

Kids Connection

Connecting active bodies and minds

Parent Handbook

Genesis Place

800 East Lake Blvd. NE

Airdrie, AB

Growing
the **whole**
person

The preschool where kids
develop healthy habits
that last a lifetime.



Email: kids.connection@airdrie.ca

Phone: 403.948.8804 ext. 5510

Our Program

At Kids Connection, we believe that our program allows children the opportunity to develop and use new talents, skills and interests that will assist them when they enter the school system and set them up for success throughout their life.

Our unique approach

What sets us apart is that in addition to exploring the foundation of reading, writing and arithmetic, and working and collaboration with others, we also believe in developing a strong foundation in physical literacy. While children master their 123's and ABC's they also master hopping, throwing, kicking, catching, and simply being active. By balancing classroom time with physical activities, our program will prepare all children for a lifelong, health and active journey.

A physically active life starts now

We are intellectual, social and physical beings. We want our children to be smart and well-adjusted, but first and foremost we want them to be healthy. A physically active life is a healthy one and it starts early in life by developing skills, confidence and a love of movement. The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for children state that being active can help young children maintain a healthy weight, improve movement skills, have fun, be happy, develop self-confidence and improve learning and attention. We focus on the foundations of physical literacy and ensure your child meets the required time guidelines each day so you don't have to worry about this after a long day at work.

Playing together builds social and emotional intelligence

Children learn best through play. Our program offers children the opportunity to choose learning centres to explore with other classmates. Sensory tables open up the chance to explore varied textures and materials while sharing the experience with peers. These are fantastic times to discover how to share and empathize with others. Arts and craft centres provide time for imaginations to soar. All of our play areas are designed to give children a chance to play creatively using their imaginations to create their own experiences.

Expanding minds through cognitive learning

Circle and table times create opportunities for children to develop their cognitive learning skills. At circle time we explore numbers, letters, counting, pattern recognition and listening skills. This group time allows learning to be shared with friends and makes it fun and challenging at the same time. During table times, we work together on fine motor skills like cutting, pasting and other important skills such as letter identification and following directions. Early literacy and language skills are explored by combining calendar activities, name recognition activities, letter of the week program, special helpers, reading and listening centres.

Kids Connection is fun and challenging

At Kids Connection, your child will dive into themes related to the world in a way that they can relate these ideas to their everyday life. Children are encouraged to participate in a variety of fun and challenging activities that involve music and small equipment to explore creative movement in the dance studio, games and skill development in the gym and pool, learning centres and group activities in the classroom to provide a well-balanced program and help develop well rounded participants.

We look forward to working with your child through play to set them up for success not only for school, but for all aspects of their lives. Together we will master the foundations of cognitive, social and physical literacy.

4 to 5 year old programs

These classes are designed to be a preparation for kindergarten. Children will work on letter identification, number identification, printing their names, patterns and early math activities. Group activities at the table will focus on crafts and learning games. Socially this program encourages building relationships and understanding friend's feelings and their own feelings. In the gym and dance studio we focus on group play, skill development and activities with simple rules and directions. The Canadian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth recommends "An accumulation of at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity involving a variety of aerobic activities." These classes will spend 60 min per day in the gym or dance studio focusing on physical literacy skills. As well, these classes include two complete sets of complete swimming lessons during the year with an aquatic instructor.

3 year old program

This program is designed to introduce children to a social, learning environment. Children will work on letter identification, basic counting, group activities and identifying feelings. Physical literacy and skill competency will be developed when in the gym and dance studio. The Canadian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years recommends "At least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities spread throughout the day, of which at least 60 minutes is energetic play". These classes will spend 45-60 min per class in the gym or dance studio focusing on physical literacy skills.

Research shows that without the development of physical literacy, many children and youth withdraw from physical activity and sport and turn to more inactive and/or unhealthy choices during their leisure time.

All of our classes will develop these skills both indoors and outdoors as we will go outside for recreation time as often as the weather allows and in every season. Outdoor play is a critical component to all of our classes and provides all children a chance to explore nature activities.

