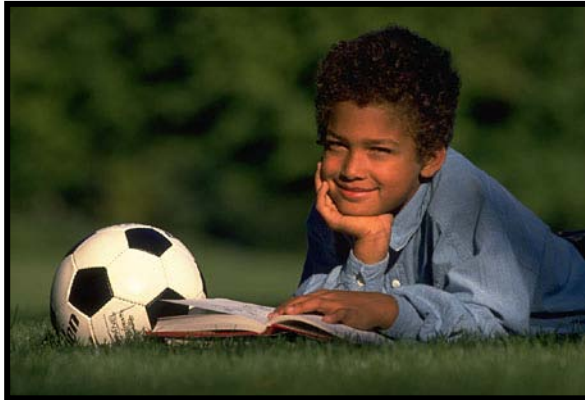


Tarrant County Kids
PARENT HANDBOOK
2010-2011



Welcome to the Tarrant County Kids!

We hope you and your child have an enjoyable experience in our before and after school care program. Good communication between your child, the program staff and you, as parents, will help to make each day a rewarding one. This handbook is designed to answer questions and to provide important information. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully, keeping it for future reference. If ever you have any questions or concerns regarding our before and after school program, please feel free to contact us without hesitation.

THIS HANDBOOK WAS REVISED
July 2010
and
CONTAINS RECENT REVISIONS BASED ON STATE LICENSING STANDARDS

LOCATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

2820 Matlock Rd.
Arlington, TX 76015
Main Number: 817-468-0306
Fax Number: 817-557-3008

Bryant	817-266-5476
Burgin	817-223-8293
Corey	817-648-5864
Crow	817-691-0713
Farrell	817-223-4400
Fitzgerald	817-504-5792
Foster	817-472-9536
Little	817-446-2051
West	817-991-6105
Wood	817-266-5475

Director of Tarrant County Kids
Manager of Childcare Accounts
Senior Vice President of Operations
President/CEO

Ryan Miller
Brooke Frame
Jennifer Limas
Susan Dougherty

For questions concerning the childcare programs,
please contact Ryan Miller at 817-468-0306.

We thank you for the opportunity to serve your family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission	4
Program Hours	4
Registration / Admission	4
Payment Policy	5
Late Fees	5
Returned Checks	6
Withdrawal from Program	6
Refunds	6
Parental Notifications	6
Notification of Absence	6
Parent Pick-Up	6
Late Pick-Ups	7
Teacher In-Services and Full-Day Care	7
Holidays	7
Spring Break, Winter Break and Summer Camp	7
Early School Closings	8
Transportation	8
Personal Belongings	8
Snacks	8
Child's Responsibilities	9
Discipline and Guidance	9
Outdoor Safety	10
Emergency Procedures	10
In Case of Accident	10
Medication Administration	11
In Case of Illness	11
Personal Communication Devices	11
Grievance Policy	12
Questions or Concerns by Parents	12
Parental Observation	12
Parental Participation	12
Licensing and Minimum Standards	12
Fees for Services	13

MISSION

Tarrant County Kids is a service provided by Girls Incorporated of Tarrant County and is a licensed childcare program providing before and after school childcare and all-day childcare during school holidays and breaks.

The mission of Girls Inc. of Tarrant County is to inspire all girls to become **strong, smart and bold** and increase the social competence of girls and boys.

PROGRAM HOURS

When school is in session (August-June), the afterschool program begins at the end of the school day (normally 3:20 p.m.) and ends at 6:30 p.m. Morning program begins at 6:30 a.m.

Hours for scheduled holidays, winter break and spring break are 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Children will not be accepted prior to the scheduled session times.

Children picked-up after 6:30 p.m. will be charged a late fee.

Tarrant County Kids has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to visit any one of our centers during operating hours.

