

Dear Parents,

Welcome to A Kid's Place Preschool. We look forward to being a part of your first school experience and feel privileged to participate in the amazing growth that will be occurring during these next few years.

A Kid's Place is a unique developmental center which offers a variety of programs for children of all ages. These include toddler ("mommy and me") classes, transition groups for two-year-olds, preschool for three- to six-year-olds, vacation camps, and enrichment classes. We opened in January of 2004, the culmination of a dream shared by a group of us who worked together at Temple Isaiah Preschool, a well-regarded, successful school located on the border of Rancho Park and Cheviot Hills in West Los Angeles. Susie Leonard, who heads A Kid's Place, was the Preschool Director at Isaiah from 1991 to 2003 and the head teacher/administrator of the toddler and transition programs for the thirteen years prior to that. The group of us who facilitate the various programs here at A Kid's Place are experienced and dedicated teachers, united by our belief in, and respect for, the uniqueness of every child and our commitment to help children grow into the best possible versions of themselves.

All of our programs share the common goal of allowing children of all ages the opportunity to use their innate curiosity and passion for exploration to make sense of the world. We have created a space full of physical, creative, social, imaginative and cognitive challenges and we encourage children to direct their own play and learning. Whether by accomplishing a new physical feat, making a friend or experiencing the satisfaction of creating a work of art, it is our hope that each child leaves here with a feeling of success and competence. We live in a hurried, demanding world. It is our objective to provide a sanctuary where children can be children and do what they do best: learn through play.

Please take some time to really read this handbook. Not only does it include some important rules and policies crucial to the smooth operation of our various programs but, even more significantly, it will give you some insight into our purposes and goals and, hopefully, will allow us at school and you at home to work together as a team.

TUITION AND FEES

Please consult the Tuition Schedule for this year's tuition costs for our various programs. The Registration Fee which accompanied your application does not apply to tuition.

By enrolling you are committing to the school for the entire academic calendar and are liable for the entire year's tuition, although, as a courtesy to parents, A Kid's Place offers the option of installment payments. Tuition can either be paid in full or divided into nine (9) payments with the first (equal to 2 times the monthly installment amount, less the initial deposit if one was made) due on or before August 1st and the balance paid in eight (8) equal monthly installments due September 1st through April 1st. Monthly tuition payments are due the first day of each month. Checks should be made payable to "A Kid's Place" and either remitted by mail or put in one of the "Tuition" receptacles at school. Should you prefer to pay online, you can find a link for paying through Stripe at the top of our website (akidsplacela.com) or, if supported by your bank, you may pay via Zelle. **Payments made via Stripe (both ACH and credit card) will be assessed processing fees and tuition payments made via Stripe ACH must be paid no later than the 1st of the month due. No fee will be charged for payments made via Zelle or by check and tuition payments made by these methods, along with Stripe credit card payments, will be granted a 5 day grace period.**

Parent Action Committee Fee: \$100 for the first child and \$50 for each additional child (excluding toddlers). Due September 1st. These funds are utilized at the direction of the Parent Action Committee for costs associated with its fund raising activities, teacher appreciation day, parent education nights, graduation and family relations.

Facility Fee: \$125 per family. Due September 1st. These funds are used toward ongoing facility upkeep and improvement.

Returned Checks: There will be a \$15 fee for any returned checks.

Late Payment: **If a tuition installment paid via Stripe ACH is remitted after the 1st of the month due, or if a tuition installment paid via Zelle, credit card or check is remitted after the 5th of the month due, you will be charged a late fee equal to five percent (5%) of the monthly tuition amount.** If, during the course of the school year, you are late in paying tuition on three or more occasions, we may, at our option, terminate your right to make monthly payments and require that the balance of the year's tuition, as well as any future year's tuition, be paid in advance or, alternatively, require that you give us postdated checks for the remaining monthly tuition payments to become due during the school year.

Absences: Your fees pay for our direct operating costs, i.e. staff, materials, supplies, etc., all of which must be available in order to insure a quality preschool experience for your child. When you enroll, you are reserving the time, space, staffing, materials, supplies and other provisions for your child, regardless of whether or not your child attends. Therefore, **no reimbursement, credit or makeup days for absences will be granted.**

HOURS, ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Hours for our morning program are: 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for the two older Preschool classes (the “Popsicles”), 9:00 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. for our three year old class (the “Duckies”), and 9:00 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. for our Butterfly children who will be 2 ½ to just 3 at the start of the school year. Children may stay for an extended afternoon program, which meets from 12:30 to 2:45 p.m. Children may be registered to stay until 1:45 or 2:45. We also offer early morning care for those who need it, starting at 8:30 a.m.