Special events and parent participation

Throughout the year we have special theme days and celebrations, field trips, special guests, class photos, special helper program, and Scholastic book orders to name a few. Each month we will send home a newsletter and calendar to highlight the special activities taking place and to share important information about our programs.

At the end of the year we host a special graduation ceremony for all classes where you will get a scrapbook and photo CD of the class.

Parents are encouraged to participate and support their children in the program. We have regular volunteer opportunities throughout the year both in and out of the classroom. Special events such as; Christmas concerts, sharing days and graduation ceremonies are wonderful opportunities for parents to get together with other families and participate in our classroom.

There is no fundraising involved for parents as all of our costs are covered by our registration fees.

Our teachers

Our instructors are required to have; a minimum of the Child Development Worker certification from the Alberta government, current Standard First Aid and CPR certification, and current Criminal Record Checks with the Vulnerability section.

Ratio

4-5-year-old programs: 1 instructor to 12 children. Capacity: 24

3-year-old programs: 1 instructor to 9 children. Capacity: 18

Program Structure

It is important to dress your child for active play. Comfortable clothing and Velcro shoes are the best. Please do not send your child in flip flops as they are not appropriate for active play.

Your child will experience the following activities in a typical day;

- Welcome, circle time, recreation activity, craft, free play, story time and snack.
- Recreation activities include; modified sports/fitness, and outside activities.
- Creative movement activities include; music, drama and imaginative movement.

Participant Birthday's and Cultural Heritage

We will celebrate your child's birthday at our circle times as close to their actual birthday as we can. For children born in August we will celebrate at the end of September and for those born in July, we will celebrate in June.

All of the Kids Connection programs celebrate multi-culturalism and children will have the opportunity during the year to share their culture and traditions with the class. Families are welcome and encouraged on their child's special day to wear any traditional clothing that they may have, to bring in items or stories that they would like to share about their culture and traditions. As well they may bring in traditional snacks that they would like to offer to the class. Please check with the instructors beforehand regarding any classroom allergies.

If you would like to discuss a sharing time with the instructors, please book a time either before or after class time.

Volunteers

This is a non-parented program. However, we encourage parents to volunteer throughout the year in the classroom, during special events and on field trips. Parents can sign up to be volunteers and will then be contacted by the instructors starting in mid-October with schedule information. This is not an obligation for parents but an opportunity to be involved in our program.

Confidentiality and Volunteer Agreements must be signed by all those volunteering in the program. Any information gained, in any way, while in the classroom cannot be repeated outside the classroom, shared with other parents or used as the basis for comparison or criticism of any child.

What to Bring to class

- Small labelled backpack with a complete change of clothes in a plastic bag.
- Small healthy snack in a labelled snack bag.
- Water bottle

What Not to Bring

- Toys from home except on planned show and tell days.
- Candy or junk food.
- Peanuts or peanut products.

Snacks

To ensure that children are receiving the needed energy to participate in an active program, we request that all snacks follow the Canada Food Guide and consist of two food groups plus a drink.

Snack Examples: grapes cut in half and cheese
 small apple slices and yogurt
 bite sized carrots and whole wheat crackers

We ask that you send snacks that your children can open easily on their own. Snacks that present a choking hazard like grapes and round fruits and vegetables must be cut in half or they will be sent home. Fruit cups and yogurt tubes tend to get spilt or explode during opening and then your child doesn't have a proper snack to eat.

Drink Examples: water, 100% fruit juice or milk

If the snacks do not meet the Canada Food Guide criteria, we will send a note home to the parents to remind them of the snack policy.

Child Guidance Approach

Our approach to discipline is based on helping children to build and maintain positive self-esteem, and to help them develop the skills for managing their own behaviour. We set and clearly define limits and standards of behaviour for the group which promotes safety, harmony and responsibility. We support children as they learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviours. The children are encouraged to talk about their feelings of anger and frustration rather than acting out.

We will never use any form of physical punishment, unreasonable consequences or verbal threats. We will always emphasize the positive. Consequences will be directed at the behaviour, not the child.

Staff will keep in touch with parents about their child's behaviour. If we feel that the behaviour is not improving, we will contact the parents to discuss the concern.

