



PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026



Welcome to Tarrant County Kids!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Tarrant County Kids! Thank you for choosing TCK as your childcare service for this school year. Tarrant County Kids (TCK) is a co-ed, before and after school program with school break camps designed to meet the needs of working families, who need access to quality affordable childcare. TCK partners with school districts to meet the needs of working families by providing programs on-site at elementary schools. We are currently serving Arlington Independent School District, Lake Worth Independent School District and Rocketship Texas with growth on the horizon.

This handbook is designed to answer questions and to provide important information to you and your family about our policies and procedures. Please take a few moments to read through this guide with your child. It will help familiarize you with our programs.

We look forward to another great year! Thank you for entrusting us with your kids. Our expectation is that each parent will read and understand this Parent Handbook and act in accordance with our policies.

Thank you,

Lisa Dia, MSW
Director of Tarrant County Kids
Ldia@girlsinctarrant.org
817-223-2833
817-468-0306 x103

Girls Inc. of Tarrant County

2820 Matlock Rd
Arlington, TX 76015

To learn more, visit www.tckids.org

Inspiring all girls to be **strong, smart, and boldSM**

To learn more, visit www.girlsinctarrant.org

Chief Executive Officer

Jennifer Limas

Chief Operating Officer

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Tiffany Alexander

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Office Manager

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Administrative Office

2820 Matlock Road

Arlington, TX 76015

Main: 817-468-0306

TCKids.org

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Program Directory

Director of Tarrant County Kids

Lisa Dia

ldia@girlsinctarrant.org

ext. 103

Office Management

Receptionist

receptionist@girlsinctarrant.org

ext. 101

Accounts Manager

Kayla Thiede

kthiede@girlsinctarrant.org

ext. 102

Billing, Invoicing, Accounts Questions

Office Manager

Elia Sandoval

esandoval@girlsinctarrant.org

ext. 101

Accounts and Enrollments Questions

Program Managers

Below are our Program Managers and the school sites and phones numbers they manage.

Sergio Estala sestala@girlsinctarrant.org 817-201-1357		Freddie Burns fburns@girlsinctarrant.org 817-343-5899	
~Effie	817-223-6681	~Burgin	817-223-8293
~Ellis	817-253-4573	~*Corey	817-648-5864
~Foster	817-739-4651	~Crow	817-253-2818
~*Little	817-688-2051	~Ditto	817-253-8132
Rocketship Dennis Dunkin	817-229-7968	Larson	817-253-6702
~*Wood	817-266-5474	~McNutt	817-253-4004
~Bebensee	817-253-2854	Hill	
Tiffany Alexander Talexander@girlsinctarrant.org 817-201-9580			
~Ashworth	817-253-2854		
~Bryant	817-266-5476		
Crescendo			
~*Farrell	817-223-4400		
~Fitzgerald	817-504-5792		
~Remynse	817-201-4936		
~Starrett	817-253-3757		
~*West	817-991-6105		
~Williams	817-223-5505		

*Indicates schools with before and after school programming.

~Indicates schools that accept CCMS.

About Us

Mission

TCK is a before and after school program affiliated with Girls Inc. of Tarrant County providing working families access to quality affordable childcare with academic enrichment and social emotional components.

Minimum Standards

TCK abides by Texas Minimum Standards regulating childcare. In order to obtain full compliance with these standards, parents must complete the enrollment forms entirely and, as necessary, update the information throughout the year. Texas Minimum Standards and a copy of operations' most recent inspection are available at our sites for viewing.

Staffing

Our programs are staffed by personnel who are screened and trained in accordance with state licensing requirements. Employees are required to obtain the following items:

- FBI fingerprints
- Pre-employment criminal background check with Texas DFPS (every 2 years)
- Childcare Pre-Service Training (8 hours)
- Continuing child related training annually (15 hours)
- Tuberculosis test (every two years)
- First Aid & CPR certification (every two years)
- Trauma Informed Training
- District required training may apply

It is our expectation that staff members represent Tarrant County Kids in a positive and professional manner always. We are confident in our staff members and their ability to serve as role models and implement excellent programming. Both Texas Childcare Regulations representatives, TCK Managers, and the Director of Tarrant County Kids randomly and regularly inspect sites.

We are an equal opportunity agency. We do not discriminate based on race, sex, age, ethnicity, or religion. Tarrant County Kids is a subsidiary of Girls Inc. of Tarrant County.

Program Overview

Curriculum Goals

TCK's curriculum is catered to the child's development group to promote essential skills needed to be successful. Our curriculum highlights the following content areas.

- Helping Others
- Expressions and the Arts
- Academics (Literacy)
- Resilience
- The Inner Child

Program Hours

When school is in session (August-May), the after-school program begins at the end of the school day and ends at 6:00 pm. The before-school program begins at 6:30 am and ends at 8 am. *Children will not be accepted prior to the scheduled session times.*

- **Before-school** is offered at Corey, Farrell, Little, West and Wood elementary schools.
- **Adventure Camp**, our all-day care, is offered during scheduled school holidays and breaks. Adventure Camp operates from 7:30 am to 6 pm.