REGISTRATION / ADMISSION

Registration fees are as follows:	First child	\$ 25.00
	Second child	\$ 20.00
	Third child	\$ 15.00

All children must enroll for each school year and each summer session. Children can only be enrolled at our Administrative Office located at 2820 Matlock Road in Arlington. Payment for the first week of afterschool care, all registration fees, and prior balances (if any) must be paid upon enrollment and prior to the first day of service. Your child is not considered enrolled and therefore, may not attend this program until these payments, all required applications and documentation are received. Please be sure to verify that enrollment is completed prior to your child's first day. Children who arrive for afterschool care but have not yet completed their enrollment will be taken to the school office and the parent will then be called to come and pick up the child.

Registration fees are non-refundable.

Once enrolled, weekly fees can be paid at each site according to our payment policies. A listing of the weekly rates is attached at the back of this handbook.

Children are enrolled as one of the following:

FULL-TIME: regularly attending three or more days.

DROP-IN: occasional and unscheduled attendance, less than weekly.

All registration forms must be filled out COMPLETELY and must include:

- Complete doctor's information including address and phone number.
- Current addresses and phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts.
- Current immunization and hearing & vision records. If your child's records are on file at his/her current school, you must provide the name, address, and phone number of school. TB exams are not required by the City of Arlington or Tarrant County Health Department at this time; the TB exam record is not required.
- Current photographs of everyone authorized on the enrollment form to pick up your child (Farrell and West only).
- Notarized enrollment forms (Farrell and West only). For your convenience, forms can be notarized at our Administrative Office.

It is imperative that all changes to contact information, including addresses and phone numbers, be communicated to our Administrative Office at 817-468-0306.

We are an equal opportunity agency. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, ethnicity or religion.

PAYMENT POLICY

All payments for services are due Monday of the week that services are rendered. Fees are established based on the ability to pay.

Check or money order payments will be accepted at any childcare site. No post-dated checks will be accepted. Cash and credit card payments must be made at the Administrative Office only. Cash payment may be in the exact amount only. The Administrative Office has a drop slot for after hour payment drop-offs. Payments made through the night-drop prior to 8:00am Tuesday morning will not be considered late. For your protection, **never leave cash in the night-drop**. Cash payments must be made in person.

If your child is registered as "**FULL-TIME**," which is regularly attending three or more days per week, you will be charged for a full week of childcare.

Children registered as "**DROP-IN**" will be charged the daily rate for each day attended. Payment is due by check or money order on a daily basis at the time of pick-up, otherwise it will be considered late.

LATE FEES

Any payments received after close of business Monday will be assessed a \$15.00 late fee. Weekly fees plus applicable late fees are due no later than Friday of that week. Failure to pay by Friday will result in discharge from services effective the following week.

Outstanding fees and late fees for "Drop-Ins" are due before the child can return to the program, or within seven (7) days, whichever is sooner. Failure to pay fees by the seventh day will result in discharge from services effective immediately.

Children discharged from the program for lack of payment will need to be re-enrolled and will be subject to enrollment fees according to registration policies.

RETURNED CHECKS

A \$25.00 FEE IS CHARGED FOR ALL RETURNED CHECKS.

NSF fees and unpaid charges are to be paid by cash or money order no later than Friday of the week of payment. Failure to pay open balances, including outstanding NSF checks and all appropriate fees, result in discharge from services effective the following week.

After two returned checks, we will require all payments to be made by cash or money order.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

You are required to CALL THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE PRIOR TO WITHDRAWAL if your child is no longer going to attend the program. Re-admission will require a re-registration fee according to registration policies.

**YOU WILL CONTINUE TO BE CHARGED
UNTIL WE HAVE RECEIVED NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION.**

REFUNDS

All refunds are approved and processed for payment at the Administrative Office.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

We strive to keep all parents informed and up to date on any program changes or other important information affecting your child or his/her account as they occur. Parents are notified throughout the year of these changes either by posted notice at each of the sites, or by direct written notice given to the parent(s).

