

**Kids' Connection  
District 742 Community Education  
Before School Child Care**



**2009-2010 Parent Handbook**



**St Cloud Area Community Education  
216 8<sup>th</sup> Ave N  
Waite Park, MN 56387  
(320) 529-6500 ext 6274**

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## Program Purpose

The St Cloud Area Schools Kids' Connection Program provides an inclusive, safe, enriching, educational and FUN environment, encouraging the development of positive social skills for elementary school-aged children.

Staffed by trained adults, programs are designed to offer experiential learning in areas such as: active play, dramatic play, crafts, art, games, and academic enrichment.

The Kids' Connection staff work closely with school staff to provide the best care for each individual child.

The Kids' Connection Program follows all Independent School District #742 School Board approved policies including those outlined in the *Student Discipline Code*.

The Kids' Connection Office is located in the McKinley Education Center, Community Education Office, 216 8<sup>th</sup> Ave N, Waite Park, MN 56387

## Program Hours

The Kids' Connection Program runs before school from 6:30 a.m. to the start of the school day.

## Enrollment

The Kids' Connection Program is designed to serve children enrolled in the Westwood and Madison Elementary Schools (kindergarten through sixth grade).

Enrollment is on a first come, first served basis. Children enrolled for one school year have priority for enrollment for the next coming year, provided necessary forms are completed during the early registration period. If an account is past due, enrollment will be postponed until account is paid in full.

A child is enrolled in the program when the following have been completed and returned to the Community Education Office:

1. Parent Contract
2. Emergency Card
3. Non-Refundable Registration Fee (\$20/child)

No registrations will be accepted from families that have outstanding balances from the previous school year program.

**All registration materials and fees must be submitted to the Community Education Office a *minimum of three working days prior to the day you wish to start using the program.* Registrations are accepted on a space available basis.**

**Office Hours: 7:30am - 4:30pm Monday - Friday**

## Contracts and Billing

Parents are required to sign a contract for the Kids' Connection Program. During the school year parents may choose from a Standard Weekly Contract or Drop-in Only Contract. A \$10.00 contract change fee will be charged any time the contract is changed. **Any change in your contract requires a 3 day written notice to the Community Education Office.**

Payments are to be mailed or brought to the Community Education Office, 216 8<sup>th</sup> Ave N, Waite Park, MN 56387. Please do not give payments to site staff or mail to your child's school. Please indicate your child's name and site on your check.

**Any change in your contract requires a 3 day written notice to the Community Education Office.**

The Kids' Connection Program is self-supported by user fees. Therefore it is imperative that all fees be paid on time. Delinquent accounts are subject to removal from the program, as well as possible collection and/or legal action

and their associated fees. Fees may be paid with check, cash or credit card (Visa or Master Card).

**Option 1 - Standard Weekly Agreement**

Parents commit to a regular monthly schedule of 3 - 5 days per week. Fees are charged based on enrollment, not attendance. **No credit is given for absence.** To permanently change the contract or withdraw from the program, the Community Education Office must be notified in writing **at least 3 days in advance.** Telephone calls or notification to site staff are not acceptable notification.

**Payments**

Payments are due on the dates listed below

<b>Payment Due Dates</b>	<b>Period of time parent is paying for</b>
9/8/2009	2 weeks/child
9/21/2009	2 weeks/child
10/5/2009	2 weeks/child
10/19/2009	2 weeks/child
11/2/2009	2 weeks/child
11/16/2009	2 weeks/child
11/30/2009	2 weeks/child
12/14/2009	2 weeks/child
1/4/2010	2 weeks/child
1/19/2010	2 weeks/child
2/1/2010	2 weeks/child
2/16/2010	2 weeks/child
3/1/2010	1 week/child
3/15/2010	2 weeks/child
3/29/2010	2 weeks/child
4/6/2010	2 weeks/child
4/19/2010	2 weeks/child
5/3/2010	2 weeks/child
5/17/2010	2 weeks/child
6/1/2010	1 week/child plus any remaining balance

A calendar will be provided at each site with payment due dates listed.

Bills will be distributed to the sites and placed in the Family File. Parents are responsible for picking up their child’s bill. A \$10 late fee will be assessed for payments more than three business days overdue. Consistent late payments may result in termination of your contract. No child’s fees will be allowed to fall more than two weeks behind.