Physical Activity

After-school programs will provide up to 30 minutes or more of physical activity time. Weather permitting, this will be held outside on the school playground. During times of inclement weather physical activity will be conducted in the gym. TCK staff will use a variety of structured and unstructured game play allowing for participant-initiated activities.

Playground Safety

Children will experience outdoor activities in our program, which may include playing on the school's playground equipment. Play equipment at each of our program sites (schools) may or may not meet Licensing standards specified by the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Nutritious Snacks & Meals

When possible, Tarrant County Kids has partnered with the district nutrition services to provide nutritious snacks each afternoon. If desired, children may bring snacks from home. Only individually wrapped food items can be shared with other children on special occasions. Dietary restrictions are to be written by the parent on the enrollment form. We will attempt to meet any special dietary considerations.

Food and liquids hotter than 110°F are kept out of reach of children.

Staff Ratio

Tarrant County Kids strives to maintain a child/staff ratio of 15:1 at the site, and 10:1 for field trips. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requires a ratio of 22:1, Tarrant County Kids defaults to this ratio when necessary.

Sample Daily Schedule

(Times may vary based on district)

Before School

6:30 am – Open and ready for parents to sign-in students.

We provide fine-motor movement games and manipulatives for the students to play with and allow time for unfinished homework to be completed.

7:45 am – Breakfast students line up

Students that receive breakfast will line up at 7:45 am and be escorted to the cafeteria by an instructor.

8:00 am – All remaining students line up

Students who do not receive breakfast line up and are released from the gym to go their classrooms.

After School

3:35 pm – Dismissal / Attendance

After dismissal from schools, the students enrolled in our program begin coming into the gym. Attendance is taken after our students have arrived.

3:55 pm – Wash Hands / Drink Water / Snack Time

4:15 pm – Homework Time / Read a Book / Assignments

We allow for these 30 minutes of time to complete homework.

4:45 pm – Rotation Groups: Curriculum and Group Activities

We split our students into age-appropriate groups (Pre-K-2nd and 3rd-6th grade).

Students will be participating in group activities during this time. Weather permitted, students may go outside and play.

This time includes physical fitness, playground time, and arts & crafts.

5:45 pm – Rotation Groups: Social Emotional Learning

This time is delegated to various activities of group building relationships and bonding.

6:00 pm – Closing Time & Clean Up

Enrollment Policies

Admission

TCK is a tuition fee-based, first come, first served program. All students must re-enroll for each school year and/or each summer session.

Enrollment Process

1. Fill out our Enrollment Packet electronically by
 - a. going to our website at TCKids.org, finding your school campus and completing the enrollment form online or
 - b. in person at our administrative office located at 2820 Matlock Road in Arlington.
2. Once we have received your enrollment packet, you will be notified to log into your Parent Portal on Myprocare.com to complete the Re-Register questions.
 - a. To complete this step, you will need to pay your non-refundable Enrollment Fee per child.
3. Once completed, our office staff will send an email for our Policies and Procedures Signatures Form to be signed and dated and upload a photo of your Driver's License or ID. **This is a crucial step to finalizing the enrollment process.**
4. If additional forms are needed, you will need to fill out the appropriate form completely. These forms will be sent to you once we have reviewed your enrollment packet. These may include:
 - a. A Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan Form,
 - b. Dispensing Medication Form,
 - c. Special Care Needs,
 - d. Additional Pick-Up Form,
 - e. Your current school year lunch letter showing free or reduced lunch rate (if applicable).
5. If you attend Farrell, Larson, Remyse, Starrett, or West:
 - a. You will need to make an appointment to come to our Main Office (2820 Matlock Rd.) to receive a notary on your application for Emergency Medical Release, and
 - b. Send photos of each of your authorized pick-up persons to receptionist@girlsinctarrant.org.

Missing information or documents may result in your enrollment process extending.

What to expect:

Once we receive your Enrollment Packet, a member of our team will reach out to you to confirm receipt. We normally have a 2-business day turn around. If any additional information or forms are needed, we will contact you to discuss this with you.

Start dates are typically Monday of the following week to follow the natural billing cycle. Starting mid-week may result in paying multiple weeks at the time of enrollment.

Enrollment Requirements

All enrollment forms must be filled out *completely* to include:

- Doctor's information including address and phone number.
- Current addresses and phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts.
- Current immunization and hearing & vision records. If your child's records are on file at his/her current school, you must provide the name, address, and phone number of the school. TB exams are not required by the City of Arlington or Tarrant County Health Department now.

All changes to contact information, including addresses and phone numbers, must be immediately communicated to our administrative office at 817-468-0306.

Enrollment Status

Payment for the first week of programming, enrollment fees, and prior balances (if any) must be paid upon enrollment and prior to the first day of service.

Students are enrolled as **one** of the following statuses:

Full-Time

Your child will regularly be attending weekly.