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

For full-time children, it is the parent's responsibility to notify Tarrant County Kids when their child will not be attending the program. Parents must leave a message on the voicemail for their child's site before 12 p.m. to avoid a failure to notify fee. Each site's phone number can be found on page one of this handbook. Failure to do so will result in a \$10 fee.

PARENT PICK-UP

Please be prepared for the first week to present your identification. Please make sure that anyone who is picking up your child has proper picture identification and is on the pick-up list.

STATE GUIDELINES REQUIRE THAT ALL CHILDREN BE SIGNED OUT AT TIME OF PICK-UP.

We require that you ALWAYS sign your child out with the time and your initials when you pick them up.

No child will be released to someone other than the parent without authorization by the parent and without a picture ID.

We require written permission from the parent for a school-age child to be released to the care of a sibling under 18 years old.

LATE PICK-UPS

A \$10.00 late fee is due for every increment of fifteen (15) minutes after 6:30 p.m. that you are late. The late pick-up fee can be paid by check or money order at the time of pick-up, or can be paid to the Administrative Office. Late pick-up fees must be paid no later than Friday of that week in order to avoid being discharged from the program. If you are late picking up your child three times, you will be asked to leave the program.

If your child is not picked up by 7:15 p.m., we will call the Arlington Police Department.

ALL DAY CHILDCARE – HOLIDAYS AND TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAYS

All-day childcare is provided for MOST AISD holidays for an additional fee. Parents need to sign up their children and pay additional fees associated with the extended hours of service **prior to** the day of service. Dates of upcoming school holidays will be posted two weeks in advance.

Morning and afternoon snacks are provided by Tarrant County Kids. **Children need to bring a sack lunch every day of all-day care.**

HOLIDAYS

Holiday care is provided for all school holidays EXCEPT for the following:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day
New Year's Eve	Memorial Day
Independence Day (July 4 th)	

Dates of upcoming holidays will be posted two weeks in advance.

Payment is due for the full week of care regardless of holidays.

SPRING BREAK, WINTER BREAK and SUMMER ADVENTURE CAMP

Adventure Camp, our all-day childcare, is provided during the scheduled school holidays and spring, winter and summer breaks at a full-day rate. For spring and winter holidays, parents are to sign up their children and pay additional fees associated with the extended hours of service prior to the first day of camp. Dates of upcoming holidays will be posted in advance at childcare locations and on the website.

Children planning to attend all-day care during the summer months are required to enroll for the summer and pay registration fees according to our registration policies.

EARLY SCHOOL CLOSING

Afterschool care will be provided from the dismissal of school at each site on school district scheduled early dismissal days. During the event of an unscheduled school closing, such as for

bad weather conditions, the agency will also close and no childcare will be provided. Inclement weather closings will be posted on our website (www.girlsinctarrant.org) as well as local news channels 4, 5, 8 and/or 11.

TRANSPORTATION

Written authorization is required from the parent prior to scheduled field trips in order for Tarrant County Kids to transport your child. In the absence of written authorization, parents may drive their children to and from field trips, however, since there will be no staff available at the childcare site during the field trip, children may not be left at the site and parents will be asked to come and pick up the child.

Only approved staff of Tarrant County Kids will transport children in company-owned vehicles or in AISD school buses with AISD bus drivers.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please mark all belongings with your child's name. No money is allowed except for field trip purposes or special occasions. If you choose to send money with your child, Tarrant County Kids cannot be responsible for lost money or purchases made. If your child purchases something the staff deems inappropriate, the item will be taken away and given to the parents at pick up.

Children are allowed to bring personal gaming systems, toys and other personal items. However, if the items begin to cause problems, they will be taken away and given to parents at pick up.

Please remind your child to take all belongings home every day.

**Tarrant County Kids will not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items
at the school site or on field trips.**

SNACKS

Tarrant County Kids provides snacks each afternoon. If desired, children may bring snacks from home. Only individually wrapped items can be shared with other children on special occasions.

