Jr. Kids
Connection
@ OSWEGOLAND PARK DISTRICT

2020-21 PARENT HANDBOOK
May 2020

Welcome to Junior Kid’s Connection!

Play is the work of a child. During play, children are able to express themselves, problem solve, and learn about the world around them. Our Junior Kid’s Connection program is designed to promote meaningful learning experiences for children aged three to five in an environment where they will develop a wide range of cognitive, physical, language, social, and emotional skills.

In our five day a week preschool program, teachers plan curriculum utilizing concepts from the Illinois Early Learning Standards, so the whole child is enriched through our program each day. Areas of concentration include literacy development using an early phonics program known as Jolly Phonics, science and exploration, creative development through the use of various art materials, large and fine motor skill development, early math concepts and social development. Developmentally appropriate practices are incorporated to stimulate creativity, foster independence, encourage the expression of thoughts, expose children to literacy and provide children with the tools they will need to be successful in the preschool setting. Through hands on learning, investigation and exploration activities, teachers play a vital role in creating supportive environments for children to grow and develop.

Our caring staff enjoys working with preschool children and are screened and approved through the Park District and the Department of Children and Family Services. The Junior Kid’s Connection staff attends monthly trainings on topics relevant to the Junior Kid’s Connection program. The staff also adheres to the mission statement and values of the Oswegoland Park District.

Thank you for choosing the Junior Kid’s Connection program at the Oswegoland Park District. Our entire Junior Kid’s Connection staff is excited to have you join the fun!

Krista Casanovas  
Preschool Coordinator  
630.554.4060

Kelly Summers  
Registration Coordinator  
630.554.4064

Susan Lipnick  
Billing Coordinator  
630.554.4443
Junior Kid’s Connection is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment where children can develop their natural joy and enthusiasm for learning, exploring, and creating.

Professional staff will plan a variety of activities that will provide opportunities for children to learn about themselves and the world around them. Junior Kid’s Connection is:

- a place where a higher level of thinking is encouraged and being a child is nurtured
- a program in which teamwork and social interaction are the basics
- a community where the courage to try is celebrated and the desire to succeed is supported
- an opportunity for children to grow through accomplishment and respect

Our focus on relationships and providing children with opportunities to learn, grow, and discover themselves is at the heart of the Junior Kid’s Connection philosophy. Our attitude and approach to everything we do focuses on creating a warm, welcoming environment in which kids can be themselves without fear of judgment and in which each child belongs. Our child centered philosophy creates a supportive atmosphere where participants develop skills and values to last a lifetime.

**IN PERSON** - Parents are welcome to visit the site at any time, however, during Junior Kid’s Connection time the staff may not be able to talk at length with you. Please speak to the site supervisor to make an appointment if an extended conversation is desired.

**PHONE** - You can contact your child’s site supervisor by phone at 630.551.0490.

**SITE COMMUNICATION LOG** - Junior Kids Connection has a communication log for any information or messages a parent may have regarding their child’s attendance or other changes/concerns/needs. A written record ensures that all staff are informed. Please feel free to speak to a supervisor should you have information of a more personal or confidential nature.

**WEBSITE** - The Park District’s website, oswegolandparkdistrict.org is a good place to find menus, field trip details, and other site information. The preschool teacher also maintains a Shutterfly account where you can see activities and photos. You will be invited to join this site after the school year begins.

**REMIND** - The classroom teacher will communicate through Remind, a mobile app. You may receive email, texts, and notifications through the app. You will be invited to join this group after the school year begins.

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES** - Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall. These conferences are held to discuss the development and well-being of your child. The teacher will present an evaluation and provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and questions.
The Oswegoland Park District shall respect the confidential nature of the child and personal records. Information pertaining to the admission, progress, health, or discharge of an individual child shall be confidential and limited to Oswegoland Park District staff designated by the Superintendent of Early Childhood and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services authorized representatives or unless the parent of the child has granted written permission for disclosure or dissemination.

1. The Junior Kid’s Connection program will have confidentiality release forms signed by the parents specifying to whom information may be released and the length of time the release form is valid. Such release forms shall be on file at the facility prior to release of information.