We reserve the right to remove children from the program due to severe behavioural issues that have not been rectified. When the safety of the participant, other class members, instructors or volunteers are put at risk, parents will be contacted to pick up their child from the program. Physical and verbal abuse will not be tolerated.

Toileting

As we know, toilet training can be ongoing at this age. However, we do require a few things;

- No diapers but pull ups are allowed.
- Parents should be actively working with their children to use the toilet independently i.e. wiping and aim
- We do not accept training potties or special seats.
- Instructors are not able to wipe bottoms or change children if there is a bowel movement accident.
- If a bowel movement accident occurs, parents will be called immediately.

If we have any ongoing concerns about toileting issues, the instructors will contact the parent directly to discuss the situation and possible solutions.

Registration

Registration for Kids Connection preschool programs begin the end of January. Registration will be ongoing until classes have reached capacity. When classes are at capacity, parents will have an option to be placed on a waiting list.

Please register in person between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday - Friday. Or by emailing bobbi.thomas@airdrie.ca

Cancellation/Withdrawal

It is requested that 30 days' written notice be provided.

Arrivals and Departures

Parents **MUST** bring children into the classroom, sign in and make sure a staff member is aware that your child has arrived. Please inform us in writing of anyone else authorized to drop-off and pick-up your child. During pick-up at the end of class, please sign-out and notify a staff member you are taking your child.

We will not release any child to an unauthorized adult.

ID is required for anyone new picking up a child. No Exceptions.

Please be punctual in picking your child up as lateness can cause upsets and have a negative impact.

Parking

When dropping off and picking up children please ensure that you use the parking lot and not drop off in the front of the building, as this is a no parking zone. Cars parked in the drop off zone could be ticketed and towed.

****Do not leave children unattended in your vehicles while dropping off or picking up****

Absence

If your child is absent, parents are still responsible for the full fee. Please notify the instructors of an absence before the class starts by calling the Preschool, Children's and Youth Programmer at 403.948.8804 ext. 5510.

If the absence is planned, such as vacation or appointments, you can leave a note in the attendance basket prior to the event.

Illness

If your child is ill, he/she **MUST** be kept at home including; bad coughs, temperatures higher than 101, diarrhea, infectious disease including pink eye, head lice or impetigo. If your child develops an illness during class time, we will contact you and ask you to pick them up as soon as possible. If your child appears to be too ill to participate in the program, instructors reserve the right to not have the child in the program for the day. We have a full list of communicable diseases available and information if you have any questions or concerns about your child's health.

Please inform us immediately of any illness, rashes, etc. that your child may have before they enter the classroom.

If your child is too sick to participate in the program activities, they are too sick to attend the program that day.

Medical Emergency Procedure

If any serious medical situation arises during class time, the Kids Connection program will call 911 for emergency assistance. Parents would then be contacted. Any costs associated with 911 calls, transportation and further medical assistance would be the responsibility of the parent.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency and evacuation of Genesis Place, we will follow the emergency procedures as outlined in the Genesis Place Evacuation Plan.

Inclement Weather Procedure

Kids Connection preschool will only be closed due to inclement weather if Genesis Place is closed. When the building is open, so are we.

If you would like to confirm the closure with the preschool please call 403.948.8804 ext. 5510.

Complaint Policy

When concerned with the care of your child please feel free to contact the following individuals:

1. Kids Connection Instructors – please contact your child’s instructor directly.
2. Preschool, Children’s and Youth Programmer –403.948.8804 ext. 5510
3. Fitness and Leisure Team Leader –403.948.8804 ext. 5568

The process for dealing with complaints:

1. A discussion between the parent and the Kids Connection team (this could include instructors, Programmer and Team Leader if necessary) to resolve the issue.
2. If you are not satisfied that your concern or complaint has been dealt with you should contact :

Roberta Rossow
Child Care Licensing Officer
Human Services
Child and Family Services Division – Calgary Region
Westmount Regional Services Office
140, 4820 Richard Rd SW
Calgary, AB T3E 6L1
Tel: 403. 355.4238 Fax: 403. 297.7340