Unless you have signed up for early morning care, please arrive no earlier than 8:50 a.m. so that our teachers may complete their necessary set-up and be ready to greet your child, fully prepared for their time together. **Avoid late arrivals or late pick-ups as children find them very distressing.**

Your child may be picked up only by those authorized on your application form or by someone specifically designated with your written permission. **You must send a dated note if your child is going home with a friend.**

EXTENDED DAYS

We offer extended day options until 1:45 or 2:45 for our Preschool children. The extended day program includes arts and crafts, music, movement, games, creative dramatics, and just fun “hanging out” together.

Additional days may be added during the school year, provided space allows. ****If you wish for your child to attend on an occasional basis, or to try and see if he/she is ready for an extended day program, please speak to us prior to the day you want him/her to attend to see if space is available.** We must place a limit on the number of children in our playgroups in order to provide adequate staffing and a quality program.

CAR LINE

We offer car line drop-off and pick-up in the alley behind the school. Specifics regarding time windows for your child's class will be communicated via email. When possible, we prefer that children be dropped off/picked up via the car line. That being said, we recognize that children, especially those who are new to AKP, might initially need a parent or caretaker to walk them into school. That is fine.

Please enter the alley from Grandview (heading west) and either pull up alongside the preschool yard gate for Orange Duck and Rainbow Popsicle drop off/pick up or the ECC (Butterfly/Ducky) yard gate for Butterfly. **Remain in your car** and pull up as close as you can to the door/gate opening. We will assist the children in exiting and entering your cars, but we are not legally permitted to buckle them in. If you need to exit your vehicle for this purpose, you may do so after we have helped your child into his/her carseat, although if you are able to just lean over from the front seat, we would prefer that. It is our goal to expedite the process as much as possible and get everyone on their way as quickly, efficiently and safely as we can.

Please be considerate of our neighbors. Do not arrive early and sit in the alley. In addition, when waiting for your turn to drop off or pick up, remember to pull as far to the the right as you can so that others can pass on your left.

It is imperative that children be dropped off and picked up at their class' designated time. If you arrive after the drop off time window for your child's class, you must park and walk your child into school through the front.

SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

According to Title 22, the manual of policies and procedures governing licensing of California Preschools, **every single child attending Preschool must be signed in when he/she arrives at school and signed out when he/she leaves, every single day.** As such, you will be asked to sign your child in/out at drop-off/pick-up time every day.

You must sign your full name, **no initials**, plus the time of day. Please remind anyone who may be bringing or picking up your child, e.g. carpool driver, babysitter, or grandparent, to sign him/her in/out. If you are bringing or taking other children in addition to your own, please be sure to sign-in and out for each.

Children will only be released to those authorized on your Registration Forms or designated

with your written permission. These procedures, although occasionally burdensome, are designed for the protection and safety of your child.

FORMS AND FORM CHANGES

New families are required to complete and submit a set of emergency and medical authorization forms. These forms (eight in total) may be accessed on the Admissions page of our website and must be completed and on file before your child's first day at A Kid's Place. No child will be allowed to begin school unless or until all emergency and medical forms have been submitted, without exception. This policy is mandated by the State of California and is intended to protect the health and safety of all children. It is essential that you keep all information current so that we can locate you quickly in case of an emergency. Please email us notification of the following:

****1. Change of home address or phone****

2. Change of employment phone
3. Change of pediatrician and phone
4. Change in and/or addition of persons to contact in case of emergency, and phone
5. Additional persons authorized to pick-up your child.

Only persons authorized in writing by the parents may pick-up the child. This is for your child's protection. **THE STAFF WILL NOT RELEASE A CHILD TO ANYONE WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORITY**. If someone new is to pick-up your child, please email the director in advance and ask that individual to bring a driver's license or photo i.d.

SEPARATIONS

Children, as well as adults, need time to feel comfortable in a new situation. We are asking your child to expand his world, to trust others besides Mom and Dad, to begin to learn the give and take of making friends, of being a member of a group. Children differ in their readiness to separate when they first begin preschool. You can help to make this transition easier for your child by striving to reach that delicate balance between staying just long enough to allow him/her to feel secure, without over-staying your welcome; for some children, this may mean your staying only fifteen minutes, for others, a more extended period. Whatever the time frame, keep in mind your goal is to help you child begin to reach out and accept help and comfort from his/her teachers.

