

kids' S.P.A.C.E.

school-based program - activity - care - enrichment

PARENT HANDBOOK

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Kids' S.P.A.C.E. of Rye, Inc.
21 Locust Avenue
Rye, NY 10580
(914) 921-3390

WELCOME

We are confident that our program will provide a most rewarding and enriching experience for your child. We appreciate the confidence you have demonstrated in choosing our program.

It is the goal of Kids' S.P.A.C.E. to provide a quality, reliable child care/enrichment program, supervised by a nurturing, educational staff, in a safe and secure environment.

This handbook should answer many of your questions as well as acquaint you with our program. And, our staff is always available. At the time of enrollment, if you would like further information about our program please contact the office to arrange for an orientation meeting. We encourage your involvement and look forward to helping your child benefit from the Kids' S.P.A.C.E. experience.

THE PROGRAM

Kids' S.P.A.C.E., inaugurated in September, 1994 is offered by an **independent**, not-for-profit community organization governed by a Board of Directors of Rye residents. It came to exist after a concerted parent effort convinced the Rye City School District (RCSD) Board of Education that a program is needed.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is open to all children who reside within the RCSD or who attend Rye City Schools and who are currently in grades K - 5th. Parents may be working, have a volunteer job, attend school or need dependable, enriched child care. The program admits children of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin, physical or mental ability. Children with special needs will be considered for admission on a case by case basis.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is located at Osborn School for the Breakfast (7:00AM – 8:30AM) and After School (3:00PM – 6:00PM) sessions. The administrative office is located at the Rye YMCA, 21 Locust Ave. Transportation is provided for children who attend the "off-site" schools.

The **philosophy** of Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is to provide an atmosphere that is as close to a home environment as possible. Self-confidence and self-expression are encouraged, as are responsibility, decision-making and respect for others. Children can relax, socialize, complete homework or participate in any number of the diverse activities we offer.

There is a balance between structured and non-structured activity. All activities are age-appropriate, appeal to many personalities and extend the children's skills and educational

experiences.

The Kids' S.P.A.C.E. curriculum currently emphasizes the importance of play -- guided forays into often self-initiated projects in nature, architecture, science and the arts. It is hoped that the children can experience the joy of discovery.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. also offers a variety of activities daily, which are integrated throughout the curriculum.

In most cases, there is no extra charge or need to register for these activities. Children are made aware of the day's offerings and encouraged to make their own choices.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Session I: (7:00 - 8:30 AM)

The Kids' S.P.A.C.E. Breakfast Club provides children with the opportunity to have breakfast in a calm, home-like atmosphere. Children must be brought to the program by a parent or guardian. Each child must be signed in with the Teacher-In-Charge. Students attending other schools are transported to their respective schools by a bus which is monitored by a Kids' S.P.A.C.E. staff member.

AFTER SCHOOL

Session III: (3-6 PM)

The Kids' S.P.A.C.E. After School session is for children in K - 5th grades. Children are encouraged to make their own choices. They may partake in a special activity such as art, sports, science and cooking. Children may also choose to socialize or relax or to study in the homework area. Upon school dismissal, children at Osborn School walk to the Kids' S.P.A.C.E. room. Children from "off-site" schools are transported by bus to the site. We provide a healthy afternoon snack.

VACATIONS/OTHER DAYS

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is also open to enrolled students on **other days**, e.g., "early school dismissal days," "vacation days as announced," and "delayed opening days." To add on extra sessions or hours, simply call our office at (914)921-3390.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. members' may participate in the Rye YMCA **vacation program** if no program is offered by Kids' S.P.A.C.E. at the member rate. Contact Rye YMCA 914-967-6363 to enroll students during school breaks from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. No bus is available.

OUR STAFF

The **staff** consists of the Teacher/Director ("Director"), and trained teaching assistants. Our staff to student ratio, which is governed by the NYS

Office of Children and Family Services, is generally kept under the requirements of 1:10.

We seek community **volunteers**, e.g., teachers in training, high school students, parents and seniors to add to the overall program enrichment. Volunteers help keep costs down.

ADMINISTRATION

The Kids' S.P.A.C.E. Administration Office is in the 2nd floor office at the Rye YMCA (921-3390), to which all inquiries concerning registration, scheduling, absences and billing should be directed.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Enrollment is granted on a first-come, first-serve basis throughout the year. However, preference is given to children needing care 5 days a week in any session for a complete school year.

For enrollment to the program, parents must complete and sign the following: Application for Registration, Parent Consent Form, Policy Statement and our OCFS-approved Health Form signed by a physician. The school's Health Form is acceptable. There is a yearly family registration fee.

Enrollment enables your child to use any portion of the program throughout the school year, on a **"scheduled"** or **"occasional"** basis.