Drop-In

Your child only attends occasionally. Drop-in seats will be limited to 5 per location. TCK Main Office will need to be notified before your child may attend to remit payment. A change of enrollment status is only permitted once per year. **(Rocketeers ineligible)**

Tuition Fees

2025-2026 School Year

Arlington ISD

Enrollment Fee \$40 per student

Full Time Weekly Rates

Regular \$70 First Student
\$65 Siblings

Free/Reduced \$59 First Student
\$54 Siblings

Drop-in Daily Rates

Regular \$31 First Student
\$29 Siblings

Free/Reduced \$27 First Student
\$25 Siblings

Before School Rates

Weekly \$35 per Student

Lake Worth ISD

Enrollment Fee \$40 per Student

Weekly Rates \$70 First Student
\$65 Siblings

Drop-in Daily Rates

Regular \$31 First Student
\$29 Siblings

School Year Adventure Camp

Enrollment Fee \$40 per student
for new students only

Full Time Weekly Rates

Regular \$120 First Student
\$110 Siblings

Free/Reduced \$110 First Student
\$100 Siblings

Drop-in Daily Rates

Regular \$50 First Student
\$45 Siblings

Free/Reduced \$45 First Student
\$40 Siblings

Uplift Education

Enrollment Fee \$40 per Student

Full Time Weekly Rates

Regular \$50 per Student

Before School Rates

Weekly \$35 per Student

*All lunch rates are based on the current school year. We must have a copy of the reduced/free lunch letter on file for your child to receive the correct rate.

*Enrollment fees are non-refundable.

* Full-time students, weekly tuition is due each week regardless of attendance. This reserves your child's spot in programming.

Payment Policies

Payment Schedule

Full Time Students

Students enrolled as **FULL-TIME** will be charged the weekly rate the week prior to care being provided. Tuition is due BEFORE your child can attend TCK programming.

- **Monday:** Any penalty fees from the previous week will be reflected in your account. Tuition for the upcoming week will be billed to your account. An Account Summary Invoice will be sent to the Primary Account Holder's email.
- **Thursday:** Tuition payment is due by **5:00 PM** for the following week's attendance.
- **Friday:** A late payment fee will be applied to any past due balance. Please refer to the *Penalty Fees* section for further details.
- **Monday:** Students will not be permitted to attend the program if payment is not reflected in their account by Monday morning.

Important: Tuition fees are **non-refundable** once billed on Monday and will not be waived, removed, credited, or reimbursed for non-attendance.

Failure to make full and timely payments will result in your child being denied access to the program upon arrival.

Drop-in Students

Students enrolled as **DROP-IN** will be charged the daily rate for each day attended. The Accounts Manager must have notice of attendance by emailing receptionist@girlsinctarrant.org or calling 817-468-0306.

Monday: Payment is due no later than 12:00 pm on Monday of the week services are to be rendered. Failure to pay may result in your child being sent to the school's office.

Last Minute Attendance: A minimum of 2 hours' notice is required for last-minute attendance needed with payment in full.

Drop-in Students pre-pay at the daily rate; accounts will not be prorated to full-time tuition rates.

Methods Of Payment

All Accounts are required to have a form of payment on file. Recurring Payments will be processed on Thursday mornings. If in need, you can make payment in person at our office (2820 Matlock Rd.), or by calling our office at 817-468-0306.

- **Recurring Payments:**
 - Are required and must be set up in MyProcure.
 - Can be set up using either a Debit/Credit Card or an ACH account.
 - Are processed weekly on Thursday mornings.
 - Any declined payments will be notified. It is the responsibility of the parent to contact the office to remit payment over the phone to ensure that there are no disruptions to your child's care.
- **Credit Card Payments:**
 - Incur a processing fee of 2.4% on all charges.
- **ACH Payments**
 - Do not incur processing fees.

- Receive a \$25 NSF/Chargeback fee for any declined payments.

Penalty Fees

Penalty Fees will be added to your account ledger on Mondays, except for the late payment fee which is assessed on Thursday. These fees will be due no later than Wednesday along with your weekly tuition at 5 pm.

Late Payment Fee

\$15 fee applied to your account if you do not pay **in full and on-time** per the payment policies listed above.

Failure to Notify Fee

\$10 fee applied to your account if you do not notify Tarrant County Kids in advance of your Full-Time student being absent from the program. You may call the site staff at the phone number listed on page 1 to inform staff of an excused absence, text messages will not be accepted. *Drop-In students are not subject to this fee.*

Late Pick Up Fee

\$10 per every 15 minutes. This fee will be applied to your account for each 15-minute increment after 6:00 pm that your child has not been picked up. These fees begin at 6:01 pm.

Chargeback Fee

\$25 fee applied to your account for all ACH and CC chargebacks. After two chargebacks, you will be required to pay by money order or check.

Declined Payment Fee

\$5 fee applied to your account for all Debit and Credit Card declines for recurring payments. Please ensure that your account is kept up to date with a form of payment.

Force Withdrawal from Program

Failure to pay your weekly tuition on time and in full will result in disruption of your child's TCK programming. Your account will be withdrawn from TCK programs on Tuesday mornings if your account is past due. Students removed from the program must be re-enrolled and will be subject to fees per enrollment policies. Enrollments are first come, first served, so a seat is not always guaranteed.

