providing access to a pool, gym, arena, climbing wall and neighbouring Public Library.

Little Kids, Active Learners:

- Provides a social/recreational program for children between the ages of three and five. Focus is on self growth and the importance of the child's well being, built through relationships with other children and caring adults.
- Provides an opportunity for all children to become aware of their own self.
- Helps children obtain maximum physical growth and performance by improving coordination of large and small muscle groups.
- Provides a fun atmosphere that incorporates crafts, music, field trips, interactive play and an extensive array of creative and educational toys at a developmentally appropriate level.
- Fosters development of the child's intellect so he or she can initiate their own activities, learn to ask questions and discover answers and use language to comprehend and make explanations.
- Provides opportunities for children to learn by doing, experiencing, observing, imitating, discovering and questioning.

## **First Week Gradual Entry**

During the first week of preschool, children attend half of their class for each day they attend. **Your designated time will be communicated in the Welcome Letter sent to you via email. You will receive this letter the end of August.** Gradual entry allows children to become comfortable in their new environment with a smaller group of children present.

## **Arts and Crafts**

This section of our curriculum is an area of major growth and development. Beginning with simple projects and progressing to more difficult ones as the year goes on, children are given the opportunity to be creative and expressive through many different art mediums. While some of the items your child brings home may be indescribable, please remember that hard work is put in to each one and your child is proud of their results. Messy projects are usually sources of pleasure to our children. Our program focuses on the 'process' in which the child creates their craft, not the finished product as it's within the 'process' that children learn and create.

Families returning to preschool for a second year may see a few projects you have seen before. If certain projects were a lot of fun to make, educational for the child or successful in some other way, they are worth repeating. Arts and crafts are not included in the program every day but are instead balanced with other activities.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Sessions run September 2011 to June 2012
- Children must be 3 years of age when classes commence to enroll in Preschool 3 & 4 year program
- Children must be 4 years of age by March 1, 2012 and/or starting Kindergarten the following September to enroll in Preschool 4 & 5 year program
- Children must be toilet trained (no diapers or pull-ups)
- Class switches are subject to availability

### **Please include the following with your registration package:**

- Completed Monthly Payment Plan Agreement or full payment
- \$50 non-refundable registration fee (in addition to class fees)
- Child Information Form
- Portable Emergency Form
- Volunteer Security Clearance (if you wish to volunteer)
- Two recent head shot photographs of your child

### **Withdrawal**

One month's written notice prior to the first of the month is required to withdraw from Little Kids, Active Learners Preschool Program and have the appropriate fees cancelled. This policy is effective August 31 entering into the new preschool year. Registration fee and monthly payment plan administration fee are non-refundable.

### **Temporary Absence**

Should a parent withdraw their child from the program for a short period of time, all fees must be paid to maintain the child's place in the program.

### **Payment Information**

- Can be paid in full or through monthly payment plan. Cash, Visa and MasterCard accepted. A \$20 administration fee applies to activate the Monthly Payment Plan Agreement.
- Monthly payments may be made by automatic withdrawal from an account with cheque privileges at a Financial Institute.
- Payments can be deducted from a Visa or MasterCard. Normal bank service charges may apply.

### **Stay-at-Home Parent Support Subsidy**

Alberta Child and Youth Services provide financial assistance to eligible families using licensed preschools. Little Kids, Active Learners accepts the Stay-At-Home Parents Support Subsidy.

- Eligible families may receive \$1200 per year for each pre-school-aged child attending a licensed preschool. It is your responsibility to maintain your subsidy.
- If approved for a Stay-At-Home Subsidy, you will receive a letter from the Government of Alberta Children and Youth Services indicating the subsidy start and end dates and the amount we will receive on your behalf. At the end of each month, we will submit your child's attendance hours and monthly fee on your behalf. Subsidy will then process the claim and send a statement back to us with the amount they will pay. This amount is applied to your account and a cheque will be issued to you for the amount paid that month. Processing time is one to two months.
- You are still required to pay the full monthly payment.