2. If information is requested by outside persons or agencies, a specific written request signed by the person requesting the information shall be obtained and placed on file at the Kid’s Connection site prior to the release of the information.

3. In extreme emergency circumstances or when there is evidence of child abuse or neglect, any child 12 years of age or older must be informed of such disclosure of information.

Authorized Illinois Department of Children and Family Services licensing representatives, child protection investigators and other Illinois Department of Children and Family Services representatives who have written permission from the Director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services written authorization (specifying the statutory authority or administrative rule under which access is granted) shall have access to the Junior Kid’s Connection’s records and reports. All persons with access to records and reports shall respect their confidential nature.

Junior Kid’s Connection staff creates engaging activities designed for fun, safety, and to develop higher thinking. The children are given the time to discover, learn, and explore through enriching activities:

- Breakfast, Healthy Snack, & Lunch
- Large Motor & Outside Play Time
- Science Projects
- Exploration
- Life Skill Activities
- Educational & Recreational Activities
- Large & Small Group Play & Projects

The activities will be conducted in a setting in which:

- Activity areas, equipment, and materials will be arranged so the children are visible to the supervising staff
- Children will be provided with limits, choices, and the opportunity to play in a safe manner
- The program shall be modified when there are extremes of temperature, or when the facilities or materials become temporarily unavailable
Program Hours 6:15am-6:15pm
AM Extended Care 6:15am-1:00pm
PM Extended Care 9:30am-6:15pm

Preschool Only
5 Days a Week (3’s & 4’s) 9:30am-1:00pm
1-4 Day Flexible (3’s) 9:15am-1:00pm
T/Thu Three’s 9:15am-11:45am

Brokaw Students
AM Attendance 6:15am-11:15am
PM Attendance 11:00am-6:15pm

Our ratios exceed all state requirements for licensed early childhood facilities. We hope to keep the child to staff ratio at 8:1 or better. It should never go higher than 10:1 unless there is an emergency. Field trip ratios will be adjusted according to activity.

Oswegoland Park District Early Childhood programs work in conjunction with the kindergarten teachers in District 308 to allow for a smooth transition between preschool and kindergarten.

Goals and Objectives

- **Self-Assurance** - Children will feel comfortable and secure in their classroom environment.
- **Motor Skills** - Children will continue to develop gross and fine motor skills.
- **Readiness Skills** - Children will learn developmentally appropriate skills for their age, including learning how to walk in a line and being responsible for packing and unpacking their backpacks at the end of the day.
- **Literature Skills** - Children will be introduced to the concept of journaling, and be encouraged to creatively express their thoughts through writing and drawing.
Skill Development

- **Social Skills** promote self-assurance. Children are encouraged to develop trust and respect for their teachers and classmates, learn how to work in a group as well as individually, and to interact positively with their classmates.

- **Self Help Skills** promote independence. Children are encouraged to hang up their coats and backpacks, zip and unzip, use the bathroom independently, clean up after themselves, appropriately express their needs, ask questions, seek answers, and initiate problem solving.

- **Large and Fine Motor Activities** promote physical coordination. To develop fine motor movements, children practice using scissors, holding a pencil, using print as a tool for communication, completing puzzles, and stringing beads. To develop large motor movements, children practice hopping, dancing, jumping, and running.

- **Comprehension Activities** help children focus and learn. Children practice following single step then multi-step directions. They learn that there is a time to listen and a time to talk, to ask questions pertaining to the story, and to complete an assigned task.

- **Kindergarten Readiness Skills** prepare children to succeed in kindergarten. Children learn to identify letters, basic shapes and colors. They learn to identify and print their first and last name using upper and lower case letters, be aware of the initial sounds that letters make through the support of the Jolly Phonics program, and become aware of the beginning, middle, and end of stories. Children will learn to identify many numerals, and make a one to one correspondence between objects and numbers. Children will learn number stories through various games and activities that promote the early fundamentals of math skills.

- **Communication Skills** enable children to interact with others. Children are encouraged to converse with teachers and peers, develop manners, speak so others can understand them, and use words and sentence structures appropriate for their age.