Dietary restrictions are to be written by the parent on the enrollment form. We will attempt to meet any special dietary considerations.

CHILD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Your child...

- Will learn to accept the consequences for his/her own actions.

- Will respect the rules that guide him/her during the day, and will control his/her feelings so that his/her actions do not hurt anyone in the program.
- Will not willfully destroy or harm any equipment or property in the building, or anyone else's, while he/she is in the program.
- Will remain with a staff member at all times.
- Will come to the program site immediately after school unless he/she notifies a staff member. (A note from the teacher is needed if your child will be staying after to help that teacher.)
- Will return materials and equipment to the place they found them.
- Will finish activities and clean up afterward.

DISCIPLINE and GUIDANCE

In accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance, our agency adheres to the following guidelines:

- Discipline must be:
 - Individualized and consistent for each child;
 - Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
 - Directed toward teaching this child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 - Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
- There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 - Punishment, shaking, or biting a child;
 - Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 - Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 - Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language;
 - Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed;

- o Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Appropriate behavior is expected of all program participants. Parents are asked to work with us regarding any problems your child may have. Children must be willing and able to participate with a child/staff ratio of 15:1. Children not meeting this requirement may be dropped from the program. Registration will not be refunded.

Tarrant County Kids reserves the right to request without advance notice that you pick up your child and to discontinue service if the child's behavior poses a threat to him/herself, other children, staff or to property belonging to either Tarrant County Kids or the school.

The Tarrant County Kids standard of child guidance is positive and based on assisting the child to learn to better control his/her responses to situations.

If a child destroys any property belonging to Tarrant County Kids or the school, the parent will be responsible for paying for the cost of the damage.

When incidents occur, our staff will communicate with the parent to achieve a positive solution in the best interest of the child or children involved. When problems are repeated, the child may be suspended from the program for one day. If the problems continue after suspension, the child will be dismissed from the program.

Any child exhibiting discipline problems will not be allowed to attend field trips.

Tarrant County Kids reserves the right to remove *any* child at *any* time for *any* purpose the agency feels is reasonable.

OUTDOOR SAFETY

Children will experience outdoor activities in our program, which may include playing on the school's playground equipment. Play equipment at each of our sites (schools) may not meet Licensing standards specified by the Department of Family and Protective Services.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Parents of all children in a childcare program are required to submit a medical release form providing Tarrant County Kids permission to seek medical attention for your child in case of an emergency.

It is imperative that parents notify the Administrative Office of any change to home, work and medical phone numbers. Incorrect numbers will result in the removal of your child from our program.

Fire and tornado drills are conducted monthly at each of our sites.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENT

Tarrant County Kids always considers the child's safety above all other factors and will call for emergency medical assistance whenever immediate medical attention is needed.

A member of the staff will carry out immediate First Aid or call for assistance. A member of the management staff will call you (or emergency contact) to advise you of any accident needing medical attention. The Administration is contacted immediately to assess all accidents.

In case the parents or designated person cannot be reached, a staff member will have the authority to transport the child to a hospital.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

We will not administer medication (prescription or non-prescription) without the written authorization of both the parent and physician. For children with periodic and recurring medical problems requiring continuous medications (such as asthma or diabetic medications), the parent must provide written authorization every six months.

Any medication brought to the site must be in its original container and clearly labeled with the child's first and last name and given to the site manager.

A Permission Slip for administering medications MUST be completed for any child needing to take medication, specifying the dates, times and amounts of medication to be given. It must be kept on file at the site.

IN CASE OF ILLNESS

Please do not bring your child to the center with a contagious illness. If it is apparent that your child is ill and should not remain at the site, you will be called and asked to make other arrangements. **Please make sure that your emergency contact telephone numbers are current at all times.**

Children who did not attend school for reasons of illness cannot attend after-school care that day. If your child feels ill during the program and cannot participate, we will attempt to give your child a place to rest while you are notified.