**Option 2 - Drop-In Agreement**

Parents who cannot commit to a weekly schedule of at least 3 days per week or who only need occasional care are considered drop-in clients. **Payment is due to the program leader for occasional use on the day of use.** Children must be registered with the Kids’ Connection Program in order to be eligible for this option.

**Fees**

**Please check with the Community Education Office or web page for current fee information. \*All fees are subject to change\***

A late fee of \$10.00 will be assessed weekly to all accounts more than 3 days overdue.

**Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF)**

When a check is returned from the bank for any reason, a \$25.00 late fee will automatically be assessed. ***It is the responsibility of the parent to bring the amount of the NSF check, including the late fee, to the Community Education Office within three days of notification.*** More than two NSF checks will require future payments to be made by cash, money order, or certified check. Failure to make payment will result in termination of your contract.

**Fee Assistance**

Partial or total fee reimbursement may be available to qualifying families through Stearns, Benton or Sherburne Counties. For further information, please call Child Care Choices at **320-251-5081**. It is the Parents responsibility to communicate with the county.

### **No Charge holidays/School Breaks**

Families will not be charged for the following school breaks

December 28 2009 - January 1, 2010

March 8 – 12, 2010

### **Contract Changes/Withdrawing from the Program**

A **3 day written notice** is required to change a contract or withdraw from the program. Telephone calls or lack of attendance is not an acceptable method of withdrawing from the program. The Parent/ Guardian will be responsible for any remaining balance. **There will be a \$10.00 contract change fee charged to the account each time the contract is changed.**

### **Attendance Information**

Children are to remain under the supervision of staff at all times. The Kids' Connection Program will be responsible for the children from the time they are signed in to the time they are signed out.

### **Signing In**

Parents **must** sign the attendance sheet when bringing children to the program. It is not acceptable to send a child to the program without a signing in and could result in termination from the program. Parents should also check the sign-in table for current program information.

### **Release of Children**

Upon registration, the name of the person(s) authorized to pick up the children must be given. If someone other than the authorized person(s) will be picking up child, the Kids' Connection program leader must be notified **in writing prior to pick-up**. If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up a child, the parent will be called. If they cannot be reached, the child will be held until the proper guardian arrives. This policy is not meant as an inconvenience but rather designed to protect the child. Staff will ask for identification from persons they do not know. If a child is to be released to go to a meeting, club,

activity or help a teacher, a note from the parent will be requested.

### **Early Arrivals**

**Extended Day children and parents may not enter the school building prior to 6:30 a.m.** No child should be left in the Kids' Connection area without an adult present to supervise.

### **Emergency Closings**

Announcements of emergency closings, late starts and early dismissal will be made on KCLD and WJON (am 1240). Kids' Connection closings will be announced as part of the St Cloud Area School District information.

**Late Starts:** In the event the start of school is delayed, the before school session of Kid's Connection will be cancelled.

### **Communication**

Communication with parents is handled through periodic newsletters and notices at the sign in table. Please watch for these announcements. Each family will have a Family File for bills, calendars and various notices. Please check this file daily. Staff will post notices on the Parent Board, located at the sign in table. Families may also receive information via e-mail.

### **Personal Belongings**

Children should be dressed appropriately for inside and outside activities. The Kids' Connection Program will not be responsible for soiled clothing. Outer wear, backpacks, and lunch boxes should be labeled in order to avoid mix-ups. **The program is not responsible for lost items. Valuable items should not be brought to the program. Items from home are not allowed at Kids' Connection.**

### **Sick or Absent Children**

The Kids' Connection Program assumes responsibility for children each day. ***Parents must notify the program leader if their child will be late or absent.*** The elementary schools do not notify Kids' Connection of absences. Attendance is taken daily and a missing child causes concerns. Sick children should not be brought to the Kids' Connection Program. When children indicate illness at home, do not send them to Kids' Connection. This results in further inconvenience to the parent and possible exposure of illness to other children. It is important that communicable diseases such as strep throat, chicken pox, impetigo and conjunctivitis be reported to the Kids' Connection staff.