Payment Parent Notifications

We strive to keep all parents informed regarding tuition and fees. The primary payer who originally set up the account with Tarrant County Kids will receive all communications regarding Tuition billing, invoicing, and fees via their email on file.

Before & After School Program Policies

Attendance Requirements

Full Time Students: is defined as a student attending 3 or more days weekly. Notification must be clearly documented to avoid Failure to Notify Fees.

Weekly tuition will not be removed, refunded, or prorated for excused or unexcused absences. Payment for weekly tuition reserves child's seat at their campus.

Drop-in Students: Notification and payment must be received by the Accounts Manager before your child can attend programming.

Extracurricular Activities

Students participating in extracurricular activities after school will not be signed into the program until their activities are complete. This includes school clubs, tutoring, testing, and assisting teachers. An **Extracurricular Activities Authorization** form must be on file at the site if your child participates in extracurricular activities.

If your child does not arrive approximately 15-20 minutes after the arrival time specified on the form, you will be called to ensure the safety of your child. If the child has been picked up without notifying Tarrant County Kids, this will result in a **\$10 Failure to Notify Fee**. Tarrant County Kids is not responsible for children who do not arrive at the after-school program after the activity.

Parents are required to call the site cell phone before 3pm if their child is going to be absent during after-school program that day, text messages will not be accepted as a form of communication.

Children in before-school care must be brought to the program entrance by one of the contacts listed on the enrollment form. The site supervisor will sign the child in with the time, their initials, and the full name of the person dropping the child off.

Any children arriving without an adult will not be admitted into the program.

Sign-In Procedures

Students are responsible for going to Tarrant County Kids immediately upon dismissal from school, where the site supervisor will sign them in with the current time and their initials. Parents must notify their teacher when enrolled in TCK.

Sign-Out Procedures

Children may not leave the after-school care program without being signed-out by:

- An authorized person on the enrollment form (must have ID).
- A person (not on the enrollment form) authorized by emergency pick-up verification procedures (see below).
- Pick-up personnel must be 18 years of age or older. Otherwise, an **Authorization for Minor Pick-Up** form must be completed by the primary contact.
- Children will not be released to any person without verification of identity of the person at pick-up.
- Children will be signed out of in our ProCare system at the time of pick-up by an authorized person.

Be prepared to present your identification and make sure that anyone who is picking up your child has proper picture identification and is on the authorized pick-up list.

Students will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Students in before-school care will be signed out by the Site Supervisor at 7:45am for children eating breakfast in the cafeteria and 8am for all other children.

Emergency Pick-Up

If your child is being picked-up by someone not listed on your authorized pick-up persons, the following steps must be completed to ensure the safety and security of your child:

- The primary contact must call the administrative office or the after-school site cell phone before 3pm. After 3pm, call the after-school site cell phone.
- The security code on the enrollment form and name of the person picking-up must be given.
- The pick-up person must present a valid ID that matches the legal name given by the primary signer.

This procedure is for emergencies only, if the individual arrives again to pick-up the children and they are not listed as an authorized pick-up person, they will be turned away by the Site Supervisor.

Late Pick-Up

A **\$10 Late Pick-Up Fee** will be applied for each 15-minute increment after 6:00 pm if your child has not been picked up. This fee takes affect at 6:01 pm.

- We will attempt to contact the parents and emergency contacts to arrange pick-up of the child after 6:00pm.
- Our staff are still on the clock when parents are late picking up, therefore Late Pick-Up Fees will **not** be reduced or waived for any reason to include traffic and weather issues.
- This fee must be paid in full along with your weekly tuition by the following Wednesday no later than 5:00 pm.
- If you have three Late Pick-Up Fees, your child may be removed from the program.
- We will contact the Police Department if your child is not picked up by 7:00 pm.

Early Dismissal Days

After-school programs will be provided from the dismissal of school at each site on school district scheduled early dismissal days at no additional cost. Be advised that after-school programs may be cancelled on these days per the district's guidance.

Inclement Weather

In the event of a school closing, your child's before and after-school program will also be closed.

- If there is a delayed start, before-school care will be closed.
- If there is an unscheduled early dismissal, after-school programs will be closed, and you will need to pick up your child from school at the time of the school closing.
- Inclement weather closings will be announced through local news channels 4, 5, 8 and/or 11.
- Accounts will not be refunded due to inclement weather.

Personal Belongings

- All belongings should be clearly marked with your child's name.
- Money is not allowed except for field trip purposes or special occasions. If your child brings money to the program, Tarrant County Kids cannot be responsible for lost or stolen money, or purchases made. If your child purchases something the staff deems inappropriate, the item will be taken away and given to the parents to pick up.
- Children can bring personal gaming systems, toys, and other personal items. However, if an item becomes disruptive, it will be taken away and given to parents at pick up.
- Please note that your child's time on their electronics will be limited.
- Please remind your child to take all their belongings home every day.
- Children will not be permitted to share their personal electronics and toys; we ask that all belongings stay with your child or in their backpack.
- Once signed into the program, children will not be permitted back into the school to retrieve items left in their classroom or other areas of the school.

Tarrant County Kids will not assume responsibility for lost, stolen or broken items at the school site or on field trips.

