

History of After School Programs

Johnson County Park & Recreation District has been successfully providing programs for children and families since 1965. Early activities were limited to the occasional art and craft class and the summer drop in playground program at the neighborhood school. Initial programming was designed to meet the needs of a Johnson County community that was primarily composed of two parent families where one was a stay at home mom. A single full time staff person and a handful of part time instructors headed up the children's recreation programs.

By the 1980's women in Johnson County and across America were entering the workforce in record numbers, giving rise to the question of what to do with school age children at the end of the school day. After school programs housed in elementary schools were beginning to pop up on both coasts, and in 1987 Johnson County Park & Recreation District opened the first after school program in the metropolitan area at Brookwood Elementary School in Leawood, Kansas. Fourteen children participated in this new program that met from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. on school days. No one envisioned the amazing growth that would result from the Brookwood After school pilot.

Today's School Age Care and Enrichment Program boasts 18 locations that offer options of before school, extended day kindergarten, and/or after school recreation and enrichment. The programs are open not only on regular school days, but during conferences, in-services, winter and spring break, and even during inclement weather school closings. Selected sites also host full day/full summer day camp programs.

Our initial enrollment of 14 children back in 1987 has grown to over 1,000 in the current 18 programs, and has resulted in the creation of a Children's Services Department composed of 35 full time employees and over 100 half time staff. School Age Care and Enrichment programs currently represent 40% of the total number of participants enrolled in recreation programs offered by Johnson County Park & Recreation District.

The Children's Services Department seeks to build on their successful history through continued responsiveness to the ever changing needs of Johnson County families.

**JOHNSON COUNTY PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
AFTER SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT**

MISSION STATEMENT:

NSACA Standard 32c,36a

To support working families by providing their children a safe and structured setting, facilitated by caring and qualified staff.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT:

- To create an environment that assures all children feel safe, secure, and nurtured.
- To encourage children to cooperate, accept responsibility, embrace diversity, practice respect, and continue to enhance basic life skills.
- To develop and maintain a sense of community that encourages open communication between parents, children, and staff.
- To strive for an atmosphere that helps children feel confident, valued, accepted as individuals, and supports the development of a healthy self- image.
- To encourage creativity through self-expression and exposure to enrichment activities that stimulates thinking and exploration.
- To promote physical, social and emotional growth through age appropriate learning experiences and recreational activities.

1. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

NSACA Standard 24d,26d

The after care programs located on-site in Shawnee Mission & DeSoto Elementary Schools are operated by the Johnson County Park and Recreation District. The space is leased to our agency by the school district, with the expectation that our program function independently in both policy and procedure. We are guests of the school and seek to be compatible and unobtrusive to the schools mission of education. Be considerate of your principal's full schedule by directing all program related issues to Johnson County Park and Recreation District personnel.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

NSACA Standard 36d

Johnson County Park and Recreation District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, ancestry, or handicapped status in the provision of service or employment.

3. REQUIRED FORMS

NSACA Standard 30a,-b36b

Kansas State law requires all children to have a personal data sheet, health history, and authorization for emergency medical care on file at the center before attendance is permitted. Kansas Department of Health & Environment is stringently enforcing this regulation. Centers can be fined and even closed for non-compliance. Therefore, all forms must be submitted to our office two weeks prior to the first week of care. Children with incomplete records cannot attend the program.

4. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

NSACA Standard 36b

Children attending the program must be pre-registered in advance of attendance, by submitting the above forms and paying the \$25.00 registration fee. Registration fee is not applied to the weekly tuition.

5. FEE PAYMENT

NSACA Standard 36b

Payment for the program is collected every two weeks in advance of care, by 6:00 p.m. on designated Mondays. All participants are responsible for a full 2-week fee beginning with the first week of school. Weekly fees will not be prorated for holidays or shortened weeks, as the fees are based on the overall cost of the program, not week by week expenses. Second child discounts are applied to lowest fee. Fees are payable to the director at the center. Checks, money orders, cashier's checks, Master Card, Discover, and Visa are accepted forms of payment. Late fees for overdue payments accrue at the rate of \$5.00 per day. Payment deadlines and associated penalties are a necessity for our registration department in the timely posting and deposit of payments from the 1,000+ enrollment of our 18 school age locations.

6. CHILD RELEASE

NSACA Standard 16d,19a,22b,29d

All individuals authorized to pick up children must be listed in advance on the personal data sheet. Until all authorized parties are known to the staff, photo identification will be required at the time of pick up. State law prohibits the release of children to parents and other authorized adults who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol. Any existing court orders barring parent contact, visitation, and child release must be on file at the center to support law enforcement interventions. Children attending the center cannot be released to walk home unsupervised.

RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

7. AFTER HOUR CARE CHARGES

NSACA Standard 36b

A charge of \$5.00 for each 5 minutes past the 6:00 p.m. closure will be assessed to parents for after hour care. We realize that under some circumstances lateness cannot be avoided, and require parents to call us should such a situation occur. Regardless of the cause of after hour care, charges are due to the staff member on duty at time of child pick up.

8. DISCIPLINE POLICY

NSACA Standard 5a-d

Discipline procedures shall be of a positive nature and shall not include any form of corporal punishment, verbal abuse, physical restraint, confinement, threats, humiliation, forcing or withholding of food or fear tactics. Parents will be notified of any inappropriate behavior and will be advised of steps taken toward improvement. All children enrolled must observe the Participant Code of Conduct while attending the program.

9. PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT

NSACA Standard 5a-d

Participation in the program is a privilege not a right. The ability of each participant to consistently practice positive life skills is essential to on-going enrollment. The following set of non-negotiable standards for participation is designed to allow participants to self regulate behavior. These are reasonable expectations for any child participating in a group care setting. The actions of each individual influence the quality of participation for the entire group. Our goal is to facilitate successful participation for each child through the joint understanding, support, and practice of these positive life skills. Respect the right of others to courtesy and personal space.

- Manage anger in appropriate ways.
- Respect and respond to adult authority.
- Accept differences among the group.
- Accept responsibility for own actions.

10. DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

NSACA Standard 5a-d

Discipline for inappropriate behavior will focus on consequences, rather than punishment, to help children self manage their behavior in the future. Teachers assist children in self-management through reminders, redirection, and discussions about consequences. When children consciously make a choice to ignore expectations, consequences in line with the behavior will follow. Interventions and consequences focus on as little teacher intervention as possible. This allows children to be internally motivated in developing appropriate behaviors. Typical behavior interventions are as follows:

- Often closer teacher proximity and eye contact are all children need to self correct.
- On other occasions a reminder of the rule is effective.
- Sometimes teachers and children discuss the inappropriate behavior and more acceptable alternatives.
- In some situations children are redirected to a solitary activity for a brief period of time.
- More serious behavior issues require a parent/teacher conference to develop an action plan for improvement.

11. PARENT VISITATION AND INVOLVEMENT

NSACA Standard 23a , 24d

Our program has on "open door" policy on parent visitation. Parents are also encouraged to become actively involved in the center by: chaperoning field trips, decorating, planning and/or baking for seasonal parties, reading to the children, and/or sharing your personal hobbies, talents and professional skills. Contact the director to express your interest and offer suggestions on program activities.

12. NON-VIOLENCE POLICY

NSACA Standard 16a,b,c

The program will not allow any form of violent play, including the use of toys as weapons, gesturing in an aggressive manner, or depicting violence in drawings or any other expressive form. Possession of weapons fashioned or real is prohibited and grounds for immediate expulsion. Statements by anyone that threaten violent action will be regarded as real and result in immediate contact of law enforcement and parents.

13. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

NSACA Standard 18b,30

Participants shall not be in attendance when suffering from any communicable disease. Guidelines as determined by the Johnson County Health Department will be observed. The Program Director shall exercise his/her discretion in determining if a child seems well enough to resume normal participation. Parents must report to the Program Director any exposure to communicable diseases.

RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

14. PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

NSACA Standard 30

If your child is taking any prescription drugs while in attendance, these medications must be sent to the program director in their original containers and must have RX information affixed. All medications must be sent in daily dosages. Signed permission for administration of these medications must accompany them. Medication cannot be administered without signed parental consent.

15. DRESS

NSACA Standard 30b

Dress for the weather. A portion of the day will be spent outdoors. No baseball caps are allowed in the school, nor are shirts with questionable graphics. Parent notes should be provided when participant time outdoors is not desirable.

16. TERMS OF CARE

NSACA Standard 32b

Attendance days must be pre-selected and consistent. Weekly fees must be paid in order to retain space. One week advance notification of discontinuing care. Contact Kim Lee at 432-2116 x 1526 for an exit interview. Children must fully comply with the Code of Conduct to continue enrollment. Non-compliance will result in immediate termination of care. **ALL FEES ARE NONREFUNDABLE**

17. ABSENCES/DAILY SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

NSACA Standard 22a,b

Parents must telephone the center each day the participant will be absent from scheduled attendance. Children will sign themselves into the center and staff will follow up with a roster check. At child pick up, parents or their child need to initial and record time of pick up next to their child's name. Help us attend to this important safety issue by observing this policy.

18. PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Label all personal belongings. Toys, video games, and radios are prohibited.

19. MEDICAL INSURANCE

NSACA Standard 29a,b,c30b,d

During the course of normal participation, accidents can and do happen. Therefore, it is important that parents carry medical insurance for expenses that result from injury. Make sure your health insurance policy name and number are recorded on the Authorization for Emergency Medical Care form. In urgent care situations, staff will attempt to contact parents for child pick up and follow up medical treatment. Should parents be unavailable staff will transport child to nearest hospital for treatment. In emergency care situations, children will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital. Be sure all of your child's records are up to date to assist us in effectively responding to emergencies.

