

# The Kids' Place Christian Learning Center

A Ministry of Indian River City United Methodist Church



## Family Handbook 2023-2024

*"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will  
not turn from it."*

-Proverbs 22:6"

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**The Kids' Place Christian Learning Center**  
A Ministry of Indian River City United Methodist Church  
1355 Cheney Highway  
Titusville, FL 32780  
(321)267-7308  
DCF License # C18BR0142

Program Telephone Extensions

Executive Director	Extension 5
Toddler Program	Extension 2
Preschool Program	Extension 3
School Age Program & Summer Camp	Extension 4

**Statement of Faith**

**1. We believe in the authority of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17).**

What this means for us at The Kids' Place is we accept the plain sense of Scripture as the sufficient rule of faith and proactive for our life together. We recognize some parts of Scripture are difficult to understand (even Peter said that 2 Peter 3:16) but we also believe as we engage them the Holy Spirit will illuminate their meaning to us. When it comes to our life together, we believe Scripture is our primary curriculum and guide.

**2. We believe there is salvation only through Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).**

While we respect the religious beliefs of others, we recognize them as human expressions of the universal longing to reach God (or some sort of transcendence). We believe Scripture clearly teaches the only way to God is through His Son, Jesus (John 14:6). Therefore, we are unapologetic in our desire to reach people of all faiths and cultures with the Good News that Jesus died and rose for them. There is urgency to our evangelism because we believe without a relationship with Christ people will spend an eternity apart from God.

**3. We believe that life-change is possible and normal for the Christian believer (2 Corinthians 3:18).**

We believe an encounter with Jesus Christ is not just about eternal salvation but about life-change here and now. Further, we believe that this life-change is not an option but normal for every Christian so that we can grow into the likeness of Christ (Ephesians 4:15-16). Therefore, our preaching, teaching, and curriculum are all aimed at transformation, not simply transmission of information.

**4. We believe in the dignity and value of every human being.**

Because God created people in His own image (Genesis 1:26) and is intimately involved in the creation of each individual (Psalm 139:13), we believe each person bears the imprint of God on their life regardless of how muddy or broken that image may have become through sin. Therefore, we will treat each person with dignity and honor, whether or not they know Christ. This means we will not degrade or speak disparagingly to others. Rather, we will seek their salvation and welfare just as God does. (2Peter3:9)

Dear Families:

We appreciate you sharing your most prized possession with us. The Kids' Place is a Christian Learning Center, offering a comprehensive program for children one year of age through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Our program is designed to offer an opportunity for your child to develop spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, socially, and physically by giving him or her guidance and encouragement to mature in a caring environment of Christian love.

The Kids' Place is a non-profit organization. We are the largest ministry of Indian River City United Methodist Church. Please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with our policies. We look forward to serving you and your family.

### **Vision**

The Kids' Place vision is to be the Christian educational facility of choice in North Brevard and to consistently pursue and achieve excellence for every child spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally. This vision embraces reaching out to families for Jesus by providing support, education, and resources that will enable families to grow as a family and to grow as Christians.

### **Mission**

*“Bringing families together through Christ-centered learning.”*

### **Admission Policy/Open Door Policy**

The Kids' Place is open to all children regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. All children will receive the full benefit of our programs and will be treated with dignity and respect. The Kids' Place practices an open-door policy for our families. We require parents to check in at the program office before entering a classroom. We encourage family involvement and will provide opportunities for families to participate in the classroom or program.

### **Password Policy**

In an effort to ensure the safety of your children who have been entrusted to us, The Kids' Place requires that all families provide a unique password that will be used for child pickup. This password will be on the Student and Family Information Sheet and kept in a secure location in the classroom. If a teacher does not recognize a person picking up your child, they will require the correct password be given before releasing your child to that person.

### **Curriculum (Toddler & Preschool)**

Our approach to teaching children is based on learning through structured play experiences. Our programs provide a variety of activities in a relaxed and caring environment. We utilize Teaching Strategies & Creative Curriculum. Children will be introduced through hand-on activities to art, math, cooking, music, physical activities, science, creative drama, language arts, social studies and games. In addition, spiritual development will be encouraged through devotional time and chapels. We also use the Pyramid Model and Becky Bailey's Conscience Discipline which focuses on classroom management, positive reinforcement and re-direction.

### **Attendance Policy**

Regular attendance is a requirement for all children attending The Kids' Place. Children should arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. each morning. If a child arrives after 9:00 a.m., they will need to check-in at the preschool office and provide a doctor's note unless a pre-arranged appointment is made. Attending regularly, arriving and dismissing promptly provides a sense of security and well-being for each child and is conducive to proper development.