Children In Pre-K 4 & Kindergarten

Children enrolled in TCK must be potty trained and not require restroom assistance. In the event that your child has a toileting accident, we request you to send an extra pair of clothes in your child's backpack in a sealed Ziploc bag labeled "After School Program". If your child requires assistance staff will assist only by providing cleaning materials and unbuttoning/buttoning of clothes as needed. If a child is unable to clean themselves properly on their own, does not have a change of clothes, or has multiple toileting accidents, their parent or guardian will be called, and the child will be sent home.

Personal Communication Devices

To avoid interference with program facilitation, your child's cell phone use will be limited. If your child needs to communicate with you on an emergency basis, the program's phone will be made available. Children are not permitted to text and make calls without the Site Supervisors supervision. We will not be able to accommodate daily communication but will make every effort to see that your child's needs are met.

Clothing Policy

Tarrant County Kids adheres to district and campus level dress code policies for participants and Rocketeers. TCK prefers students to wear closed toed shoes to participate in indoor and outdoor physical activities.

Parental Observation & Participation

Tarrant County Kids has an open-door policy whereby parents can observe their child(ren), operation, and program activities, without prior notice, at any time during the hours of operation. Parents wishing to stay longer than 15 minutes must have a current background check and volunteer form on file with Tarrant County Kids and be approved by the Director of Tarrant County Kids.

Parent Conferences

Our programs do not have scheduled parent conferences, but we welcome ongoing communications to support your child's learning and development. Appointments may be scheduled by contacting the TCK Manager over your student's campus.

Parental Notifications

We strive to keep all parents informed regarding program/policy changes or other important information affecting your child or your account as they occur. Parents are notified of these changes either by posted notice at the program site, written notice given to the parents at the program site, and emails from our administrative office.

Withdrawal From Services

You are required to call or email the administrative office prior to withdrawal if your child is no longer going to attend the program. A Withdrawal Request Form will be sent to you to complete. Re-admission will require an enrollment fee per enrollment policies. Link website for current parents

Grievance Policy


Should a problem, question or complaint arise, please speak with the Site Supervisor.

- If you are not satisfied, you may contact the Program Manager.
- If you are not satisfied after speaking with the Program Manager, you may contact the Director of Tarrant County Kids.
- If, after speaking with the Director of Tarrant County Kids, you are not satisfied, you may contact the COO.
- All problems, questions or comments concerning billing and enrollments should be directed to the Administrative Office.
- We welcome your ideas, comments, and questions. Please feel free to contact us without hesitation!

Holiday Adventure Camp

Adventure Camp

Adventure Camp, our all-day programs (7:30am-6pm), is provided during most scheduled school holidays and breaks for additional fees. Enrollment is open to all/any children.

- Parents must notify or enroll at the administrative office if their child will attend Adventure Camp.
- Payments for Adventure Camp are due at the time of registration **regardless of enrollment status**. These fees will be reflected on your account the Wednesday prior to services being rendered.
- Failure to pay in advance will result in your child being turned away at the program.
- Adventure Camp dates will be posted in advance at childcare locations, posted on TCK Facebook and on our website.
- School holiday Adventure Camp is offered at  West Elementary (2911 Kingswood Blvd., Grand Prairie). Any changes to the location will be communicated via email or flyer at the site location or on our website.
- Summer Adventure Camp is offered at three locations to be announced during the spring.
- Children planning to attend Adventure Camp during the summer months are required to enroll for the summer and pay enrollment fees per enrollment policies.
- Morning and afternoon snacks are provided by Tarrant County Kids. Children may need to bring a **sack lunch** every day at Adventure Camp; information will be provided closure to these dates.

Transportation

During Adventure Camp field trips, transportation is provided using AISD/district school buses with district bus drivers. We do not transport children during before and after-school programs.

For Tarrant County Kids to transport your child, written authorization is required from the primary payer prior to field trips. In the absence of written authorization, parents may drive their children to and from field trips; however, since there will be no staff available at the childcare site during the field trip, children may not be left at the site and parents will be asked to come and pick up their child.

Holidays

Holiday care is provided during most school holidays and breaks **EXCEPT** for the following:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| • Labor Day | • Memorial Day |
| • Good Friday | • Thanksgiving Fall Break & Black Friday |
| • Dolores Huerta & Cesar Chaves Day | • Independence Day |
| • Juneteenth | • Christmas Eve & Christmas Day |
| • New Year's Eve & New Year's Day | • 4 th of July |

A list of Adventure Camp dates is available on our website at www.TCKids.org.

Behavioral Expectations

Student & Parent Responsibilities

Parents will receive communication daily from on-site staff regarding their child's progress in TCK programs. Staff will work collaboratively with parents/guardians for the success of their child.

Students must...

1. Learn to accept the consequences for his/her own actions.
2. Respect the rules that guide him/her during the day and will control his/her feelings so that his/her actions do not hurt anyone in the program.
3. Not willfully destroy or harm any equipment or property in the building, or anyone else's property while he/she is in the program.
4. Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
5. Not using inappropriate language.
6. Remain with a staff member always.
7. Come to the program site immediately after school or upon the completion of extracurricular activities.
8. Be able to arrive directly and independently to his/her classroom or directed area upon dismissal from before-school care.
9. Return materials and equipment to the place they found them.
10. Finish activities and clean up afterward.
11. Be able to use the restroom without assistance.
12. Be able to successfully operate within a child/staff ratio of 15:1.