If you use the program on a "scheduled" basis (e.g., Monday-Friday, or Monday, Wednesday, Thursday) your child is placed on the lists and is expected on those days. If you use the program on an "occasional" basis, you must call the Director, ideally 24 hours in advance to be sure there is room for your child. (Occasional fees apply)

Rye **residency** is required: Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is open to all children who reside within the RCSD or who attend Rye City Schools and who are currently enrolled in grades K - 5th.

A child residing out of the area is enrolled only if the family presents a signed contract for a home in the RCSD at the time of enrollment. Within 6 weeks, proof of residency must be provided, i.e., closing documents or the family's Con Edison bill.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. reserves the right to refuse an application or dismiss a child at any time, e.g., if a child is unable to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time or otherwise requires a disproportionate share of staff attention. Then, contractual fees are refunded on a prorated basis.

BILLING & PAYMENT

The monthly INVOICE, also known as a "PRE-BILL" itemizes the cost of your schedule for the *upcoming* month, and any other charges. The periodic STATEMENT summarizes your balance(s), invoice #(s) and payment(s).

PROGRAM FEES ARE PAID IN ADVANCE!

Payments DUE (before care)	The 10th
Payments LATE/\$20 charged	The 20th
Schedule CHANGE, last day	The 20th

SCHEDULES:

All students are scheduled. Schedules are pre-billed, with payment due by the 10th, *prior* to the month of service.

To change a student's schedule, a parent must call or write TO THE DIRECTOR ONLY before the 20th, *prior* to the month of service. ***If a schedule change is made after the 20th, prior to the month of service, parents are still responsible for the timely payment of the original schedule.***

If a student uses the program occasionally, **parents must reserve space a day or more in advance and pay for service when picking up their child/ren**. The statement and invoice(s) summarize attendance and payments-upon-service for the month just ended.

Any parent who calls in to register a child/ren on the same day(s) of the week more than 3 times in a month is technically a scheduled, not an occasional user. Our office will be contacting you to determine your actual needs for pre-billing.

FOR ALL STUDENTS:

- "Add-On" sessions or hours are accommodated if space is available that day. Parents should call our office at least 24 hours in advance. "Add-on" charges are listed on the next pre-bill.
- Once a reservation for space is made parents are billed and payment is due, whether the child attends or not.
- For any early dismissal day, any session, the session times and amounts remain the same.
- Bounced checks are very costly, to you and to us. Please take extreme care to avoid this.
- No refund or credit is given if a child is absent for whatever reason, including snow days.
- If parents have a past due or unpaid balance, their child may not attend or continue to attend.
- Scheduled users who do not pay their pre-bills by the 20th are assumed not to need the

program and wish to have their schedules dropped from our lists automatically. A \$20 late charge is billed, and any balances are collected.

- "\$5 Forgot-To-Call" Charge: Any user who forgets to call/write about a child's absence--for illness, attendance, schedule change, etc. is billed a \$5 service charge. Tracking missing children takes occupies staff that should otherwise be supervising and caring for children. *Our office answering machine operates 24 hours a day.*
- If there is a legitimate credit on an account, a credit memo is issued, which must be used within 1 year from issue date.
- Fees & Discounts: See Current Brochure
Late Payment: Per month, \$20
Late Pickup: 1st\$20/2nd\$30/3rd\$50
Bank Fees (NSF): Each time \$30

ABSENCE AND ILLNESS

Keep us informed of absences -- for illness, changes to your child's schedule or for any reason - - BEFORE 10:00 AM THAT DAY. Our answering machine operates 24 hours a day.

When we are left uninformed of an absence on her/his scheduled day, the child is considered missing until found. When parents cannot be reached, a search is conducted, including contacting local authorities.

Report all illness on the first day it appears. Include a diagnosis of any communicable disease, e.g., head lice, strep throat, scarlet fever, chicken pox, etc. Parents are notified if children are exposed to contagious disease.

Children with these symptoms are considered to be mildly ill and may not be in a child care program that is only for well children.

- The illness, or child's reaction to it, requires more care than staff can provide or compromises the health and safety of others.
- Significant fever, as defined below:
- Children over the age of six months should be excluded and referred to a health professional whenever fever is accompanied by a behavior change, stiff neck, a rash, unusual irritability, poor feeding, vomiting or excess crying. Fever means:
Rectal temperature above 102;
Axillary (armpit) temperature above 100; or Oral temperature above 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Persistent diarrhea, defined as three or more stools in a 24 hour period, when that pattern represents:
 - An increased number of stools compare to the child's normal pattern
 - Increased stool water
 - Diarrhea accompanied with symptoms of

dehydration, such as sunken eyes, dry skin, concentrated urine or small amounts of urine, or no urine in four hours; or

- Diarrhea accompanied with blood in the stool.
- Undiagnosed rash
- Vomiting two or more times in previous 24 hour period, or any vomiting accompanied by symptoms of dehydration or other signs of illness
- Until medical evaluation allows inclusion, signs and symptoms of possible illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, persistent abdominal pain, discolored urine, refusal to eat or drink, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs.