DISCIPLINE

We view discipline as an opportunity to help each child develop the inner controls necessary to become a successful, functioning member of a group. As they do in all areas of development, children differ in their awareness of, and responsiveness to, social cues. We believe that it is our job as teachers to gently, but firmly, guide children to learn the give and take of social interactions. We try very hard to make our expectations reflective of the developmental capabilities of our individual children. It is our goal to encourage children to begin to understand how their behavior leads to reactive behavior from those around them. Our approach to discipline is to guide, to support, to narrate; not to punish, humiliate or shame.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A certificate of good health, signed by a physician, is required prior to enrollment. All children must have the correct immunizations for their age level as well as a tubercular tine test. Preschool children over the age of two years should have received a total of 3 polio immunizations, 4 doses of DPT, one injection of the measles, mumps, rubella vaccine (MMR), one dose of HIB and 3 doses of Hepatitis B. To be excluded from such immunization requirements, the child must receive a permanent medical exemption from a physician.

For your child's protection, as well as for others, please do not send him/her to school if there are any symptoms of illness. After a fever has subsided, your child should remain at home for at least 24 hours. It has been our experience that a drippy nose may be due to allergies, a sinus infection, or the onset of a cold. Since we are unable to determine the exact cause of such symptoms, we ask that any condition be cleared up before your child returns to school. If your child is brought to school sick, or if illness develops, a parent will be called and the child will be sent home.

If your child needs to be given medication during the school day, you must clear it in advance with the director. We prefer that you try to arrange giving the medication at home, but if this is not possible, fill out the Request to Administer Medication form and give the form and medication to the director in its original container. We will only give the doses prescribed by the doctor. We will not administer any non-prescription medications. Your child's teacher will care for minor injuries with soap, water, first-aid cream, band-aids, and a hug. Should there be an emergency, parents or those persons listed on your emergency will be called. If none of the above can be reached, the physician listed will be called. We can keep outbreaks of communicable diseases to a minimum if you will help us in the following ways: First, **if you child's illness is diagnosed as communicable, please notify us immediately** so that we can inform other parents. Second, let us know if your

child has been exposed to a communicable disease, as we might ask that he/she **remain at home during the contagious period of incubation.**

Head lice are a part of our environment. Please watch for symptoms of head scratching and check periodically for translucent, pearl-shaped eggs. A child with head lice will be sent home and allowed to return to school only when completely clear of live lice or remaining nits (eggs).

COVID POLICIES & PROTOCOLS

- Masks are now optional both indoors and outdoors. Please let us know if you would like your child to wear a mask.
- You must inform AKP and keep your child at home if s/he or any other family members have been exposed to COVID-19. If your child is exposed to someone who tests positive, s/he will need to remain out of school for either 10 days after the exposure, or 5 days with a negative PCR test taken on day 5. If the exposure is ongoing, such as when a parent or sibling who cannot isolate from the child tests positive, the child's period of quarantine will begin the day after the isolation period ends for the person who tested positive.
- If you are keeping your child home due to illness, please inform us via email. Depending on the circumstances, we will let you know how long your child needs to remain out and whether s/he needs to be tested before returning. If we do require testing for a child who is ill, either an Antigen or a PCR test may be utilized.
- Since we cannot tell the difference between garden variety childhood illness and COVID, children who exhibit any symptoms while at school — including coughs and drippy noses — will be sent home and will need to get either an Antigen or PCR test before returning to school.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19, s/he must remain home until:
 - At least 5 days have passed since his/her symptoms first started or, if asymptomatic, since s/he tested positive **and**
 - S/he receives a negative Antigen test on day 5 or later **and**
 - S/he has been fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medicine **and**
 - His/her symptoms are significantly improved

- OR -

- At least 10 days have passed since his/her symptoms first started or, if asymptomatic, since s/he tested positive **and**
 - S/he has been fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medicine **and**
 - His/her symptoms are significantly improved
- In the event of an in-school exposure, children may continue to attend school. You will need to monitor your child for symptoms and s/he must get a PCR test 3-5 days after the exposure.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Safety and earthquake drills are held regularly during the school year. Should an emergency occur, please know that your child will be under the care of a responsible staff trained in CPR and First Aid procedures. We will provide food, shelter and medical attention to the best of our abilities. Teachers will stay with the children until all are picked-up by parents or emergency contacts. If possible, please plan to stay and help care for the children. We will unquestionably need additional help.