Parents must...

1. Act in a respectful manner when dropping off or picking up their child.
 - o Abusive language or threatening behavior will not be tolerated and may be grounds for removal.
2. Assist us in working with their child regarding behavioral issues.
 - o Appropriate behavior and cooperation is expected of all program participants.
3. Parents are asked to wait near the entrance while their children gather personal belongings. Staff assistance can be given to a child to aid in the sign-out process if necessary.

Custodial Challenges

Girls Inc. of Tarrant County and TCK staff are dedicated to providing excellent experiences for the students we have the honor of serving. However, staff are not responsible for mediating custodial disputes in relation to the children. For children in these circumstances:

- Unlike school personnel, TCK staff are not trained, nor do we accept court/ custody documentation. TCK will not get involved in custodial or legal concerns.
- TCK staff will monitor authorized pick-ups as determined by the primary account parent/guardian and only allow pick-ups that are authorized. It is up to all individuals involved to honor the court's determined authorizations, agreed upon dates, and times. TCK does not monitor these court orders.
- Understand that parents/guardians are solely responsible for following any court decisions or agreements. TCK staff are not to provide enforcement nor monitoring of these decisions beyond listed authorizations.
- Any perceived indiscretions in relation to court decisions or agreements need to be addressed to the proper authorities, not TCK staff members.
- Parents/guardians are expected to work together to ensure the implementation of a plan that allows TCK staff to remain uninvolved and to focus on program operation.

Placing TCK staff in a situation where they are requested or expected to enforce or monitor custodial challenges may result in suspension and/or removal from the program.

Developmental Milestones

Developmental Milestones trackers are reviewed and utilized as a tool to encourage ongoing conversations between families and professionals for children ages 4-5. These milestones help to identify the need for additional screening (between universal screening ages, as needed) when there is a potential developmental concern. Milestones are just one part of these communication tools. These milestone trackers are not developmental guidelines or standards for children's development. They should not and are not used as screening or diagnostic tools to detect developmental delays. If developmental concerns are noted, the next step is to schedule a parent conference with the Program Manager to discuss the suitability of your child for our program.

Discipline & Guidance

In accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance, our agency adheres to the following guidelines:

- Discipline must be:
 - Individualized and consistent for each child;
 - Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
 - Directed toward teaching this child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 - Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
- There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 - Punishment, shaking, or biting a child;
 - Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 - Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 - Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language;
 - Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed;
 - Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

The Tarrant County Kids standard of child guidance is positive and based on assisting the child to learn to better control his/her responses to situations.

Challenging Behaviors

When a child demonstrates inappropriate or disruptive behavior, such as activities that put other children or staff at risk of harm (ie, hitting, biting, throwing materials, etc.) or when a child creates an environment that makes it difficult for others to learn, it becomes necessary for staff to intervene. The following actions will be taken in addressing challenging behaviors in our program to ensure the safety of everyone.

1. The child will be told that their behavior is inappropriate. The teacher will first talk to the child about the behavior and try to guide the child into using more appropriate ways to communicate.
2. The child will be redirected and, if necessary, given a short time away to calm down away from the rest of the children.
3. Teachers and/or the director will have ongoing conversations with parents regarding their child and any concerning or challenging behaviors.

Collaboration between our program and parents/guardians is critical in helping each child succeed and overcome any challenging behaviors. By maintaining regular contact with parents, we are striving for the following:

- For parents and staff to express any concerns related to the child's challenging behavior
- To collaborate on strategies in addressing the challenging behaviors
- To keep parents informed of their child's progress; and
- Keep the goals and objectives of our program in mind, which include valuing each child as their own individual self, building social and academic skills that prepare each child for continued learning and successes in life, provide a nurturing and safe environment for all children, and working with the unique skills and abilities of each child. Our handbook covers goals and objective more in depth and we strive to adhere to these goals.

Communication can take place through phone calls, emails, parent communication app, parent conferences, behavior plans, daily reports, or other methods as determined by parents and staff.

We will make every effort to work with families to resolve inappropriate behaviors with their children. In some cases, a child may need additional support and we may ask families to find another care facility for their child. Medical and Developmental resources are located in the Parent Resource area for further support. We will give reasonable time for parents to find alternative care when possible.

Behavioral Guidelines

When a student chooses to not follow TCK guidelines and policies:

- He/she will be verbally redirected for minor incidents.
- He/she will be separated from the other children in a brief reflection time away. Reflection times are approximately 1 minute long per the age of student and are designed to allow the student to think about his/her actions and start fresh afterwards.
- Additional reflection times may be used for continued misbehavior, and a Behavior Report will be written. **Behavior Reports** are on-site notices designed to inform parents of their child's behavior. We require the parent to sign the Behavior Report at pick-up that is then turned in to our administrative office.
- When two or three Behavior Reports are written for a child, the parent will receive:
 - **1st Letter** – This is the first warning. This letter also serves as a reminder to review our rules and policies within the parent handbook. The Behavior Reports will be summarized. If another Behavior Report is written after the parent has received the 1st Letter, then the parent will receive the 2nd Letter.
 - **2nd Letter** – This is the final warning. This letter is our last attempt to encourage positive behavioral change. Behavior Reports will be summarized. If another Behavior Report is written after the parent has received the 2nd Letter, the parent will then receive the 3rd Letter.