- **Cooperation Skills** promote respect between children and teachers. Children are encouraged to take turns, share, and resolve conflicts with their peers in an appropriate manner.

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**meals & snacks**

If your child has dietary restrictions, be sure to indicate that on your child’s ePact account and upload an allergy packet if necessary. Menus will be posted for parents to review and are also available on the Park District website. All meals will be provided by Junior Kid’s Connection, including breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack for 5 days a week preschoolers. Per DCFS regulations, parents are asked to see that children do not bring food to the program. Food exceptions will only be made in the case of health restrictions. In such cases, a note signed by a doctor must be provided before your child can bring their own food into the Junior Kid’s Connection program.
clothing guidelines

A preschooler’s day is filled with activities that allow them to explore art materials to stimulate creativity, as well as outdoor activities for large motor skill development. Clothing choices should be practical as children may get messy throughout the preschool day.

- Choose comfortable, loose fitting clothing that your child can get on and off easily. This helps make trips to the bathroom easy for children.
- We recommend comfortable, closed toe shoes for your child. Children are active outdoors, and little toes can become easily hurt on the playground in open toed shoes.
- Label all of your child’s outdoor clothing. Many times children will have the same boots, coats, gloves, or mittens as other children in their class.

personal items

Send your child to school each day with a backpack or open tote bag with handles, and include your child’s name on the bag where it is clearly visible. It is important to check your child’s school bag each day for notes from the teacher as well as any books or artwork your child may have worked on during class.

potty time

Our program requires that your child be independent in the bathroom which includes:

- Using the toilet without assistance
- Pulling up and down his/her own clothes
- Washing and drying his/her own hands

Please do not send your child in pull-ups. If your child should have an accident while at Junior Kid’s Connection, the staff cannot change your child’s clothing. If your child cannot change his/her clothing without assistance, we will contact you.

Pack a spare change of clothes, including underwear and socks, in a clear plastic bag and label it with your child’s name. This bag will stay in your child’s classroom and be returned to you at the end of the school year.

lost/stolen items

Please do not send items from home. Oswegoland Park District is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items.
field trips/transportation

For four-year olds only. Transportation for field trips and short outings will be on either a Park District Activity Bus or an SD308 bus. Please review the following rules for travel.

- Passengers will remain seated at all times, facing the front of the vehicle and wearing seat belts. Your child will have assistance buckling their seat belt on an Oswegoland Park District activity bus before departure.
- No eating or drinking is permitted.
- Excessively loud, noisy or distracting behavior is not permitted.
- Personal belongings must remain in book bags.
- Doors will be opened and closed only by the driver or by another designated staff person.
- Children may not extend any part of their body through the vehicle windows.

fox valley special recreation association (FVSRA)

Oswegoland Park District is a member of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA). FVSRA provides recreational opportunities for children with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities. In partnership with FVSRA our staff will make every effort to provide children with disabilities the accommodations they require to participate in our program. In many situations, FVSRA will provide a companion who will give one-on-one support to the person participating. It may take up to ten days to secure a companion. Please indicate any special needs under the medical portion of the registration form. For more information about FVSRA please visit FVSRA.org or contact Oswegoland Park District.

birthdays

Birthdays are important days in your child’s life. As referenced in the meal section, DCFS does not allow food items from outside sources to be brought into the program. You may send a goodie bag with non food items, but please do not send food treats. Some parents like to join the class as a Mystery Reader on their child’s special day. Contact the classroom teacher if you are interested in reading or would like to discuss other options.
**electronic devices**

The use of cell phones is not permitted. Cell phones must remain in the children’s backpacks. Children may request access to use the site phone should it be necessary to contact a parent or guardian.

Parents/guardians may call the site phone at 630.551.4090 should they need to reach their children or need to talk to a staff member. The use of other electronic devices including, but not limited to, hand held gaming and music electronic devices are not permitted at Junior Kid’s Connection.

**emergency drills**

As required by DCFS, we will hold regular fire, tornado, and lock down drills. It is expected that all students in attendance will participate fully so they know where to go and what to do should an emergency arise.