Emergency files will be kept for each child at each site. Parents will be notified by telephone from the Kids' Connection staff of any symptoms of impending illness (e.g. headache, fever, vomiting, etc.). Parents will be expected to pick up a child who appears to the supervisor to be too ill to remain in the program. Until the parent arrives, the child will be excluded from the activities with other children. The child will rest in the "quiet area" secluded from the main area and supervised by a staff member.

### **Emergency Care**

Parents will be called in the event a child requires emergency care. If parents are unavailable, the person(s) indicated on the emergency card will be notified. In the event none of the above can be reached and it is an extreme emergency situation, the child will be taken by the police and/or paramedics to the nearest emergency medical facility. Please make sure your child's records are kept up to date.

### **Medication Policy**

In order for the Kids' Connection Staff to administer medication, a completed *Medication Permission Form* must be on file with the Kid's Connection site. If the medication is to be given for more than ten days, a

doctor's signature is required on the form. Staff is not allowed to administer **any** medication including over the counter drugs without a *Medication Permission Form* on file. Changes in medication dosage will require that an updated authorization form be completed. Medication must be in the original prescription container. Kids' Connection prefers that all medications be administered by a parent prior to his/her arrival at Kids' Connection.

### **Notification of Diseases**

Parents will be notified in the case of infectious or communicable diseases. After conferring with the school nursing staff concerning the severity of the disease, Kids' Connection staff will follow policies and procedures as set by the school health office.

### **Health & Safety Information**

Emergency forms must be on file for all children enrolled in the Kids' Connection Program. Kids' Connection does not carry health insurance. No pets are allowed to be brought to Kids' Connection as per District 742 Board Policy.

### **Accommodations**

The Kids' Connection program is not designed to provide long-term 1:1 care for students. A parent/guardian meeting is requested prior to enrollment if your child receives 1:1 student support in the classroom or has an IEP or 504 plan. Additional services may be provided to ensure successful participation. However, to prepare for these services extra time may be required prior to attendance.

### **Parent Participation**

As parents, we encourage you to participate in the program. Please feel free to offer suggestions that you feel would enhance the program. Parent volunteers are always welcome. If you have any skills you would like to share with the children or staff, please talk with a program leader. Parents are invited to visit the Kids' Connection site. To schedule a conference, an appointment should be made with the program leader.

## **Breakfast**

A school breakfast program is available at all elementary buildings. Parents may purchase a breakfast for their child.

Children will be given a PIN (**P**ersonal **I**dentification **N**umber) to access their school food service account. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure there are sufficient funds in their child's account. Kids Connection staff do not have access to student's Personal identification numbers. Due to food allergies, we ask that children do not bring breakfast to the program.

## **Behavior Management**

Children will have a clear understanding of the authority and rules of the Kids' Connection Program. Children will be helped to understand their responsibility to other children, the staff and the program environment. A serious disciplinary problem is defined as one in which a child is hampering the smooth flow of the program by requiring constant one-on-one attention; inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children; physically abusing staff; or otherwise is unable to conform to the rules and guidelines of the program. When conflicts over the rights of other people and property develop, it is our goal to work with the individual children, listening to what each has to say and helping to resolve the conflict through effective communication. If a conflict continues to exist:

1. A child may not be allowed to participate for a period of time in the particular activity where conflict exists.
2. If the problem is re-occurring, the program leader will request a conference with the parents to discuss ideas on solving the problem.
3. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the child may be suspended for up to two weeks.
4. If the situation continues, parents will be expected to remove the child from the program.

The Kid's Connection Program follows all Independent School District #742 School Board approved policies including those outlined in the *Student Discipline Code*.

## **Kids' Connection Rules**

1. Be Safe
2. Be Kind
3. Be Fair
4. Be Respectful
5. Have FUN!!!

## **Parents' Responsibilities**

***Parents have the responsibility to:***

1. Observe the rules and policies of the Kids' Connection Program.
2. Let the staff know if their child will not be attending for the day.
3. Sign their child in to the program.
4. Pay fees on time.
5. Share their concerns with staff members if the program is not meeting their child's needs.
6. Listen to concerns that staff members have about their child's behavior and work through an agreeable solution to any problems that have occurred.
7. Know about any change in policy or procedure.
8. Inform staff if child has been exposed to a contagious illness.
9. Notify the Community Education office in writing of any change in contract at least 3 days in advance.
10. Keep child's record up to date.
11. Check family file and sign-in table daily for announcements and notices.