## LITTLE KIDS, ACTIVE LEARNERS PARENT HANDBOOK 2011-2012

Preschool Coordinator 403-567-4485

After Hours Emergencies 403-532-1013



### To determine if you are eligible, please contact:

Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority  
#300, 1240 Kensington Road NW  
Calgary, Alberta T2N 3P7

**Telephone:** 403-297-6100

**Fax:** 403-297-7214

**Email:** calgaryareacfsa.info@gov.ab.ca

**Web:** <http://www.calgaryandareacfsa.ab.ca>

## TEACHERS

Classes operate on a ratio of one staff per 10 children with a maximum of 16 children/class for 3 & 4 year old classes and 17 children/class for 4 & 5 year old classes. Little Kids, Active Learners provides professional qualified teachers who understand child development and the value of play-based learning. Teachers are educated, experienced and hold valid first aid certificates and security clearance.

## VOLUNTEERS

An essential part of our program, volunteers are required in the classroom on days such as special events and swimming. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering, as some activities cannot take place without volunteer support. Your assistance is highly valued and keeps our program running smoothly.

### Volunteer Guidelines

- Volunteers must be an adult. Both parents and grandparents can be included in the volunteer program.
- Volunteers will be asked to do many different jobs.
- Volunteers must interact with **all** children.
- Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of the classroom. All information shared must remain confidential.
- Volunteers are not to be left alone with the children and will leave all discipline matters to the teacher.
- Volunteers support the teacher with everyday class activities and rules.
- Volunteers support and enhance our entire program, creating more opportunities for children attending.
- Please commit to the volunteer days you sign up for. If you are not able to make it, please inform the teacher as soon as possible so that another volunteer may be found.

### How to Volunteer

- Complete the volunteer security clearance form prior to volunteering. Must be completed annually.
- Complete all forms in blue ink
- Initial all four places on the back page
- Include a photocopy of two government forms of ID (Drivers License, Social Insurance, Passport, etc.)

If you are unsure whether you have completed your security clearance, please consult with your child's teacher.

### Parent Volunteer Days or Field Trips

Due to provincial licensing regulations, *only children enrolled in Little Kids, Active Learners are allowed in the classroom*. No siblings are allowed to attend Parent Volunteer Days or Field Trips – please make alternate childcare arrangements. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

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### Swimming

As a 1-3 adult to child ratio is required, parent volunteers are **mandatory** for Little Kids, Active Learners swim times. Parents volunteering on swim days are required to wear a swimsuit and be with the children in the water.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Current Information Required on File

Please keep us informed of any changes in your status: address, telephone numbers, email address. It is essential that we maintain accurate and up-to-date records. This is a Social Services requirement.

### Parent Communication

A monthly classroom calendar and newsletter are sent via email at the beginning of each month. This will keep you up-to-date with Little Kids, Active Learners activities. If you would like to meet with your child's teacher for any reason, please set up a time after class to make an appointment.

### School Closure

Please refer to the attached school calendar and monthly newsletters for school closures. Please keep it for future reference.

### Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Should Little Kids, Active Learners need to evacuate the facility and not return, the children will remain with the teachers at Country Hills Superstore, 5251 Country Hills Blvd. NW. Teachers will contact children's families using information provided on the Portable Emergency Forms. Please ensure that the information you provide remains up-to-date.

### Program Time and Late Fee

Please be punctual when dropping off and picking up your children. After five minutes of lateness at pick-up teachers will take any remaining children to Child Minding (morning classes) or Guest Services (afternoon classes) and a late fee will be charged. If a parent/guardian demonstrates habitual lateness in collecting their child, a letter will be sent home asking that the situation be corrected. If the situation remains unresolved, a \$5.00 / 15 minutes late fee may be applied.

### Entry Procedures

An adult must accompany every child into the classroom. Please help your child find their coat hook and remove their outerwear. Social Services require that the adult delivering and collecting the child must sign the child **IN** and **OUT** on the sheet provided.