- **3rd Letter** – This letter is a notification of suspension or removal from the program. Suspension lasts up to five program days. Upon return from a suspension, the child is subject to further suspension or removal if the behavioral issues continue.

Suspension/Removal from Program

- Behavior that is more extreme, such as acts of physical aggression or inappropriate language and/or touching, may be grounds for immediate suspension and/or removal from the program.
- If a child destroys property belonging to Tarrant County Kids or the school, the parent will be responsible for paying for the cost of the damage.
- Any child exhibiting behavioral problems will not be allowed to participate in field trips.

Tarrant County Kids reserves the right to remove any child at any time for any purpose the agency feels is reasonable. Tarrant County Kids also reserves the right to request without advanced notice that a child is picked up immediately due to behavioral concerns.

Tarrant County Kids strives to provide a quality experience for all children; however, it is not the best environment for every child, or for the same child at different developmental stages.

Emergency Procedures

Medical Release

Parents of all children in our programs are required to sign off at registration a medical release form providing Tarrant County Kids permission to seek medical attention for your child in case of an emergency.

- **It is imperative that parents notify the Administrative Office of any change to home, work and medical phone numbers.**
- Incorrect contact numbers may result in the removal of your child from our program.

In Case of Accident

Tarrant County Kids always considers the child's safety above all other factors and will call for emergency medical assistance whenever immediate medical attention is needed.

- A member of the staff will carry out immediate First Aid/CPR and/or call for assistance.
- A member of the management staff will call emergency contacts listed on enrollment forms to advise you of any accident needing medical attention.
- In case the parents or designated person cannot be reached, a staff member will have the authority to transport the child to a hospital via 9-1-1 or emergency personnel.

Medication Administration

We will not administer medication (prescription or non-prescription) without the written authorization of the parent on an **Authorization for Administering Medication** form.

- Parents must complete an **Authorization for Administering Medication** form at the main office when enrolling and provide medication when the form is submitted. **The office will not accept the form without the medication and the enrollment will be considered incomplete. The office will ensure the site receives both form and medication in time for the child's first day.**
- The Authorization for Administering Medication form must specify the dates, times and amounts of medication to be given, and it will be kept on file at the program location.
- Any medication brought to the office must be in its original container and clearly labeled with the child's first and last name.
- For children with periodic and recurring medical problems requiring continuous medications (such as asthma or diabetic medications), the parent must provide written authorization every six months.
- **Medication must not be expired.**
- TCK staff do not have access to medication on file in the school nurses office.

Any medication that is brought back to our administrative office will be held for a maximum of two weeks. Our team will make an attempt to contact the parent/guardian to make to make arrangements to pick-up. After the two week period the medication will be disposed of.

Special Care Needs

We require a statement of your child's special care needs or diagnosis to include, but not limited to, food/other allergies, existing illness, previous serious illness/injuries, hospitalizations within the last 12 months, behavioral/emotional issues, and any medications prescribed for continuous, long-term use.

- **Food Allergies** – A Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan is necessary for any child with a food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional (we have this form in our office). The form must be signed by both the parent and the child's health-care professional.

- **Other Special Care Needs** – A written, signed and dated statement from either the parent/guardian or the child’s physician describing the child’s special condition.
- Your child must be able to participate in a group setting and not require one-on-one care.

Children with disabilities and other special learning needs will be welcome in our programs to the extent that they can participate in our usual programs. Accommodation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. TCK staff will attempt to bridge language barriers for all families.

In Case of Illness

Please do not bring your child to the school or Adventure Camp with a contagious illness. If it is apparent that your child is ill and should not remain at the site, you will be called and asked to make other arrangements.

- Children who did not attend school for reasons of illness cannot attend after-school care that day.
- If your child feels ill during the program and cannot participate, we will attempt to give your child a place to rest while you are notified.
- State law requires those children with a temperature of 100.4 or higher be sent home. If a child is sent home with fever, he or she must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to the childcare program. You will be asked to pick up your child immediately.
- Signs of possible severe illness include unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, rash with fever, pink eye(s), behavioral changes, or any other unusual signs.
- If your child has had two or more episodes of diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours, the child may only return to childcare after the diarrhea or vomiting has subsided for 24 hours.

Head Lice

If a child comes to the program with head lice, we take every measure possible to prevent spreading.

