



Jr. Kid's Connection and Jr. Camp Connection @ OSWEGOLAND PARK DISTRICT

PARENT HANDBOOK



OSWEGOLAND
PARK DISTRICT



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Welcome!

August 2024

Welcome to Jr. 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 Jr. 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, language, physical, 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, 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 Jr. Kid's Connection staff attends monthly trainings on topics relevant to the Jr. Kid's Connection program. The staff also adheres to the mission statement and values of the Oswegoland Park District.

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

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Philosophy

Jr. 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. Jr. 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 Jr. 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.

Confidentiality of Records

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 Recreation 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 Jr. 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 Jr. 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 Jr. Kid's Connection's records and reports. All persons with access to records and reports shall respect their confidential nature.

Parent Communication

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

WEBSITE - The Park District's website, oswegolandparkdistrict.org is a good place to find menus and other site information.

CLASSDOJO - The classroom teacher will communicate through Class DoJo. You will receive messages and updates weekly with pictures.

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.

ePACT Information

ePACT is a tool that allows the Jr. Kid's Connection program to collect important health and emergency information. It helps to make sure that the right data, is in the right hands at the right time. It is very important to keep your ePACT information current so staff is able to reach you when needed.

Receiving a Request for the first time

- The Oswegoland Park District will send you a request for each child participating in their program for this year or season.
- Click on Complete Request to get started and create an account.
- Add your name, choose a password, and accept our Terms of Use and now you're ready to go!
- Read the instructions carefully and click on "Getting Started."
- Answer questions on each step. Those with an * are required. Ensure all the steps have a check mark.
- We find when you're unable to complete your set up it is often because you have not uploaded a photo of your child.
- **Add Additional Documents**
- You can upload additional documents like immunization records, custody orders or allergy information. Add your initials to each waiver (or agree by check box) and add your signature.
- Click on the "Share" button to complete the process.

ePACT Support: Have questions or feedback? Please contact help@epactnetwork.com or call 1-855- 773-7228 ext. 1 to speak with ePACT's Customer Success Team.

Location & Time

South Point 810 Preston Lane, Oswego

Phone: 630.551.0490

Program Hours	6:30am-6:15pm	Preschool Only	
AM Extended Care	6:30am-1:00pm	5 Days a Week (3's & 4's)	9:30am-1:00pm
PM Extended Care	9:30am-6:15pm	Jr Summer Camp 5 Days a Week (3's & 4's)	6:30am-6:15pm

Eligibility Requirements

Program participants must meet the following basic eligibility requirements in order to participate in Oswegoland Park District programs and events.

- The ability and willingness to participate in group activities
- The ability to understand and follow program rules and conduct themselves safely and appropriately within a group setting
- Participants will need to be able to refrain from outbursts and physically aggressive behavior such as biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking, etc.
- Participants must be able to stay near the group and not run or wander away
- Participants must be able to independently provide personal self-care such as bath-rooming, hand-washing, eating, and personal hygiene

Failure to follow these requirements may result in removal from the program or event.

Potty Time

Our program requires that your child be independent in the bathroom which includes: Using the toilet without assistance.

- Pulling up and down their own clothes
- Wiping without assistance
- Washing and drying their own hands

Please do not send your child in pull-ups. If your child should have an accident while at Jr. Kid's Connection, the staff cannot change your child's clothing. If your child cannot change their 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.

Ratio

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.

Code of Conduct

It is the goal of Jr. 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. Jr. 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.

Discipline Procedures

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 Jr. 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 Jr. 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 Jr. 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 Jr. 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 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.

Activities

Jr. 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:

- 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

Sign In/Sign Out

Please bring an ID at all times when you pick up to assist in signing your child out of the program smoothly. We will occasionally have new staff, or staff that will be at a location that is new to them, and they may not be familiar with you. Kindly remember this process is necessary to ensure your child is released to authorized adults. If anyone other than the parent or guardian is picking up a child, that person must be authorized to do so and be listed in ePACT.