**pest control**

Junior Kid’s Connection follows DCFS standards for an Integrated Pest Management System. We will notify you via whiteboard at your site at least two, but not more than 30, days before the pesticide application.

**picture day**

Individual pictures of each child, as well as group pictures of your child’s class will be taken on picture day. If your child does not attend on that day, and cannot make the group picture, individual pictures can be taken at a later date. Your classroom teacher will have more information after school begins.
Non-refundable Registration Fee - due at time of registration

$50 by July 10  |  $75 July 11- 31  |  $100 Aug 1- Sept 4  |  $75 on or after Sept 5

*If you withdraw from the Junior Kids Connection program, there will be a re-registration fee of $50 to return to the program.*

To register, we need the following forms:

- A signed Junior Kid’s Connection registration form
- A signed Junior Kid’s Connection Payment Agreement
- A copy of your child’s birth certificate & DHS form, per DCFS regulations

### Junior Kid’s Connection

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<tr>
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<th>Per Day</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>$32</td>
<td>6:15am-1:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>$41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preschool Only</td>
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### Brokaw Students

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<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>10:45am-6:15pm</td>
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</table>
| AM & PM          | $41     | 6:15am-6:15pm  
  *Attend before & after Brokaw school day* |
| Day Off School   | $56     | 6:15am-6:15pm                 |

**EPACT**

ePact is an online emergency network, where you can securely add, manage, and share your child’s key health and emergency contact information with us.

After completing the initial registration, you’ll receive an email invitation that will guide you through a few quick steps to set up your account and share your child’s information with us. This must be completed before your child can begin in the program.
The fee for a full day off of school is $56. You will need to register online before the deadline date for your child to attend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day Off School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>Sep 28</td>
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<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Oct 20</td>
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<td>Nov 25</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day Off School</th>
<th>Register By</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
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<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>Feb 12</td>
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<td>Apr 6</td>
<td>Mar 23</td>
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Winter and Spring Break Camps are not included in the regular Kid’s Connection schedule and must be registered for online. Payment is due at the time of registration. Adjustments to your schedule can be made until the final day of registration. We will be unable to issue refunds or make attendance adjustments once registration for Winter/Spring Break Camps end.

**WINTER BREAK CAMP**

- $56 per day
- Dec 23, 28, 29, 30, 2020 and Jan 4-5, 2021
- REGISTER: Nov 16-Dec 7, 2020

**SPRING BREAK CAMP**

- $56 per day
- Mar 29-Apr 5, 2021
- REGISTER: Mar 1-15, 2021

Adjustments can be made to registrations until Dec 7, 2020.

Adjustments can be made to registrations until Mar 15, 2021.
If your child will be absent and it is unplanned, please notify us by calling the Junior Kids Connection site. Please notify the staff in advance of all planned absences. There are no credits issued for absences or vacations.

In order for Kid’s Connection to best serve your family, we ask for consistency in your child(ren)’s schedule. We understand that this may look different for each family, but a schedule that is the same each week or alternating weekly is desired. If you have any questions, contact the registration coordinator at 630.554.4064 or ksummers@oswegolandpd.org

A minimum of two weeks notice is appreciated if your child is withdrawing from the program. If you must withdraw or make a program adjustment, visit our website at oswegolandparkdistrict.org and click on the Request Schedule Change. Please know that once payment is due, all requested changes will be effective the following month.

We understand that busy families have changing schedules. We will accommodate your first participation adjustment at no charge. Due to administrative costs, a $15 charge will be assessed for each participation adjustment for the reminder of the year.

While swapping days is not allowed, your child may attend up to 3 days each month that are not part of his/her regular enrollment. If more extra days are needed, a change in registration should be made.

Please complete the half-slip at the site. The extra attendance fee will be added to your account within 2 business days. Accounts set up on auto-charge may check the Auto Charge Authorization of the half-sheet for payment.
Junior Kid’s Connection is a monthly billing program. You will be billed at the beginning of the month for the actual days your child is registered within that month.