### **Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) and ELC Attendance Policy**

Regular attendance is mandatory for the VPK and ELC programs. Attendance is recorded daily and submitted as required by the State. Failure to attend regularly may result in dismissal from The Kids' Place and termination of your VPK or ELC benefits/contract. VPK students are mandated to attend 540 hours per school year. VPK contract allots for 2 absences per month. The contract requires students to attend the first and last day of program.

### **Student Records**

Student records are open only to the child's teacher, Program Directors, authorized employees of the licensing agency, and the child's parent or legal guardian. Records are the property of the Kids' Place.

Immunizations and physical records must be submitted within 15 days of enrollment and must be kept current at all times. All student files and records will be inspected by the Department of Children and Families and the Brevard County Early Learning Coalition for licensing and contract purposes as needed. There are children in our program that do not have immunizations due to religious exemption per DCF.

### **Conferences**

Please remember that arrival and dismissal times are not good for a conference. The teacher's first responsibility is to the children. Preschool has a scheduled parent conference day. Should you need additional conferences, please contact your child's teacher to schedule. We value our parent partnerships.

### **Fundraising**

We are a non-profit organization; therefore, we depend on fundraisers to provide needed funds for extra items purchased throughout the year. Success relies heavily on parent participation and support. Parents receiving financial assistance from TKP are required to volunteer for fundraising events.

### **Health and Safety**

Children may not attend The Kids' Place with a fever or if exhibiting signs of a communicable disease or illness. This policy helps protect all children from being unnecessarily exposed. Children with the following symptoms should not be brought to The Kids' Place:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher
2. Respiratory or breathing difficulties
3. Vomiting
4. Diarrhea
5. Unexplained rash – other than heat rash
6. Sore throat
7. Impetigo or open sores

Children exhibiting symptoms after arrival, will be taken to the Program office until a parent can pick them up. Once contacted, parents have 1 hour to pick up the sick child. There will be a charge of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes after that hour. Re-admittance to The Kids' Place for the above symptoms will be permitted when the child is symptom free and has been home for 24 hours from the time of pick-up. The child can be re-admitted with a doctor's written permission, stating the child is no longer contagious.

### **Communicable Disease**

Re-admittance policies are as follows:

1. Chicken pox – all lesions are dry and crusted.
2. Impetigo – 24 hours after medication administered.
3. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) – 24 hours after medication administered.
4. Lice – follow medical treatment - Head must be free of lice/eggs (100% nit free). Director must check/approve the return of student. Three consecutive months could jeopardize enrollment at TKP.
5. Hepatitis – Doctor's statement required.
6. Strep throat – 24 hours after medication administered.
7. Pertussis (whooping cough) – 5 days after antibiotic administered.
8. Mumps – 9 days after onset of gland swelling
9. Hand, foot, mouth disease- 24 hours after symptom free.

## Medication

A medication form must be completed for children needing medication. Anything required for the dispensing of the medication, i.e., spoon, should be provided and labeled appropriately. We will not administer any over-the-counter medicine unless prescribed by a doctor. If your child needs to receive over the counter medicine, please get a doctor's note stating the frequency and dosage to administer. All medicine should be in the original container with written instructions and will be administered by the director, assistant director, or trained designer. Morning and evening doses are the responsibility of the parent.

The Kids' Place will administer diaper rash cream, sunscreen, insect repellent, calamine lotion or Benadryl gel for bug bites if provided by the parent and form is completed. The child's first and last name must be written on any medication or other items.

If your child receives breathing treatments and/or uses an inhaler, please provide a doctor's note and instructions for breathing machine to the Program Director.

## Clothing

Children should wear clothing that is durable, comfortable, and easy to manage by the child. We provide outside play daily and we use the gym for physical activities. Please dress children accordingly. Sneakers and socks are highly recommended. **No open-toed shoes or flip-flops are permitted.** School Age children are required to wear their Kids' Place T-Shirts on field trips.

**Toddler & Preschool-** A complete change of clothes, labeled in a zip lock bag will be necessary for each child in case of an accident. No string or teething necklaces are permitted due to strangulation risks. Pacifier keepers are not permitted.

## Personal Items

In order to prevent lost or broken toys, please refrain from sending toys, headphones, games, phones, iPods, etc. to school from home. *The Kids' Place will not be responsible for lost or broken toys or items brought from home.*

## Lunches

Parents provide lunch for their children daily. Children need a nutritious lunch. Please limit drinks to juice, milk or water (**no sodas**). Lunches should be in a labeled lunch box or paper sack. We do not refrigerate or heat up lunches. No glass containers are permitted. Field Trip lunches should be in paper bags, labeled and fully disposable.

**Toddler & Preschool 3's** parents are to avoid the following foods due to choking hazards: whole grapes (unless cut in half), nuts, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole round hot dogs (unless cut long ways and sliced in small bite sized pieces), hard carrots, cheese cubes, or any other food that may be a choking hazard. Food for toddlers must be cut into pieces ½ inches or smaller to prevent choking.

## Snacks

We provide snacks in the school age program and summer camp. Afternoon snacks during the school year and am and pm snacks during summer camp. All preschool and Toddler Inn parents must provide healthy snacks for children daily.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are special and may be celebrated during the regular snack time. Speak to your child's teacher about scheduling a birthday snack (no gifts or party favors please). Summer birthdays may be scheduled at any time during the year. Only store-bought treats may be shared with the class.

## Discipline Policy

Our disciplinary goal is to guide children to understand their boundaries and the proper way to handle problems they may encounter. In helping children develop this inner discipline, we will set reasonable limits with logical consequences. We strive to be positive role models for children. The health and safety of our children is a top priority. A child who displays an unacceptable behavior that affects the wellbeing of another child will be removed from the classroom and taken to the program office. At this time, if necessary, a parent/teacher conference and/or a conference with parents, teachers and the Director may occur. If necessary, the Executive Director may become involved. **If at any point a student temporarily requires one on one supervision to be successful in the classroom setting, the parents will be required to pay additional tuition to cover the cost of added teacher.**

Any action or decision regarding unacceptable behavior or violence will be made at the discretion of the Executive and Program Director. If deemed necessary, disciplinary action may result in **suspension or expulsion** from The Kids' Place.

Elementary/School Age Care & Summer Camp – if a child has 3 incident reports, they will not be permitted on the next scheduled field trip. Parents will need to make alternate arrangements for care of their child on that day. If a child purposely damages Kids' Place property, the parent is liable for damages incurred.

No staff or parent will administer corporal punishment while your child is on school property or during participation of The Kids' Place activities. Please remember that changes at home may affect your child's performance at school. Please notify your child's teacher of changes or experiences that may impact your child at school. This will be kept in strict confidence.

If we have a serious behavior and a child needs to be removed from the classroom, teachers call for immediate assistance from another staff member. If we must pick up a child, we pick them up from behind by placing arms under the child's arms. We strive to remain calm and professional at all times.



If a child's behavior causes physical harm to himself/herself, others or is repeatedly disruptive in the classroom, the following steps will be taken at the discretion of the director and executive director:

Step One: Parents will be contacted for a conference with the teacher and/or directors to share behaviors and will be encouraged to work with the program staff in finding a solution. Intervention for home and school will be discussed. The Toddlers and Preschool work with Early Steps or Child Find to assist teachers and parents to help children whose behavior is disruptive and/or harmful. This is a free service provided by Brevard County. Parents will be provided with contact information for these services. These organizations will assign an early childhood specialist to the child and will contact the parents to set up times for observation and discussion. They will also provide suggestions for both home and school to enable the child to participate successfully. This process typically takes several weeks. The school age program encourages counselors or behavioral therapists to come and observe the behaviors to work together to find a solution. Depending on circumstances, the child could be suspended from field trips.

Step Two: A parent conference will be scheduled, and a probationary period of 4-6 weeks will begin for Toddler and Preschool and 1-2 weeks for School Age will begin. During this time, a written behavior plan will be developed with input from teachers, parents and the director. We will use all resources available to resolve the concerns. Major incidents/behaviors resulting in harm to child or others during this period, may result in the child being sent home from school immediately.

Step Three: If the teacher and/or director document satisfactory improvement, the child will continue in the class. On rare occasions, a child does not respond to interventions and has needs beyond our capabilities.

At this point, the parents will be asked to make other arrangements for the care of their child. The directors working closely with the executive director reserve the right to bypass steps and remove a child or take more drastic measures if necessary.

### **Biting Policy**

The Kids' Place policy encourages positive behaviors. We utilize strategies from the Pyramid Model and Dr. Becky Baileys' Conscious Discipline to help children with social-emotional development and self-regulation. Our teachers have taken the training "No More Biting" by Dr. Maryln Applebaum and have familiarized themselves with the techniques described in the book "The Biting Solution" by Lisa Poelle, M.A. While it is considered age-appropriate behavior for your children to bite, we recognize that biting is a serious concern.