For safety and consistency, parents/guardians will not be allowed to drop off or pick up from an offsite location, including field trip destination. The only exception to this is the Oswegoland Park District pool.

Both parents will be allowed to pick up their child at any time unless legal documentation, such as court orders explaining your custody arrangement, has been provided. Please upload your most current documents to ePACT so they are accessible to the staff.

Once a child is signed out and leaves school grounds, they are unable to return to Jr. Kid's Connection unless they are signed back in by a parent or adult on the approved pick up list.

Late Pick /Up

It is recommended that you have alternate pick up arrangements in the event you are running later than 6:15pm.

- Late pick-ups will be charges accordingly.
 - 6:16-6:30 - \$25
 - 6:31-6:45 - \$50
 - 6:45-7:00 - \$75

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.

Repeat Offenses:

School Year Jr. Kid's Connection:

If the household reaches five late pick-ups in one school year, the family will be notified and the child will be dropped from the program.

Jr. Summer Camp:

If the household reaches three late pick-ups in one summer, the family will be notified and the child will be dropped from the program.

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. All fees must be paid when your next payment is due or attendance may be interrupted. Jr. Kid's Connection staff will remain responsible for the child and their well-being until the parent or outside authorities arrive. Late pick up will only be discussed with the parent/ guardian/emergency contact, never with the child. 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.

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 Jr. 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 Jr. Kid's Connection program.

Lost/Stolen Items

Please do not send items, including toys, from home. Oswegoland Park District is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items.

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.

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.
- Please provide a set of extra clothes daily.

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 Jr. Kid's Connection.

Field Trips/Transportation

Transportation for short outings will be on a Park District Activity 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.

At times, we will use the District 308 school buses for field trips.

School Closing/Inclement Weather

In inclement weather, Jr. Kid's Connection may close with the District 308. If school lets out early during the day due to bad weather, afternoon Jr. Kid's Connection may close. Refunds will be issued in a timely manner. Jr. Kid's Connection will share announcements through ePact.

Excessive Heat Precautions

Weather changes require the staff to monitor the health and safety of the participants. Activities will be planned based on the weather conditions for the day as determined by the National Weather Service:

Green Day: Heat index 80 degrees or below. Activities go on as planned.

Yellow Day: Heat index 90 degrees. Time outdoors will be monitored closely. We will go swimming but time may be limited.

Red Day. Heat index 100 degrees or above. Outdoor play and field trips may need to be limited and allow for an indoor break if needed. We will go swimming but time may be limited.

Health

Injuries

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 Jr. 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.

Medication

If your child must receive prescription medication while at Jr. 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.

Sunscreen

Sunburn is a concern during the summer. Since we spend so much of our day outdoors, we recommend that you apply sunscreen before you bring your child in the morning. We also ask that you send a bottle of sunscreen to Camp Connection so that your child can reapply as necessary throughout the day. We recommend a sunscreen stick as a great way to apply sunscreen to cheeks and noses. Our staff will be able to help with the application only if you provide a spray sunscreen.

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 their 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 Jr. 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 Jr. Kid's Connection)
- Heavy nasal discharge indicative of infection
- Constant cough or sore throat
- Skin rash
- Head lice
- Symptoms of a communicable disease

COVID-19 Symptoms

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Severe Allergies

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 Jr. Kid's Connection. The following forms must be uploaded to ePact and all medications must be on site before your child can attend Jr. 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.

Insurance

Oswegoland Park District does not provide insurance for participants. Please be sure that your personal or family policy is adequate for your needs.

Contact Us

Jr. Kid's Connection

South Point

630.551.0490

Oswegoland Park District

South Point

810 Preston Lane, Oswego 60543

Civic Center

5 Ashlawn Avenue, Montgomery 60538

Prairie Point

313 E. Washington St., Oswego 60543

Boulder Point

0 Boulder Hill Pass, Montgomery 60538

Administrative Staff

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