NUTRITION

Your child will enjoy nutritious and varied mid-morning or mid-afternoon snacks. Lunch is an enriching time for socializing, for being self-sufficient, for sharing, for developing pride. Plastic wrap is difficult to unwrap; using non-lock bags or wax paper will enable our children to unwrap food by themselves. Please send small portions of food -- children are overwhelmed by too much. Parents need help from each other! **PLEASE OMIT cookies, candy, and other non-nutritious goodies from lunch.** If everyone cooperates, it will make it easier for all to be firm on this point. **WE ARE A NUT-FREE SCHOOL.** Please DO NOT Pack items containing nuts including, nut butters, e.g. peanut butter, cashew butter, etc.

Lunch is an opportunity to encourage our children's independence. We allow each child to determine what they eat and in what order. Teachers do not tell their children what to eat first. Please keep this in mind when packing your child's lunch so that each item included will contain some nutritional value.

CLOTHING

Please make certain that the clothing your child wears to school is comfortable, appropriate for the weather, and that it enables him/her to participate fully in the many experiences (many of these will get your child dirty -- expect paint, glue, etc. to get on clothes) offered throughout the day, e.g. painting, climbing, bike-riding, etc. A change of clothes should always be available in your child's cubby. **Please label all clothing, especially sweaters and jackets, with permanent markers or name tags.** For younger children who are newly toilet-trained or still in diapers, please keep your child's cubby stocked with diapers, extra underwear and socks.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We are pleased to celebrate you child's birthday in his/her classroom. We encourage low-key, simple birthday celebrations. Parents are invited to provide a special birthday treat for their child's class. Please save elaborate birthday treats and candies for home parties. We recommend cookies, muffins, popsicles, frozen yogurt, or even pizza. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher well in advance so that the celebration can be successful. Also, please make home birthday party invitations and arrangements outside of school. Be sensitive when planning a party as children's feelings are easily hurt if they are among only a few left out.

TOYS FROM HOME

Children may bring books or CDs to school to share with their classmates anytime. Be certain to label these items with your child's name.

Children may not bring toys or other things of personal value which all too often create sharing conflicts and unnecessary tears when they are inevitably lost or misplaced.

MAIL

In an attempt to minimize the use of paper, we communicate primarily through email, so be sure to check your inbox and make the appropriate adjustments so that mail from us is not directed to your spam folder. Also, remember to check bulletin boards and doors for posted announcements.

COMMUNICATION

While formal parent conferences will take place midway through the school year, we encourage frequent, open communication between you and your child's teachers and the director. The teachers and the director are available to speak by telephone, email or in person. We ask that you not take teachers away from supervising the children in order to have an impromptu conference at drop-off or pick-up times. Please email or call us to make an appointment.

CALENDAR

A Preschool Calendar will be available for download on our website prior to the start of the school year. This calendar is provided so that you can have prior knowledge of vacation periods, holiday observances, and other special events. ****Please put it up somewhere where you can refer to it as needed.****

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Active participation in our programs and activities is an integral part of our philosophy. We have found that when our parents involve themselves in the various facets of our school and other programs, a more enriching experience is available for your child, your family, our school and the community. Parents are invited to become interconnected with each other as part of a community of families. We need you to help augment our programs by participating in our educational programs, school activities, fundraisers for scholarship and school development, potluck dinners, field trips and more. The Parent Action Committee plays a vital role in planning many of these special events. All parents are invited to join PAC meetings and become a part of this important Preschool support group.

MANDATED REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

All staff members at A Kid's Place are "Mandated Reporters" under State law. This means that we are required to report all suspected incidents of child abuse. These include physical injuries (inflicted by other than accidental means), as well as sexual abuse and neglect. For staff, failure to report is a crime punishable by six months in jail and/or a \$1000 fine. The Department of Social Services has a right to interview children and staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records, without prior consent.

COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING

The Community Care Licensing Division is a sub agency of the California Department of Social Services. It is responsible for the implementation of the requirements and laws governing child care centers, including preschools, in the State of California. It issues licenses to centers in compliance with required standards and makes periodic site inspections to determine center compliance with those required standards and regulations. Parents or others concerned may contact Community Care Licensing at any time with questions or complaints regarding any child care center. The Personal & Parents Rights form (available on our website) includes the name, address and telephone number of the Community Care Licensing office that has jurisdiction over A Kid's Place.