In the event a child bites, we document each incident on the day that it occurs. When a child is biting on a continual basis, a plan is implemented.

The plan includes but is not limited to:

- Documentation is kept to determine triggers and patterns.
- Social stories are created for teachers to use with the child. These stories have pictures of what behaviors are appropriate to do with our bodies (teeth are for eating and smiling, hands are for playing with toys, feet are for walking, etc.).
- Parent/teacher conferences are held to discuss family routines and what type of discipline is used at home. Together we try to find a cause and solution for the behavior.
- If necessary, an evaluation will be recommended for the child and the parents will be given contact information for Early Steps, Child Find, or Kinder Consulting. The parents have one week to make the appropriate connection. After the evaluation, all documentation must be provided to The Kids' Place office. Failure to respond in a timely manner may result in the child's expulsion from the program.

Disciplinary action for repeat biters:

- If a child bites two times in the same day the child must be picked up immediately.
- If a child bites three times in a week, the child must be picked up immediately and will be suspended for the following day.
- If a child bites 4 times in one week, the child must be picked up immediately and will be suspended for the rest of the week.

Continuation of aggressive behaviors may result in expulsion from The Kids' Place.

### **Removal of Child from Program**

The Kids' Place makes every effort to work with a family to ensure the success of a child in our programs; however, we reserve the right to remove, suspend or expel a child from the program for financial, behavioral, or other issues we are unable to resolve.

### **Tuition**

Please refer to the current tuition schedule available in program offices.

Students enrolled in Toddler, Preschool, School-Age and Summer Camp tuition is due weekly on Mondays. A full weeks' tuition is due weekly. Reductions in tuition will not be made for absences, illnesses, vacation or holidays.

The Kids' Place tuition, registration and additional fee payments will be collected through Tuition Express. This is an auto draft program which allows payments to be collected electronically. Parents complete the Tuition Express enrollment form at registration and payments will be processed weekly on Mondays. The services provided depend on consistent weekly payments. Parents are encouraged to register online to gain access, view accounts and track payments that have been processed. See program directors for more information.

Toddlers– Registration fees will be due at the time of registration. If your child has not turned one by the beginning of the next session, a spot will be held for a minimum of three months. A weekly payment of 50% of the tuition will apply during the three-month waiting period in order to hold their spot.

Preschool & School-Age Care – There will be an extra charge for Full Day care, field trips and early school dismissals due to holidays or In-service days throughout the school year.

### **Fees**

A tuition and registration fee schedule are available from The Kids' Place program directors. A non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of enrollment. In instances where a child does not have lunch and we provide one, a fee will be automatically billed to the family account.

Late Fee- Tuition paid after close of business on Mondays will incur a late payment fee of \$10.00. This fee will be automatically billed to your account.

If diapers run out and are not replenished, they will be provided, and a fee will automatically be billed to the family account.

Tuition is not billed the week following Christmas when TKP is closed.

*There is a \$25.00 NSF fee for payments declined by bank or credit card companies.*

### **Discounts**

The Toddler, Pre-School & School-Age Care students will receive a reduction in tuition for families with siblings attending full time. **Discounts do not apply to VPK, Preschool or School Age Summer Camp, Spring Break or Christmas Breaks.**

The Kids' Place accepts Early Learning Coalition (ELC) contracts. We reserve the right of an upcharge from the parent portion provided by the coalition to help cover expenses. A tuition agreement will provide the agreed upon amount and be signed at registration.

### **Vacation Policy**

Children enrolled full time in the Toddler, Preschool Extended Care and the School Age Program will be allotted one week vacation to be used during the year (first day of school through the last day of summer) in addition to the week we are closed for Christmas break.

### **Severe Conditions Closings**

In the event of severe weather conditions or other local or national disasters, we typically follow the Brevard County School Board regarding openings and closings announced on local television, radio, or social media outlets. TKP reserves the right to make changes from the decisions of Brevard County School Board as necessary.

**If a severe weather/disaster announcement occurs during the school/summer day and Brevard County School Board announces school closures, you must pick up your child immediately.** If weather conditions become severe during the day you may also be called to pick up your child. *Severe conditions could include but are not limited to hurricanes, tropical storms, tornados, fires or any local or national disaster.*

The Kids' Place will re-open when the Brevard County School Board re-opens. If TKP is in a position to open earlier, we will contact our families.