20. PARENT CONDUCT

NSACA Standard 7b

Parents must demonstrate civility, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior when interacting with program employees, participants, and their families. Profanity, threats, insults, harassment, suggestive remarks, intimidation, physical crowding, and/or contact will not be tolerated. Kansas state law prohibits parents from disciplining and/or reprimanding program participants. Failure to observe appropriate conduct will result in immediate and permanent termination of childcare.

21. FIELD TRIP AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY

NSACA Standard 22d, 29C

Due to staffing ratio needs, all children in attendance on scheduled field trip days will be required to accompany the group on the trip. Should you desire that your child not participate in activities at the trip destination, please advise staff so they can arrange for an alternate activity at the field trip site. Children will be transported by leased bus for large group field trips. Trips involving 15 or fewer children will be transported in Johnson County Park & Recreation District vans.

22. ILLNESS OR VACATION

NSACA Standard 36b

Refunds will not be issued for illness or vacation.

23. CHRONIC HEALTH/SPECIAL CARE NEEDS

NSACA Standard 18a, 36d

Written physician orders as well as a parent/staff pre-attendance meeting will be required to assure that chronic health conditions and any special care needs can be accommodated within the program.

RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

24. PARENT ORIENTATION

Prior to the school year, a parent meeting will be held to cover center procedures and provide staff introductions. Plan to attend even if you have been enrolled in previous years. Parents unable to attend this meeting should contact your site director for orientation information.

25. PARENT COMMUNICATION

NSACA Standard 23c,d,24a-d., 35c,d

Families receive information from the center through: newsletters, dry erase bulletins, notes home, e-mail, telephone, and informal and formal conferencing. Parents are encouraged to contact staff with any issue, concern and/or suggestion regarding their child or the program. Any specialist working with your child is also strongly encouraged to become part of the after school communication network. Feel free to provide us with confidential feedback by utilizing the comment card box at the center. Your views are valued and appreciate and guide our efforts toward continuous improvement.

26. FOOD SERVICE

NSACA Standard 20a-d

Before school programs will provide cereal, milk, juice, and breakfast breads for children until 7:30 a.m. in the morning. Parents of Kindergarten children may elect to either send a sack lunch and purchase a school milk ticket, or purchase a full school lunch ticket. Milk and lunch tickets are available for sale in the school office. Once purchased, the milk/lunch tickets should be given to your site director who will keep them in your child's file for use each day. Kindergarten children will eat in the school cafeteria. The after school program will serve snack from 3:10p.m. to 4:00p.m. daily. Children may select from a choice of snacks and milk or juice as beverage. Our snack menu is posted at the center. Lunch menus are sent home from the school and are published in the Kansas City Star. Be sure to make us aware of any special dietary needs and/or food allergies.

27. EMERGENCY CLOSING

NSACA Standard 29a,b,32c

Natural disasters and utility outages can result in emergency closure of the program. No alternate care location will be available in the event of emergency closures. Your director will notify you of the closure and again when care can be resumed. Utility outages or any other emergency evacuation of students during the regular school day will result in the cancellation of the after school program, until the facility is reopened for regularly scheduled classes. Also, while the program does offer care on snow days, it is possible that the weather may cause power outages that prevent the program from opening. Site directors will attempt to reach families to alert them to closures, prior to their departing for the school. If this is not possible, the director will post an emergency closure sign on the school door. Follow the news media for reopening information. Snow day care will be available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the locations designated on your enrollment form.

28. FAMILY SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

NSACA Standard 25a,b

The director is always available to help families access community resources designed to support and strengthen families. Your director can provide information on application for SRS child care subsidy and other community resources. The following web sites also provide excellent and current information on a variety of family centered topics that can be accessed in the privacy of office or home. American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry <http://www.aacap.org/web/aacap/publications/factsfam/>. For locally based support services visit Johnson County FamilyNet at <http://www.jocofamily.net/>.

29. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All contents of children's files including health history, medication form, emergency medical release, personal data sheet, correspondence from parents, IEP, incident reports, and staff generated correspondence are confidential documents. File contents cannot be duplicated, distributed, discussed, and/or viewed by anyone other than the custodial parent/guardian, program staff, law enforcement officers, KDHE designee, and emergency medical personnel. Custodial parent/guardian reserves the right to make their children's records available to designated parties through signed permission. Documents can be released only to custodial parent/guardian and SRS child protection agency representatives. Release under any other circumstances must be mandated by court order. Children's records will remain on file at the program until enrollment is terminated and the file is returned to the custodial parent/guardian.

RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE