



2026-2027

SPACE Parent Handbook



Dear Skokie's Place for All Children in Extended Care (SPACE) Parents:

Welcome to the Skokie Park District's unique before & after-school program, the SPACE Program. We are committed to continuing the tradition of excellent before and after-school care for children in Grades K-5 (ages 5-11) who attend Fairview, Jane Stenson, Highland, Devonshire, Edison, Madison, Middleton, Elizabeth Meyer, and East Prairie schools.

The SPACE staff have the responsibility to meet the needs of each child and to help promote their self-esteem. Our program does this by providing a safe, secure, and nurturing environment. The SPACE program is recreational in nature and offers a wide variety of activities on a daily basis: active games, quiet games, art, music, board games, socialization and homework time. The overall atmosphere is designed to be fun and make each child feel valued.

Our main goal is for each child to develop mutual respect and trust with the SPACE staff. We strive to meet the needs of the whole child as an individual and promote a positive self-image and high self-esteem. In addition to daily contact, we promote parent-staff communication through newsletters, flyers, and family events.

The following information is compiled to answer any questions that you might have regarding the SPACE program. Please read it carefully as some of our procedures have changed.

Respectfully,

The Skokie SPACE Staff

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CONTACT INFORMATION

- Oakton Community Center 4701 Oakton Street Skokie, Illinois 60077
 - (847) 674-1500 ext. 2700
- Administrative Offices- 9300 Weber Park Place Skokie, Illinois 60077
 - (847) 674-1500
- Serena Tyler
SPACE Program Manager
styler@skokieparks.org
(847) 929-7741

The Skokie Park District's SPACE program dedicates itself to providing a safe, secure, challenging, and fun-filled before and after school recreational program in which children can grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

PROGRAM GOALS

- To develop in each child a positive self-concept and an acceptance of other individuals, their cultural backgrounds, strengths and weaknesses.
- To provide for the physical and emotional wellbeing of each child via an atmosphere of warmth, safety and acceptance.
- To help children establish relationships with other children and staff.
- To provide an environment that is stimulating and inviting to children, where each child feels a sense of belonging and is encouraged to develop control of his/her behavior.
- To encourage children to make choices and decisions and to be able to accept the outcome of their choices.
- To develop a mutually cooperative and supportive relationship with each family.
- To create a relaxed, trusting, intimate atmosphere where children are encouraged to pursue their own interests, develop friendships, and grow in confidence, independence and respect for themselves and others.

It is our goal to accommodate as many families as possible. The Skokie Park District reserves the right to adjust locations based on availability of space, staff and enrollment, in order to maintain the safety, structure and integrity of the program as a whole.

All registrations must be accompanied with payment information and waivers. Park District account must be in good financial standing. No participant is permitted to temporarily withdraw from the program.

Registration is available online only via WebTrac

Visit:

https://ilskokieweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/splash.html?interfaceparameter=webtrac_newui&ccode=space

Reach out to Serena at styler@skokieparks.org with any registration questions.

REGISTRATION CHECKLIST

- Complete the SPACE Registration Form & Sign Waivers
- Complete the Mandatory SPACE Information Form for each child via ePACT
- Complete the Medication Waiver via ePACT
- Pay Registration Fee (one fee per family)
- Please keep the SPACE Parent Handbook for reference

SCHOOL YEAR FEES

Registration Fee: \$35/family **(Non-Refundable)**

	Part-Time (1-3 days/week)	Full-Time (4-5 days/week)
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Before School (Begins at 7:00 a.m.)	\$657/ school year \$73/month Part time AM in full: \$624	\$882/ school year \$98/month Full time AM in full: \$838
After School (Ends at 6:00 p.m.)	\$1,507/school year \$167/month Part time PM in full: \$1,432	\$2,097/ school year \$233/month Full time PM in full: \$1,992

Learn & Play SPACE Program:

Learn & Play PM	11 AM- 2:30 PM	\$2,565/school year \$285/month Pay in full: \$2,437
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All parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Payment Agreement Form prior to enrollment of their child(ren) in the SPACE Program. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

SPACE PAYMENT AGREEMENT

Total monthly fees will be charged to the card on file on the 25th of each month, beginning August 25. The final payment will be charged on April 25.