- Children will not share combs or brushes.
- Children will not share towels, blankets, pillows, clothes, etc.
- Lost and found items will be laid out on a table every Friday and you will be asked to check the table for any items that might belong to your child.
 - Any leftovers lost and found will be turned into the main office every Friday night.
- Staff should be aware of any itching children and will check their hair if needed. Checking any child’s hair will be done discreetly and conducted outside to eliminate any embarrassment.
- You will be called and told to come and get your child immediately.
- The child will be asked to sit near the staff table until you pick him/her up, but all efforts will be made to not embarrass the child in front of their peers.
- The child may not come back to the program until 24 hours after their treatment has been applied and completed, and any lice or their eggs (nits) must be gone for a length of 24 hours.

Safety Drills

Fire drills are conducted monthly at each of our sites. Severe weather and Lockdown drills are conducted every 3 months. We use the districts Crisis Procedure Manual as our **Emergency Preparedness** plan. The manual is available at each site and the administrative office for your review at any time.

Additional Information

Gang-Free Zone Information

A gang-free zone is a designated area where certain gang-related activity is prohibited and is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The goal of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 100 feet of our program is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty.

You may review our posting regarding gang-free zones, which is located on the site wall locker.

Licensing & Minimum Standards

Tarrant County Kids maintains the minimum childcare standards as set forth by the Department of Family and Protective Services. A copy of the Minimum Standards, and our most recent Childcare Regulations Inspection Report are posted for your review at every childcare site and are available upon request at our administrative office.

Parents may contact the local Childcare Regulations office of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) by calling 817-321-8000 or visit them through the DFPS web-site at

www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/about_child_care_licensing.

All TCK programs operate at or above Child Care Regulations Minimum Standards. Some TCK campuses are classified as exempt from Child Care Regulations.

To report suspicions or incidents of child abuse or neglect, contact the Child Abuse Hotline at:

- 1-800-252-5400.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

An emergency preparedness plan is designed to ensure the safety of children during an emergency by addressing staff responsibilities and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation and relocation. The plan addresses the types of emergencies most likely to occur in your area including:

- An **evacuation** of the children and caregivers to a designated safe area in an emergency such as a fire or gas leak.
- A **relocation** of the children and caregivers to a designated, alternate shelter in an emergency such as a flood, a hurricane, medical emergency, or communicable disease outbreak.
- The **sheltering** and **lock-down** of children and caregivers within the operation to temporarily protect them from situations such as a tornado, volatile person on the premises, or an endangering person in the area.

Evacuation, Relocation, and Sheltering/Lock-Down of Children

1. The first responsibility of staff in an emergency evacuation or relocation is to move the children to a designated safe area or alternate shelter known to all employees, caregivers, parents and volunteers.
 - **Fire** - The children will move in single-file line to the relocation area which is on the playground and at least 50 feet away from the building. The relocation area is posted within the gym. Each gym is equipped with a fire extinguisher located near the exit doors.
 - **Tornado or Severe Weather** - The children will move into an interior hallway that has no view of glass windows or doors. If this is not available, the location is in the nearest restrooms.
 - **Intruder** - The staff will attempt to utilize an area of the school that can be locked and where the children are hidden from view.
 - **Off grounds** - If the children must be moved off grounds, we will coordinate with district bus transportation to transport the children to the alternate shelter when necessary.
2. Children with limited mobility or who otherwise may need assistance in an emergency, such as children who have mental, visual, or hearing impairments will be given special consideration and attention by the Site Manager to ensure proper evacuation or relocation.
3. The emergency evacuation and relocation diagrams are posted in the gym.
4. The staff are responsible for moving the children to a designated location within the operation where the children should gather during a sheltering/lock-down emergency. They will bring items to allow for accountability and safety.
 - Children's Files - contains enrollment forms and contact information for each child.
 - Blue Book - contains Emergency Preparedness Plan and first aid guide.
 - Attendance binder - contains the Attendance Sheets which track children in our care.
 - Site cell phone and charger
5. Alternate shelter will be provided at:
Girls Inc. of Tarrant County / Tarrant County Kids
2820 Matlock Road, Arlington TX 76015
or district designated location.
6. Children in attendance at the time of any emergency will be accounted for at the designated safe area or alternate shelter by conducting face-to-name attendance to establish visual confirmation of each child.

Communication

1. The site supervisor always keeps the site cell phone.
2. The site supervisor or other designated staff will use the site cell phone to communicate with local authorities, parents, program manager, Texas DFPS or the program director. If relocated to the alternate shelter, the staff may utilize the office phone: 817-468-0306

Essential Documentation

1. Staff will evacuate and relocate with the following items to allow for accountability and safety.
 - Children's Files - contains enrollment forms with parent contact information and authorization for emergency care.
 - Blue Book - contains Emergency Preparedness Plan and first aid guide.
 - Attendance binder - contains the Attendance Sheets which track children in our care.
 - Site cell phone and charger

Continuation of Care

At the end of an emergency evacuation or relocation, at least two staff will stay until all the children have been released to their parents or authorized pick-up persons.

Reunifying Children to Parents After an Emergency

During an emergency, the Site Manager or other designated staff will contact the parents with the site cell phone of all remaining children to make them aware of the emergency. Children will be released to an authorized person once signed-out by that individual.

Updates

This Parent Handbook was last updated on May 1, 2024.

**girls
inc.**

of Tarrant County



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