The first Junior Kid’s Connection payment is due on or before August 1, 2020. Subsequent payments are due on the first day of the month, September 2020 through May 2021. You may complete an Auto-Charge Authorization Form that allows the Park District to charge your payments on the due date to your credit card or you may complete an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form that allows the Park District to withdraw payments from your checking account on the due date. These payment methods can protect you from the additional cost of late fees.

If you do not choose Auto-Charge or EFT, you are responsible for making your payment on the due date. Bills will not be mailed. If you have provided us with an email address, a reminder will be sent five days prior to the due date. We are unable to accept installment payments at your child’s site. Payments are accepted at Park District offices, by mail, or by phone at 630.554.1010. Payments received after the due date will incur a $25 late fee that will be charged to your account.

LATE PAYMENTS
If a payment is not made by the 1st of the month, a **$25 late fee** will be added to your account. If you cannot make the payment on time, you can avoid the late fee by contacting the Park District’s billing department at 630.554.4443 prior to the due date to make an alternate payment plan. If that plan is honored, you will not be charged the late fee. If a payment has not been received by the due date and you have not contacted the billing department, your child’s participation may be disrupted. The third time your account is past due, automatic payments will be required to continue in the program.

There is a limited scholarship fund available through the Oswegoland Park District. If you wish to apply, we can supply you with the appropriate paperwork. Completed application along with required documents can be emailed to ckeilson@oswegolandpd.org.

Receipts can be accessed online at [apm.activecommunities.com/oswegolandparks](http://apm.activecommunities.com/oswegolandparks). If your child is enrolled in Junior Kid’s Connection, you will already have an account. Use your login and password to access this information. If you and your tax advisor decide you can use this deduction, the number is 36-6009398.
school closing/inclement weather

In inclement weather, Junior Kid’s Connection closes with District 308. If school lets out early in the day due to bad weather, afternoon Junior Kid’s Connection will be closed. Refunds will not be given for emergency school closings. These days are generally made up at the end of the year. Junior Kid’s Connection will share announcements through ePact.

late pick up

It is recommended that you have alternate pick up arrangements in the event you are running later than 6:15pm. Late fees may be assessed beginning at 6:16pm.

- A $15 late fee may be charged if you are late picking up between 6:16-6:30pm.
- A $30 late fee may be charged if you are late picking up after 6:30pm.

The parent/guardian will be asked to sign a form acknowledging the late pick up. The late fee will be added to the family ActiveNet account and can be paid online. Consistent late pick up may result in dismissal from the program.

Extended Care: If a child is not picked up by 7:00pm, and staff fails to reach parent or authorized person, we will seek the assistance of the local police department.

Preschool Only: If a child is not picked up 45 minutes after the dismissal time, and the preschool staff fails to reach a parent or other authorized individual, staff will seek the assistance of the local police department.
Staff is trained in CPR, First Aid, and AED. If your child is injured and requires more than basic first aid, the following steps will be taken:

1. Call 911
2. Attempt to contact parent/guardian
3. Attempt to contact emergency person
4. If necessary, the injured child will be transported by ambulance to the local hospital.

A Junior Kid’s Connection staff member will stay with the child until a parent/guardian arrives.

The parent/guardian is responsible for all charges for emergency medical services rendered.

We depend on parents to assist us in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all of our children. We reserve the right to send home any child who shows sign of illness. Anyone who becomes ill will be made comfortable until his/her parent can be notified and the student is picked up. Children may be sent home if they have any symptoms as listed below. In addition, a child must be free of all specified symptoms for at least 24 hours before he/she can return to Junior Kid’s Connection.

These symptoms are as follows:

- A fever of 100 degrees or more with no medication
- Vomiting within the previous 24-hour period
- Diarrhea within the previous 24-hour period (including recurring episodes of diarrhea at Junior Kid’s Connection)
- Heavy nasal discharge indicative of infection
- Constant cough or sore throat
- Skin rash
- Head lice
- Symptoms of a communicable disease

A doctor’s clearance may be requested before your child can return to Junior Kid’s Connection.
If your child must receive prescription medication while at Junior Kid’s Connection, please ask for and fill out the Medication Authorization form. This form must be signed by the child’s physician and a parent/guardian. It must also be filled out and signed by a parent before over-the-counter medication can be administered. All medications must be in the original packaging with the child’s name on it.