All outstanding household balances must be paid in full for a child to begin or continue attending SPACE.

If payment is not received by the due date or the card on file is declined, a \$25 late fee will be added to the household balance. The full balance, including the \$25 late fee, must be paid within five business days of the missed or declined payment. If the balance is not paid in full within five business days, the child will not be permitted to attend SPACE until the entire household balance, including all applicable fees, has been paid in full.

I understand that I am responsible for promptly notifying the Skokie Park District of any changes to my credit card or other payment information.

Revoking authorization for automatic payments, stopping a payment through a financial institution, disputing a charge, or replacing or closing the card on file does not cancel program enrollment or eliminate any amount owed to the Skokie Park District. Program cancellation must be submitted in writing in accordance with the Skokie Park District's cancellation policy. All outstanding program fees, late fees, and other authorized charges remain due unless otherwise required by law.

I understand that these financial arrangements will remain in effect until: (a) the total amount due has been collected by the Skokie Park District; (b) I have submitted a written request to cancel the program **and have**

paid all current fees, late fees, and outstanding household balances; or (c) the Skokie Park District or my financial institution sends me notice that this agreement has been terminated.

ADDITIONAL DAYS

Depending on the enrollment for a particular day, part-time children may be eligible to attend an extra day. **The charge for each additional morning is \$10.00 per day, and for afternoon is \$15.00 per day.**

Payments are due on the day of service and are made through a check to Skokie Park District. An "Additional Day Fee" form must be completed at your SPACE Site with the SPACE Director. This charge will not be billed to your account. **SPACE STAFF ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HANDLE CASH.**

TAX INFORMATION & CHILDCARE STATEMENTS

The Skokie Park District tax identification number is 36-6006104. Each year the registering parent of participants can generate a childcare statement by logging into your Skokie Park District account and clicking on Childcare Statements under my account. **All signatures** for childcare tax purposes, work reimbursements, program verification, etc. must go through Serena Tyler at styler@skokieparks.org

PARENT ORIENTATION

Parent Orientation will be held in person at the Oakton Community Center on August 11, 2026, at 7 pm. The purpose of this session is to review SPACE policies and practices, become acquainted with the schedule of activities, and to ask questions related to your child's enrollment. More details will be emailed out at a later date.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The SPACE Program is held Monday through Friday for children who attend Skokie School Districts 68, 69, 72, 73, and 73 ½, Kindergarten through 5th grade. Pre-K is available only at Elizabeth Meyer.

WAITLIST

Any child who meets the age requirements may be placed on a waiting list. If space is not available for the child at the desired time of admission, the parent can register the child(ren) on a waitlist for the desired SPACE site. When a space becomes available for the child(ren), the family will be contacted to register and confirm the child's starting date. At that time, the parents will pay the registration fee.

DCFS

The SPACE Program is not licensed or regulated by DCFS.

WITHDRAW

To withdraw your child from the program, the SPACE office must receive written notification from the parent with a one-week notice required. In addition, any balance due is payable immediately and a \$25.00 withdrawal fee is assessed. A refund is issued if overpaid for the month, based on the actual days attended, less payments made to date.

DISCHARGE

Children must follow the code of conduct while attending the SPACE Program. Any child, who, after attempts have been made to meet their individual needs, demonstrates the inability to function positively in the type of environment offered at the center or whose presence is harmful to the group, shall be discharged from the program.

PRE-K EXTENDED PROGRAM

We offer an Extended Section called Learn & Play for families with students attending Elizabeth Meyer School. The Learn & Play Section for Meyer morning preschool students runs from 11 AM-2:30 PM.

SPACE HOURS

School	AM Care	PM Care	Cell Phone Number
DISTRICT 68			
Devonshire	7:00 AM – 8:40 AM	3:30 PM – 6:00 PM	312-852-6016
Highland	7:00 AM – 8:40 AM	3:30 PM – 6:00 PM	312-874-0677
Stenson	7:00 AM – 8:40 AM	3:30 PM – 6:00 PM	312-961-8706
DISTRICT 69			
Edison	7:00 AM – 8:25 AM	3:15 PM – 6:00 PM	312-953-9661
Madison	7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	2:50 PM – 6:00 PM	312-825-2176
DISTRICT 72			
Fairview	7:00 AM – 8:45 AM	3:25 PM – 6:00 PM	312-874-1019
DISTRICT 73			
East Prairie	7:00 AM – 8:30 AM	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	312-785-3237
DISTRICT 73.5			
Elizabeth Meyer	7:00 AM-8:25 AM	2:30 PM – 6:00 PM	312-860-6574
Middleton	7:00 AM – 8:25 AM	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	312-982-1487

School start times may vary but the SPACE Program always runs 7 am-6 pm. Phone numbers for each site are operable and accessible at all times.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

Participants may choose to attend Part-Time (2/3 days per week) or Full-Time (4/5 days per week). The specific days must remain consistent for the duration of the school year for accurate attendance and record keeping. Days are not interchangeable week to week.

PROGRAM DATE CHANGES

If you need to change program options after school starts (i.e. 5 days to 3 days, etc.), all requests must be submitted in writing to the SPACE Manager. All changes requests must be submitted with at least one week's notice. Change requests are based on availability and may not be granted.

PROGRAM & FEE REVISIONS

The Skokie Park District reserves the right to revise any fees and/or policies after proper written notification is given to parents.

On select school holidays and institute days, SPACE will offer a full-day program from 8AM – 5PM for an additional charge. Registration for these special programs may be denied to any participants whose account is past due or who has shown that their behavior is not consistent with behavioral requirements of our program.

Detailed information and forms will be distributed for these days prior to the day off. Register early. There is a limit or maximum number of participants who can be accommodated on each day off.

Refunds are only available when requested at least two business days in advance of the program. Please register for these programs online or at the Oakton Community Center Guest Service Desk.

SIGN-OUT

Children enrolled in the SPACE program are **not** permitted to arrive or leave the program without a signature of a parent, guardian, or authorized adult listed on ePACT. A signature must be obtained each day; signing out your child in advance is prohibited. A valid ID must be shown to pick up your child until staff are able to recognize you, or on request.

CUSTODY SITUATIONS

Both parents/guardians will be allowed to pick up their child at any time unless legal documentation, such as court orders explaining your custody arrangement, are provided. Please bring your most current documents to the office at the Oakton Community Center and we will copy the sections pertaining to custody. Documents from past school years/summer camps need to be re-submitted.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues and loss, children are not permitted to bring toys or games (electronic or otherwise) from home. Staff will ask children to put personal electronics and toys away; failure to do so will result in confiscation. Parents will have to pick up any confiscated items from the SPACE Director. The program will not be liable for lost or stolen items if your child brings any personal items. No weapons of any kind should be brought to the program.

CELL PHONES AND SMART DEVICES

The use of cell phones/Smart watches is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, making calls, texting, browsing the internet, using social media, and taking photos or videos.

Participants who need to contact their parents/guardians for any reason during SPACE hours are encouraged to approach the Director who will assist with making the call.

Parents/guardians who need to get in touch with their children during SPACE hours can do so by calling the SPACE cell phone. SPACE staff will facilitate communication between the participants and their parent/guardian.

COMMUNICATION

Ongoing, open communication between parents/guardians is essential to a positive SPACE experience. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns with the SPACE Director. Should your child be experiencing something at SPACE or in their personal life that may be reflected in their behavior or attitude at SPACE, please inform the SPACE Director right away.

The main forms of SPACE communication are the SPACE phone and email. Emails, texting, calling, and voicemails are encouraged and accepted.

SPACE Cell Phones:

SPACE cell phone calls and texts will be answered/responded to during SPACE days and hours. SPACE cell phones will be turned off at night and on weekends. It will be checked the next business day.

SPACE Emails:

SPACE emails will receive a response before the Director leaves for the day. Emails outside of SPACE days and times will be replied to the next business day. SPACE emails and cell phones are sent in the Welcome Letter and available on the SPACE website.

Contact the SPACE Program Manager, Serena Tyler, for issues previously reported to the SPACE Director that remain unresolved or are recurring.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

SPACE staff will supervise children who are left beyond the scheduled pick-up time until a parent or another authorized adult on the pick-up list arrives. However, late pick-ups will result in a fee. The parent/guardian will receive one verbal reminder of the late pick-up policy. After the first verbal warning, any time a parent/guardian is late, a fee will be charged at a rate of \$1.00 for every minute. The dollar-per-minute charge will stay constant. Payment of the late fee is due at the time of pick-up. All measurements of time are to be according to the clock located at the SPACE site. Repeated late pick-ups may lead to additional consequences, including increased fees and dismissal from the SPACE Program.

EMERGENCY/ALT. PICK UPS

Parents are required to include on ePACT any and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick up their child from SPACE. In an emergency situation, the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the person(s) listed on this form until someone can be reached. Please make sure that the authorized person(s) you listed resides within reachable distance from the center.

Persons listed on our form will be required to provide a driver's license or state issued photo ID prior to the staff releasing the child.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event the school has an emergency closing (weather, mechanical difficulties, etc.) the SPACE program will be canceled. All day school closings will be announced on school websites and/or television news. A refund will not be issued for school cancellations. Fees will be applied to make up days, if appropriate.

ABSENCES

Parents are required to inform their respective SPACE site by leaving a message on the site cell phone number by 7:30 AM. if a child will not be in attendance on a scheduled day. This will enable the SPACE Director to effectively plan for the day. Messages (text and phone) may be left on the cell phone 24 hours a day.

EMERGENCY FORMS THROUGH ePACT

Before the start of SPACE, all participants must have emergency forms completed. This form is through ePACT, and families will receive an invitation through ePACT upon registration. This form includes pertinent information such as emergency contacts, allergies, medication waivers, and special accommodation requests. The personal information included on this form is confidential and shared only with the necessary individuals.

ILLNESS

Participants should not be brought to SPACE with an illness that is contagious, or with a fever (100.4 or above), diarrhea, vomiting, unidentifiable rashes, and/or lice infestation. Participants may not return to SPACE until they are fever- and/or diarrhea-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication).

If a child shows any signs of illness or has a fever recorded at SPACE parents are required to pick up the child within 60 minutes of notification. If a parent is reached but cannot pick up their child within 60 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for an alternate pickup with someone listed on the child's emergency contact list (listed on ePACT). If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people from the emergency contact list, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Thermometers will be available at SPACE in case staff need to take a child's temperature during the day.

Dependent upon illness, a doctor's note stating that the participant may safely return to SPACE may be required.

Parents are responsible for letting the SPACE Director/Manager know immediately if their child has symptoms or has been diagnosed with a communicable disease. If a participant has a communicable disease, all parents/guardians with a participant at the respective SPACE site will be notified by the SPACE Director or Manager.

EMERGENCIES

At least one staff person trained in the administration of First Aid and Infant/Child CPR is on duty at all times.

In cases of accidents or emergencies that require more than basic first aid, 911 will be called. Every effort will be made to contact parent/guardian immediately. Staff will provide care for which they are trained until paramedics arrive and will reassure children at all times. Parents/guardians are responsible for the emergency medical charges for all services rendered. Your authorization for the program permits staff to secure emergency medical attention for your child and your commitment for payment thereof is part of the registration agreement.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for SPACE is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants and staff. The plan outlines procedures for responding to various emergencies including severe weather, health crises, missing persons, and more.