### Pick-up Procedures

Children will not be released to any person other than the legally responsible parent / guardian. Additional individuals allowed to pick up your child must be listed on the registration form. Photo ID is required upon pick-up. Under no circumstances will a child be sent home unescorted or with another child.

## **Illnesses / Potential Health Risk**

The following is a list of symptoms that are grounds for excluding a child from the program.

Signs or symptoms of illness exhibited by a child include

- vomiting, having a fever, diarrhea or a new or unexplained rash or cough
- requiring greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program
- having or displaying any other illness or symptom the staff member knows or believes may indicate that the child poses a health risk to persons on the program premises.
- "Communicable disease" as listed in the Communicable Disease Regulation (AR238/85)

Sick children **must** stay home. If your child is not feeling well or has diarrhea or vomiting the evening prior, they are required to stay at home and recover. **Sick children will not be accepted for class.**

The program will monitor the children's health and if any child exhibits any of these signs or symptoms of illness the program will contact the child's parent to arrange for the immediate removal of the child from the program premises. Once the child is sent home from the child care program, the child will not be allowed to return until the program until we are satisfied that the child no longer poses a health risk to other persons in the program premises. Acceptable evidence may include a child is symptom free for at least 24 hours and or a parent has a physician's note.

The program will record and document the children who are ill on our Accident / Incident / illness Report Form including the name of the child, date the child was observed to be ill, name of staff member who identified the child was ill, time the parent was initially contacted, name of staff person who contacted the parent, time the child was removed from the program and the date the child returned to the program

## **Absences**

If for any reason your child will not be attending class, please contact the Preschool Coordinator at 403-567-4485 and leave a message with your child's name and class they attend.

## **Medication**

Preschool staff may only administer emergency medication such as an Epi-pen. An Emergency Medication Form must be signed before teachers can administer medication. Please ensure that you have completed this form. All emergency medication will be stored in a secure, easily accessible area.

### **Incident Reporting**

All incidents are to be documented on the appropriate forms and handed to the Preschool Coordinator as soon as possible. Incidents, serious illness of or injury to a child that occurs while the child is attending our program and any other incident that occurs while a child is attending a program that may seriously affect the health or safety of the child will be reported immediately to the regional child care office using the prescribed form. Incidents that require reporting include, but are not limited to: death of a child, injury, allegation of abuse, missing or lost child, a young person involved in crime, child removed from a program without permission, emergency evacuation or unexpected program closure, intruder on premises, illness or injury requiring emergency medical services and hospitalization, error in the administration of medication, and child left on premises after hours. Incidents will be reported immediately to licensing staff by telephone, fax or email. The Incident Report Form will be completed and submitted to your local Child and Family Services Authority's licensing office within two days of the incident.

### **Toilet Training**

All children must be fully toilet trained and able to use the washroom independently prior to beginning preschool. **Pull-ups are not permitted.**

### **Snack**

Little Kids, Active Learners Preschool is a **NUT FREE ENVIRONMENT**. Please read all food and beverage labels as we will not accept snack that say 'may contain nuts' or 'made in a facility that processes peanuts'.

Snacks are not provided by the preschool. It is the parent's responsibility to provide two healthy snacks (that follow the Canada Food Guide) including a small drink (in a reusable container) for their child. Snack such as chips, popcorn and chocolate are not accepted as snacks. Microwaves, refrigerators and hot water are not available for use. Please ensure wieners, pepperoni sticks and grapes are sliced lengthwise as these foods are known choking hazards. **Reminder: we are a nut free preschool.**

### **Clothing**

Please send a complete change of clothes in a zip lock bag in your child's backpack. All belongings (backpack, shoes, boots, coats, etc.) must be labeled.

Appropriate clothing for the weather is also required: snow pants, mittens, hats and scarves for winter weather. Indoor and outdoor play is incorporated into our program.

For safety purposes and monthly fire drills, children are required to wear running shoes. Please provide a pair of clean indoor running shoes and change footwear upon arrival and departure.

### **Toys**

Please encourage your children to leave their toys at home. We are not responsible for lost or broken toys.