Children with severe allergies, such as allergies to bee stings, peanut products, dairy, etc., may be at risk of a serious allergic reaction while participating in a Park District program due to contact with, or ingestion of the allergen. The Oswegoland Park District cannot guarantee an allergen free environment, but with your cooperation we can create a safer environment and be better prepared to handle emergencies. The Park District will make reasonable, feasible, and practical accommodations to allow children with life-threatening allergies to participate in our programs. If your child has a life threatening allergy, we will need a completed allergy packet before your child can attend Junior Kid’s Connection. The following forms must be uploaded to ePact and all medications must be on site before your child can attend Junior Kid’s Connection:

- Authorization to Administer Medication
- Authorization for Treatment of Children with Life Threatening Allergies
- Release & Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Life Threatening Allergies

If training of staff is required, seven days from the time of enrollment to the first day of attendance is required to allow Park District staff time to make accommodations.

Oswegoland Park District does not provide insurance for participants. Please be sure that your personal or family policy is adequate for your needs.
It is the goal of Junior Kid’s Connection to provide each child with an environment that is safe, secure, nurturing, and enjoyable. To meet this goal, the staff will help every child exhibit qualities and characteristics that lead to a positive environment. Participants will be expected to treat the other children, staff, facilities, and materials with respect through their words and actions. They are encouraged to demonstrate trustworthiness by being honest and doing the right thing; good citizenship by helping to better the community and the environment; accountability by being responsible for their actions and choices. The children are expected to treat others with care and kindness, and to use appropriate language at all times. Junior Kid’s Connection follows the Oswegoland Park District and District 308 behavior guidelines. The following behaviors are considered unacceptable:

1. Harming oneself, such as, but not limited to:
   - Leaving the program boundaries without permission
   - Leaving the designated group without permission
   - Misuse of equipment
   - Failing to follow verbal instructions meant to ensure safety

2. Harming others, such as, but not limited to:
   - Fighting
   - Throwing objects at or near others
   - Bringing or using weapons, i.e., knives, glass, sharp objects
   - Hitting, spitting, biting, or kicking others
   - Verbally abusing others, i.e., name calling, taunting, etc.
   - Using inappropriate language
   - Verbally or non-verbally showing disrespect

3. Damage to property, such as, but not limited to:
   - Vandalism
   - Tantrums resulting in damage to property or materials
   - Theft

   NOTE: The child’s family is responsible for all damages.
We believe the role of our staff is to help lead children toward self-discipline and self-direction. We give the child a break as an opportunity to allow the child to gain control of him/herself in a dignified and thoughtful manner. Behaviors that endanger the safety and security of the child or others may result in skipped steps or immediate and/or permanent suspension from the Junior Kid’s Connection program. If suspension is warranted, a parent/guardian will be called to pick up their child immediately. If unacceptable behavior continues, we will take the following actions in this order:

1st Offense
- Verbal warning
- Talk with the parent/guardian

2nd Offense
- The child will discuss with staff how he/she will make better choices
- The staff will complete a Junior Kid’s Connection Behavior Log Form
- The staff will talk with the parent/guardian and have them sign the Behavior Log Form
- As appropriate, privileges related to the behavior will be removed

3rd Offense
- The staff will complete a Junior Kid’s Connection Incident Report
- Meet with parent/guardian to discuss and sign the Incident Report
- Depending on the severity of the behavior, a behavior plan may be implemented
- As appropriate, privileges related to the behavior will be removed
- The child may be suspended for an amount of time reflecting the seriousness of the behavior

4th Offense
- If the same or similar behavior reoccurs, an Incident Report will be completed by staff and the child will be removed from the Junior Kid’s Connection program for the remainder of the school year.

When a child has a pattern of unacceptable behavior, the staff will work with the parents, and if necessary, a professional clinician on a plan for helping the child to develop self-control. We may use the resources of Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA) for assistance in observing and suggesting methods of behavior management for the child. Parents will be notified before someone from FVSRA is called in to observe their child.