Each site has its own specific EAP and will practice the plans and drills throughout the school year. For further details, contact the Program Manager directly.

SAFETY

Firearms are prohibited on all school premises. All schools will have a "no firearm" sign posted at all entrances.

TOILETING

The Skokie Park District is committed to providing safe, supportive, and developmentally appropriate recreation programs for all participants. To ensure a successful experience for both children and staff, we require that all participants in our recreation programs—including Learn and Play and SPACE—are fully toilet trained prior to enrollment.

Definition of Toilet Trained:

- For the purposes of our programs, a child is considered fully toilet trained when they:
 - Recognize the need to use the bathroom and can do so without reminders.
 - Can independently manage their toileting needs, including wiping, flushing, and redressing.
 - Have no regular toileting accidents (occasional, isolated accidents may happen, but not on a daily or frequent basis).

Toileting Policy:

- Children who are not fully trained are not eligible to participate in Skokie Park District recreation programs.
- If a toileting accident occurs, staff will contact a parent or guardian to come change the child within 30 minutes.
- In cases where the child is capable, staff will provide verbal coaching to help the child change into clean clothing supplied by the family.
- Staff are not permitted to wipe or change participants due to health and safety regulations.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Accurately represent your child's toileting abilities during registration.
- Disclose any medical conditions or documented disabilities that affect toileting, prior to registration, and provide documentation.
- Provide a change of clothes in your child's backpack each day.

- Respond promptly if contacted regarding an accident.
- Understand and support this policy to ensure a safe and respectful environment for all participants.

Ongoing Accidents: Staff Procedures:

To ensure clarity and fairness, the following procedure will be followed if a child is having repeated accidents:

- Initial Notification
 - After the second toileting accident within a program week, staff will notify the family that the frequency of accidents is becoming a concern.
 - Parents will be reminded of the toilet training requirements.
- Written Warning
 - If the child continues to have accidents (three or more in a program week, or a consistent pattern over two weeks), a formal written warning will be issued.
 - Staff will document incidents and communicate with the family regarding expectations and potential next steps.
- Temporary Removal
 - If the accidents persist after a written warning and it is determined the child is not fully toilet trained, the child may be temporarily removed from the program.
 - Re-enrollment may be considered once the child demonstrates consistent, independent toileting at home and/or in another structured environment.

DISPENSING MEDICATION

If your child takes any kind of medication, please complete the medication section on the ePACT emergency form. Please note medication will not be dispensed without the completed and signed emergency forms.

SPACE Staff will only dispense over-the-counter and/or prescription medication that is in original, labeled containers and is accompanied by a doctor's note with explicit dosage and administration instructions.

SPACE Staff will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor's note is written and for whom the medication container is labeled. One doctor's note per course of treatment is required. If a child, for example, is to be given a course of antibiotics for ten days, the doctor's note must identify the dates that the medication is to be given. Parents are required to complete a Medication Consent Form for each occurrence that the medication is to be dispensed. Medication Consent Forms, doctor's notes, and medication are to be turned into the SPACE Director.

Should your child be involved in an accident during the course of the day, a staff member will notify you about the specifics of the incident as it pertains to your child. They will receive first-aid. All minor injuries will be reported to the parent(s) at pick-up time; however, any kind of head injury will be reported immediately.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

SPACE will play outdoors each day, with the exception of inclement weather. Children remain indoors if the temperature is 20 degrees or lower, with wind chill factor, snow, or rain. Please make sure your child always wears gym shoes and has a jacket, scarf, hat, boots, and gloves during cold weather.

The following rules should be followed to ensure children's safety and the safety of others while at the playground:

- Refrain from using foul language.
- Refrain from causing bodily harm to other SPACERS and staff.
- Show respect for SPACE equipment, supplies, facilities and their surroundings.
- SPACERS must not climb trees, throw rocks/mulch, etc.
- SPACERS are not allowed to jump off or stand up on swings.
- SPACERS must slide down the slides on their bottoms. Children are restricted from climbing on top of any of the tunnels or slides and from climbing up slides.
- SPACERS are only allowed to climb on equipment designed for climbing.
- Running is permitted on grass and sandy areas only.
- SPACERS must stay within the boundaries established at each site (i.e., sidewalks, trees, playground, etc.)
- Animals and plants should be treated with respect. No chasing or feeding of animals, no pulling on or eating plants.
- SPACERS should never interact with adults who are not associated with the program.

HOMEWORK & CHROMEBOOKS/IPADS

Quiet time is scheduled to provide students with time to complete homework. Students will be encouraged to do homework during this time but will not be required to do so. The children will be expected to work independently, but help is available from the staff. Parents will maintain full responsibility for ensuring accuracy and completeness of all assignments. If your child does not have any homework, they may read or draw during this time. Chromebooks/IPADS are to be used for educational/homework purposes only. Failure to use Chromebooks/IPADS for educational/homework purposes will result in Chromebook/IPAD privileges removed for the remainder of the school year.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children may take part in after-school activities (i.e. Clubs, Sports, Arts, etc.). Staff will ensure children are returned to SPACE once the after-school activity has ended. SPACE fees will not be prorated for time spent at after school activities.

SNACK

SPACE will not provide snacks in the 2026/27 school year. We will provide a time to eat a snack provided by families from home, if desired.

GROUP TREAT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any group treats provided by participants or staff meet the dietary restrictions of all participants. Substitutions will not be accepted.

Group treats are required to be approved by the Site Director ahead of time. The person providing the treat must consult the Site Director to understand the dietary needs of the group and submit treat approval at least three (3) days in advance of the intended treat day. The submission should include a complete list of ingredients and any relevant preparation information to help ensure all dietary restrictions are adhered to. The Site Director will review the treat submission and either approve or deny the request based on its compliance.

Approved treats will be communicated to the group by the Site Director to ensure transparency and awareness. Any concerns or issues with the treats provided should be directed to the supervisor

immediately.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Families enrolled in the SPACE Program permit the taking of photographs and video of themselves and their children during Park District activities for publication, as the Park District deems necessary. However, if you do not wish to have your child be a part of the visual media, please indicate, “Do Not Consent” on the form provided by SPACE.

CHILD CODE OF CONDUCT

Guidance & Discipline

Our goal is to create a safe learning environment which provides each child with the opportunity to develop self-control and assume responsibility for his/her/their behavior while ensuring the safety of all children under our supervision. Staff will communicate behavioral expectations in a manner that is understandable to children, and which helps children understand the reason for rules.

The SPACE program of the Skokie Park District takes a “developmental approach” in working with children and offers a developmentally appropriate program. This approach recognizes that children learn and progress at their own rate of development. Therefore, the discipline policies may differ for kindergarteners, second graders, fifth graders, etc. Resolutions may include limited activities and parent meetings with the Site Director and/or SPACE Manager.

The Skokie Park District is constantly re-evaluating our methods for reasons of continuous improvement; therefore, additions and clarifications to these policies are a possibility.

The safety and security of our participants is our number one priority at the SPACE program. No bullying, verbal abuse, threatening or physical violence towards Park District staff or any participant will be tolerated. The Skokie Park District reserves the right to suspend and/or dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers his/her/their own safety or that of others, interferes with or disrupts the quality or enjoyment of SPACE by other participants, or impacts the ability of staff to conduct or manage activities. Refunds are not issued for days missed due to disciplinary suspension.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

To support a structured and respectful environment, all participants are expected to:

- Show respect to fellow participants and staff
- Follow directions from staff and volunteers
- Follow all established rules and regulations
- Respect equipment, supplies, and facilities
- Refrain from abusive, discriminatory, or offensive language, gestures, or written communication
- Refrain from aggressive or disruptive behavior

Behavioral Consequences

Behavior concerns will be documented when necessary. Repeated or ongoing behaviors may result in the implementation of a three-strike policy. Parents/guardians will be notified when the policy is put into effect and after each incident resulting in a strike. Participants may be suspended or dismissed after three documented incidents.