### **Field Trips**

Little Kids, Active Learners curriculum includes field trips. Consent is required in order for your child to attend with consent forms signed prior to each event. You will be notified monthly of upcoming field trips.

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### **Swimming**

On swimming days, children must come wearing a bathing suit under his or her clothing. If your child arrives without a swimsuit on scheduled swim days, he or she will either be sent home or you will be asked to locate another bathing suit. Activities outside of swim time cannot be planned as teachers and volunteers must remain with the children and proceed with the day's planned class activity. Please bring a plastic bag with your child's name on it and place a labeled towel and undergarments inside. You may also want to send a comb or brush. If your child has a life jacket, please send it on swim days.

### **Library**

Little Kids, Active Learners uses the Country Hills Public Library. Parents are asked to bring in their child's library card so that we may photocopy it for your child's use on library days. It is your responsibility to ensure that library books are returned when they are due and pay any late fees.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays may be celebrated in the classroom. Parents are welcome to bring in treats for the children provided they are free of tree nuts, peanuts and popcorn. Please include a list of ingredients.

## **Supervision Policy and Practices**

Effective Supervision in our program has our teachers closely monitoring the children at all times. They participate in the children's play to ensure that children are playing in a safe manner and so that they may anticipate any potential dangers. They listen closely to children, and position themselves and equipment to allow for the supervision of the entire group of children. Teachers monitor children's health to identify early signs of fever, illness, or unusual behaviour and know where emergency medications, first aid kits and emergency contacts numbers are kept. Teachers conduct regular safety checks of the program premises and equipment to remove hazards. Children are sign in and out on a daily basis and teachers have children's records that include emergency information and a list of individuals that are authorized to pick-up the children.

We review and discuss our program policies on a regular basis with our teachers and observe teachers to ensure that they are being followed.

We promote safety and reduce injuries in our program by maintaining staff to child ratios at all times. We collect children's emergency information and record arrival and departure times of children which accompanies us at all times on and off the premises. Teachers are consistently doing head-counts or roll calls during all transitions and when children leave or return to their classroom. While on field trips volunteers are assigned children and consistent head-counts or roll calls are done.

Our program does not transport children

## **CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY**

At Little Kids, Active Learners, we understand that children mature individually and at different age levels. Children will be treated with respect and dignity at all times. Consistent child guidance policies will be followed at all times with limits and expectations established through communication, cooperation and consistency. Positive guidance strategies are offered to reinforce appropriate behaviour and encourage cooperation.

Our preschool teachers set reasonable limits for children through positive reinforcement, limiting discipline situations whenever possible. When children need to be reminded of proper behaviour, staff will do their best to react quickly to prevent or positively redirect inappropriate behaviour. Behaviours such as hitting, pushing, spitting and unkind words require guidance and positive redirection may occur. For example, in the instance of one child hitting another, the teacher may intervene with, "Hitting hurts. We keep our hands to ourselves."

Positive reinforcement and modeling strategies encourage self-control, self-respect and respect for others including their peers, authority and surroundings. Strategies may include:

- 'I' messages – "I see you...", "I need you to..."
- Children discussing their problems together with the teacher acting as mediator, providing children with proper words if needed.
- Having children be aware of how their actions affect others. "When you said that to 'A', I see that it made 'A' feel sad.
- Discussing feelings and appropriate reactions.
- Reminders to children to express limits.
- Using limits and expectations rather than rules.
- Allowing children to choose what they want to do.

No child will be labeled, shamed or humiliated. Punishments such as striking a child, screaming, yelling, or withholding food strictly violates Little Kids, Active Learners discipline policy.

If, after attending Little Kids, Active Learners for one month, a child continues to appear unhappy and/or the child's behaviour is consistently having a detrimental affect on the class as a whole, the Preschool Coordinator will contact the parents/guardians. Together, you will determine what further steps should be taken regarding alternative programs with appropriate resources and/or strategies. This guideline is supported by Alberta Learning.