Your child must be WITHOUT FEVER 24 HOURS before returning to Kids' S.P.A.C.E.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is licensed to administer certain medications. If a child requires medication, we must have:

- **A physician's form**, which states: the drug, the dose and the time(s) the medicine is to be given.
- **A form from the parent or guardian** giving permission for a staff member to administer the medication.
- **Medicine in a properly labeled bottle** supplied by the pharmacy. Do not send unmarked medicine or loose pills.

Please contact the director for further information regarding the requirements for medication administration.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES & ACCIDENTS:

In the event of a medical emergency or accident Kids' S.P.A.C.E. staff will administer First Aid. When necessary, 911 will be called, and the child will be transferred by ambulance to a medical facility. Staff will immediately make every effort to notify the parent or persons in the emergency file. All information on emergency files must be kept current.

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. Discipline Policy

It is our goal to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions through clear and consistent rules. We attempt to achieve this by redirecting children into another activity, rewarding positive behavior and allowing children to discuss their feelings. The Director strives to build a partnership with parents where discipline becomes an issue. We reserve the right to suspend/ and or terminate Kids' S.P.A.C.E. services for inappropriate behavior that continues to remain unresolved according to our rules and philosophy.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Children from "off-site" schools are transported by bus to/from the site. We coordinate bus schedules,

absences and changes daily with contact persons at each school. Please keep us informed of absences and changes.

As a rule, children enjoy the bus ride. It is helpful if parents walk through the bus routine with their child when beginning the program.

DROPPING OFF & PICKING UP YOUR CHILDREN

Parents dropping off children at the program are required to make contact with a staff member and sign their child in.

Parents or authorized persons picking up children from Kids' S.P.A.C.E. must **sign out** when leaving. Children may leave the site only with an authorized person listed on the Application for Registration. **Closing time** is 6 PM.

EMERGENCIES

In **weather emergencies**, the program is closed when the Rye City Schools (RCSD) are closed. For information, listen to WFAS (1230 AM), or watch News 12, or call RCSD from 6:45 AM on.

On **delay opening days**, days when the RCSD delays the start of school, **Kids' S.P.A.C.E. will be on a DELAY!** For example if RCSD is on a 2hour delay, Kids' S.P.A.C.E. will open at 9:00am. Children are transported to school when class begins.

If a **snow emergency** develops, we remain open until either you or your emergency back up names are reached. In any weather emergency, parents must respond immediately in picking up their child. In a dire emergency only may a safe house be invoked.

OTHER CONCERNS

About child abuse and neglect: Each staff member and volunteer has been fingerprinted and screened by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services to verify that s/he has not been the subject of an abuse complaint.

As educators, each staff member is mandated to report suspected child abuse, endangerment or neglect to the appropriate state/local authorities.

In addition, the staff has been instructed to ask a parent who arrives at the program impaired by drugs or alcohol and is unable safely to transport child home to find an alternate means of transportation.

These procedures are implemented in good faith for the welfare of Kids' S.P.A.C.E. children.

COMMUNICATIONS & VISITS

Parents are welcome at Kids' S.P.A.C.E. any time. The Director or Head Teacher will be available for specific questions or concerns.

Conferences may be requested by the Director, staff member or parent. We encourage parents to request a conference at any time for any concern.

Parent Involvement There are many opportunities for parents to have input in the program. We have several Family Events throughout the school year. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer as part of our Board of Directors or Advisory Board.

Information provided to Kids' S.P.A.C.E. by families regarding their child or family will be held in the strictest confidence.

FIELD TRIPS

Kids' S.P.A.C.E. offers local field trips through out the school year. Proper permission slips will be required.

STAFF BABYSITTING POLICY

Any babysitting arrangements made with a staff member, outside of Kids' S.P.A.C.E. is not part of the services provided by the program. Parents must make babysitting arrangements with staff on their own time **NOT** through Kids' S.P.A.C.E. program. If a staff member transports a child home they must be listed as an emergency pick up person for that child.

Current fee Kids' S.P.A.C.E. Fee Schedule

Family registration fee: \$80

Scheduled monthly rates:

Breakfast Program: (7 – 8:30AM)

5 days \$235

4 days \$220

3 days \$180

2 days \$140

Occasional \$ 22

After School Program: (3 – 6PM)

5 days \$465

4 days \$435

3 days \$385

2 days \$300

Occasional \$ 44

Sibling Discounts:

20% for each additional child

Vacation:

(10-3) Members \$60 Non Member \$80

(8-6) Members \$75 Non Members \$95

Early Dismissal: \$44