State law requires those children with a temperature of 100.4 or higher be sent home. If a child is sent home with fever, he or she must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to the childcare program. You will be asked to pick your child up.

Signs of possible severe illness include unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, rash with fever, pink eye(s), behavioral changes or any other unusual signs.

If your child has had two or more episodes of diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours, the child may only return to childcare after the diarrhea or vomiting has subsided for 24 hours.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

To avoid interference with program facilitation, children will not be allowed to bring cell phones, pagers or walkie-talkies to the after-school programs. If your child needs to communicate with you on an emergency basis, the program's phone will be made available. We will not be able to accommodate daily communication but will make every effort to see that your child's needs are met.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Should a problem, question, or complaint arise, please speak with the Manager at the childcare site.

If you are not satisfied, you may contact the Director of Tarrant County Kids at 817-275-2120.

If, after speaking with the Director of Tarrant County Kids, you are not satisfied, you may contact the Senior Vice President of Operations at 817-275-2120.

All problems concerning billing and payments should be directed to the Childcare Accounts Manager at 817-468-0306.

We welcome your ideas, comments, and questions. Please feel free to contact us without hesitation.

Tarrant County Kids reserves the right to remove *any* child at *any* time for *any* purpose the agency feels is reasonable.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS BY PARENTS ABOUT POLICIES & PROCEDURES OF THE CHILDCARE CENTER **can be discussed with the Director of Tarrant County Kids by calling 817-275-2120.**

PARENTAL OBSERVATION

This agency has an open-door policy whereby parents can *observe* their child(ren), the childcare center's operation, and program activities, without prior notice, at any time during the childcare hours of operation.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

Parents, family members, and friends, age 18 or older, may participate in our childcare program on a volunteer basis after fulfilling all volunteer enrollment requirements, which includes background screening. This must be coordinated and completed by the Director of Tarrant County Kids and the Volunteer Coordinator. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator or Director of Tarrant County Kids.

LICENSING and MINIMUM STANDARDS

Tarrant County Kids maintains the minimum childcare standards as set forth by the Department of Family and Protective Services. A copy of the Minimum Standards and our most recent Licensing Inspection Report are posted for your review at every childcare site, and are available upon request at our Administrative Office at 2820 Matlock Rd., Arlington.

Parents may contact the local Licensing office of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) by calling 817-321-8000, or visit them through the DFPS web-site at www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/about_child_care_licensing.

To report suspicions or incidents of child abuse or neglect, contact the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.



FEES FOR SERVICES

SCHOOL YEAR 2010-2011

FULL-TIME WEEKLY RATE

Regular Lunch:	\$50.00 - First Child \$45.00 - Second Child \$40.00 - Third Child and any subsequent
Reduced Lunch*:	\$40.00 - First Child \$35.00 - Second Child \$30.00 - Third Child and any subsequent
Free Lunch*:	\$30.00 - First Child \$25.00 - Second Child \$20.00 - Third Child and any subsequent

CONTRACT & DROP-IN DAILY RATE

Regular Lunch:	\$18.00 Per Day - First Child \$16.00 Per Day - Second Child \$14.00 Per Day - Third Child and any subsequent
Reduced Lunch*:	\$14.00 Per Day - First Child \$12.00 Per Day - Second Child \$10.00 Per Day - Third Child and any subsequent
Free Lunch*:	\$11.00 Per Day - First Child \$9.00 Per Day - Second Child \$7.00 Per Day - Third Child and any subsequent

MORNING PROGRAM FEES

\$ 25.00 Per Week
\$ 9.00 Per Day

REGISTRATION FEES

<u>First Child</u>	<u>Second Child</u>	<u>Third Child</u>
\$ 25.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 15.00

** All lunch rates are based on the current school year. We must have a copy of the reduced/free lunch letter on file in order for your child to receive the correct rate.