### **Campus Safety**

To keep everyone on our campus safe, we ask the following:

- Lock Car and remove valuables.
- Never leave your car running when picking up or dropping off a child.
- In the case of an emergency or if campus is placed on a Lock Down by the authorities, do not enter campus. Follow our Facebook page or emergency text / email alerts for more information. See website for emergency procedures.
- Please drive slowly and cautiously in our parking lots.
- No smoking on our campus, including e-cigarettes, vaping.

### **Holiday & Other Closings**

Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day and Friday after  
Christmas Eve thru New Year's Day

**TKP closes for the last 3 days of summer before the new school year begins. This allows for staff training and time to transition our programs and prepare for the new school year.** Holiday closings are subject to change.

### **The Toddlers**

We offer care for children from 1 to 2 years of age. These children are lovingly nurtured in a warm, home-like atmosphere. Your child's day will be filled with small group activities and lots of individual attention. The curriculum consists of age-appropriate activities and physical exercise. The Toddler hours are 6:30a.m. -6:00p.m.

### **Morning Preschool**

4-Year-Old Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Morning Preschool

This program is offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for part time hours posted annually. The Monday- Friday 9:00-12:00 class may be available if space permits.

### **Preschool with Extended Care**

#### **3-Year-Old Extended Care Preschool**

This program is offered Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

#### **4-Year-Old Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) Extended Care Preschool**

This program is offered Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. VPK instructional hours are 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. daily.

Ages for preschool are as follows:

Preschool TU and TH	3 yrs. by September 1 <sup>st</sup>
Preschool M, W, F	4 yrs. by September 1 <sup>st</sup>
Extended Care & Summer Camp M-F	3 & 4 yrs. by September 1 <sup>st</sup>

Summer Camp is open to 5-year-olds starting Kindergarten in fall.

### **School-Age Care (K – 6<sup>th</sup> grade)**

The school-Age Care is open Monday -Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. We are open most school holidays including spring break. The Kids' Place provides bus service to Imperial Estates Elementary, Apollo Elementary, Sculptor Charter Elementary, Park Avenue Christian Academy, and Coquina Elementary School.

### **School-Age Summer Camp**

This program offers children in kindergarten- 6<sup>th</sup> grade a fun-filled summer. We offer a wide variety of field trips and activities. Our Summer Camp program participates in the IRCUMC Vacation Bible School and Summer Blast programs. When you register for our summer camp programs you are committed to complete the entire summer and will be billed accordingly.

### **TKP Arrival and Dismissal**

**The Kids' Place hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Prompt arrival is very important. Many activities that determine your child's day are explained to the children first thing in the morning. Additionally, a strict bus schedule is followed for daily school routes and field trips. If your child does not arrive on time, they may miss the bus for school or a field trip. In this case you would be responsible for alternate care for the day.

Please remember that your child depends on you to be there at pick-up time and may feel insecure and displaced if you're late. If you are running late, please call the office so we may reassure your child and relieve them of any fears.

The Kids' Place closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. A late fee will be charged after this time. Late fees are \$10 per child for every five minutes or part of five minutes past dismissal. This policy will be strictly enforced.

For the safety of the children, they will be released only to persons previously authorized in writing. Changes of pick up can be made by phone, if the parent is verified and password is provided. If a parent is not authorized to pick up, we require a copy of the Legal Custody Agreement. TKP loves and supports all parents and respects each family's privacy. We ask that our staff not be placed in uncomfortable situations due to domestic issues.

No child will be released to a parent/guardian appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **School Age Care Transportation**

A strict bus schedule is followed on school days and for field trips during school holidays. If your child does not arrive on time, they may miss the bus to school or for a field trip. Your child must arrive a minimum of 15-min. prior to departure of the bus for school days and by designated time for field trips.

If for any reason you need to change the pick-up of your child from school, you must call the Before & After School Care office at 267-7308, ext. 4, to inform staff of the change. This is very important, as we are very careful to ensure every child from the Kids' Place is on our bus before we leave the school. *There will be a charge of \$10.00 added to your account if you do not inform us of pick-up changes.*

### **Expectations**

***We take care of ourselves,***

***We take care of each other,***

***We take care of our school,***

***We take care of our world.***

*We would love for you to join us for worship!*

Sunday 8am & 9:30am Traditional  
Sunday 11am Contemporary

321-267-7922  
1355 Cheney Hwy.  
Titusville, FL 32780  
[www.ircumc.com](http://www.ircumc.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/TheKidsPlaceatIRCUMC/?fref=ts>



TKP Mission:

***“Bringing Families Together Through Christ-Centered Learning***

Updated 10/2023