Please note: Depending on the severity of the behavior, the Park District reserves the right to bypass the three-strike policy. Serious incidents may result in immediate suspension or removal from the program.

Physical Aggression

Any participant who engages in physical aggression toward another participant or staff member-including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, punching, biting, or spitting-will be required to be picked up immediately for the remainder of the day.

Following the incident, staff will review the situation. Based on the findings, the participant may face additional consequences, including suspension or removal from the program.

Discipline Approach

Our goal is to support each participant in developing self-control, responsibility, and positive behavior. Staff will set clear expectations and respond to behavior in a consistent and developmentally appropriate manner.

When addressing behavior, staff will use the following guiding principles:

- Be Safe - Behavior will be addressed immediately if it poses a risk of harm
- Be Kind - Behavior will be addressed if it negatively impacts others
- Respect the Environment - Behavior will be addressed if it causes damage to property or materials

Staff may use strategies such as redirection, problem-solving, and communication with families.

However, behaviors that impact safety or significantly disrupt the program may result in more immediate consequences.

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination Policy

The Skokie Park District is committed to protecting participants and staff from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. All participants and staff are entitled to a safe, equitable, and harassment-free experience. Bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated and is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Bullying is defined as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more participants or employees. It is further defined as 'unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment or cause long term damage; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's performance or participation, is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power'.

Discipline Philosophy

Effective discipline has three purposes:

- To encourage self-esteem, self-control, and responsibility
- To discourage irresponsibility and inappropriate behavior
- To ensure the safety of all participants and staff under our supervision

To be effective, discipline must be a part of a positive, respectful relationship between adults and participants. While participants cannot assume the same rights and responsibilities as adults, they can be treated as equals in terms of worth and respect. Staff are expected to communicate their behavioral expectations in a way that is understandable to participants.

INCLUSION

The Skokie Park District works cooperatively with the Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation (M-NASR) to integrate participants with special needs into recreational programs. For more info about M-NASR visit, <http://www.mnasr.org>.

Additional assistance, including but not limited to aides, may be provided at SPACE to work with a specific participant. These aides only intervene in necessary circumstances. If you feel that your child would benefit from additional assistance at SPACE, please mark this on the registration form. If the Program Director observes behavior in a participant, in which they would benefit from having additional assistance, the parent/guardian will be informed, and a request to M-NASR for their staff to perform an observation will be made. M-NASR will then determine if assistance for the participant would be beneficial.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

SPACE parents are required at all times to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment.

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on district property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities. Parents must always be responsible for and in control of their behavior.

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of SPACE or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner.

Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN

SPACE does not support or condone corporal punishment of children; such acts are not permitted in childcare facilities. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with staff and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own.

No parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the SPACE Director and/or SPACE Manager.

Furthermore, it is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to a SPACE leader or director's attention. At that point, a staff member and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Staff are strictly prohibited from discussing participants' issues with anyone other than the parents, legal guardians, or emergency contacts.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Within SPACE, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of SPACE on a "need-to-know" basis to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as SPACE strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, and or health related information of anyone associated with SPACE.

Information pertaining to children enrolled in SPACE or their families will be kept confidential unless a signed written consent to release has been provided to SPACE Manager.

MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of SPACE are considered mandated reporters under this law. The employees of SPACE are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or conditions prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. Staff at the Skokie Park District take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, the staff of SPACE cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Sending a sick child to school who appears to be medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation
- Leaving your child(ren) in the car running or not, even when picking up other children in the program
- Dropping off/picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time within/outside of the center
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.).
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Unusual bruises, marks, or cuts on the child's body