



# **KIDSWEST**

A WDMCS Community Education Program

2021-22 Handbook

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**Non-Discrimination Policy**—The West Des Moines Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and socioeconomic status, in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination.

If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact Dr. Anthony Ferguson, Executive Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50265; Phone: 515-633-5040; email: [fergusona@wdmcs.org](mailto:fergusona@wdmcs.org).

# Kids West Contacts

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**Kids West Office**  
Learning Resource Center  
3550 Mills Civic Parkway  
West Des Moines, IA 50265

<b>Main Office Staff</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Amy Dvorak, Program Supervisor	515-633-5017	dvoraka@wdmcs.org
K.J. Yaeger, Program Specialist	515-633-5020	yaegerkj@wdmcs.org
Kris Gardner, Program Assistant	515-633-5018	gardnerk@wdmcs.org

## **Kids West Locations**

<b>Clive</b> –1600 73rd St., Windsor Heights	515-577-6849	clkidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Crestview</b> –8355 Franklin Ave., Clive	515-577-6856	cvkidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Crossroads Park</b> –1050 50th St., WDM	515-577-6857	crkidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Fairmeadows</b> –807 23rd St., WDM	515-577-6870	fmkidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Hillside</b> –713 8 <sup>th</sup> St., WDM	515-577-6882	hdkidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Jordan Creek</b> –4105 Fuller Rd., WDM	515-577-6873	jckidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Western Hills</b> –600 39th St., WDM	515-577-6906	whkidswest@wdmcs.org
<b>Westridge</b> –5500 E.P. True Pkwy., WDM	515-577-6908	wrkidswest@wdmcs.org

You can contact your child's site cell phone during Kids West hours. You can send an email, or you can leave a message at any time, day or night, by calling your Kids West site's cell phone. Kids West cell phones do not have text messaging. Please note: The school secretaries do not take and deliver messages for Kids West, so please use only the numbers listed above.

During full-day care days, please use the number for the site your child is attending that day, even if it is not your child's regular Kids West site. Staff will be carrying phones for only the sites we are at on full days.

## Program Overview

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**Welcome**—Welcome to Kids West School-Age Child Care! Kids West provides safe, affordable, and convenient before- and after-school care for elementary (K-6) school children in the West Des Moines Community Schools. Children are able to play, create crafts, learn new team games, and make friends of all ages.

We believe children need a chance to relax at Kids West, and to choose their leisure-time activities. We offer opportunities to grow, develop, and socialize. Kids West staff members plan activities, crafts, and games designed to involve and challenge the children in a variety of fun and enriching ways. Activity plans are posted at each Kids West site.

During our summer program, children are split into age groups from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The curriculum includes, but is not limited to, social education, group games and projects, crafts and exploration, science, math, and reading activities. We also plan to go on field trips three days per week.

**Mission Statement**—Our mission is to establish a fun and safe environment that promotes creativity, guidance, mutual respect, and interaction among children, parents and guardians, and staff.

**Organization**—Kids West is a program of WDMCS Community Education. Our office is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and is located at 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, Iowa 50265.

Office Staff	Phone Numbers
Program Supervisor	515-633-5017
Program Specialist	515-633-5020
Program Assistant	515-633-5018

**Site Staff**—Each site includes a team leader, assistant team leader, and child care providers. Staff-student ratio is maintained at 1:15 and follows state guidelines. Communication with the staff is important to the quality and success of our program in serving your child. Please contact the on-site staff members or the Kids West office with questions or concerns.

## Registration

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**Enrollment Qualifications**—Any K-6 child attending school in the WDMCS may be enrolled in Kids West. Enrollment is limited at each site due to staff-student ratio guidelines and space availability.

**Registration Procedure**—To register for Kids West, please contact the office at 515-633-5018 for instructions on the registration process.

## Program Operation

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**School-Year Program Hours (Monday-Friday)**—Kids West is open from 6:30 a.m. until school begins and after school until 6 p.m. Child care for scheduled early school dismissals is also available and is included in the weekly tuition.

The exception to this is the kindergarten early dismissal offered during the beginning of the school year. Kids West charges an additional fee for this care because we have to bring our staff in early.

**Full-Day Care Dates**—Full-day care is available from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. for current participants during teacher in-service days, parent-teacher conference days, selected days during winter break, and each day of spring break. Full-day care is *not* available on the following days: Fourth of July Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving vacation, two days at Christmas, New Year district holiday, and Memorial Day. Kids West will be closed on these holidays. Full-day care requires advanced registration up to three weeks before the actual payment is due. You will be charged for all full-day care days you preregister for, and fees are not refundable. We must do this in order to provide the best possible care for all children in the program. Children who are not preregistered may not be able to participate based on space availability and will be charged a late enrollment fee of \$5 per child per day if allowed to participate.

**Summer Day Camp**—Kids West is open from 6:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. The start date of summer day camp will vary based on the number of snow days that students and/or staff members have to make up. Families will be informed of the start date in mid-April.

**Nutrition Policy**—Breakfast and snacks are provided by WDMCS Nutrition Services and are prepared and served according to Child and Adult Care Food Program standards. Exceptions to these standards will be allowed for religion, allergies, and medical conditions. If your child needs diet modifications, a physician needs to complete the Diet Modification Request form, which can be found on the WDMCS website or requested from the Kids West office. When completed, return the form to the Nutrition Services department. Menus will be posted on site. Special snacks provided by the Kids West staff will be posted in advance.

Parents/guardians must provide lunch on full-day care days. Refrigerators are not available for lunches, so please plan accordingly when packing your child's lunch.

**Field Trips**—Field trip admissions and transportation are included in your full-day care fee. Treat money is optional for your child when suggested by Kids West. **If your child will not be participating in a field trip, you are responsible for making alternate child care arrangements in advance.**

All field trips are subject to change due to weather or other circumstances. The Kids West staff will post notices at the site if changes are known in advance.

**Transportation**—West Des Moines Community Schools buses are used to transport Kids West participants on field trips. Drivers are trained according to state and school district policies. District guidelines regarding proper school bus behavior are discussed with all participants prior to the field trip.

**Parental Access Policy**—Parents/guardians are welcome to visit their child at any time, unless restricted by a court order. Kids West does ask that visitors check in with staff when entering the child care area. People not listed on the registration and consent forms will not be allowed to visit the child unless previously arranged by the parent/guardian. In a custody situation, please note that the procedure listed in the Custody/Visitation section will be followed.

Parents/guardians can contact Kids West staff while on-site or via the cell phone numbers and email addresses provided on page 1. Parents/guardians wishing to speak at length about their child are asked to schedule a meeting with the Kids West staff.

**Access Policy**—Kids West is responsible for ensuring the safety of children in our care and preventing harm by being proactive and diligent in supervising not only the children, but other people present in our proximity.

1. Any person in the building who is not a staff member, substitute, or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care **shall not** have **“unrestricted access”** to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. “Unrestricted access” means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care. **It is imperative that sites not allow people who have not had a record check to assume child care responsibilities or be alone with children. This directly relates both to child safety and liability to our program.**
2. People who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct **supervision** and **monitoring** of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. **“Supervision”** means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly. **“Monitoring”** means to be in charge of ensuring proper conduct of others.
3. Kids West staff will approach anyone who is in the proximity of the children in our care to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason, they will contact their Site Leader or another management staff to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the “intruder” procedures. Other district staff, or those contracted by the district who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on the premises.
4. A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code 692A):
  - a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
  - b. Shall not be on the property of the child care center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child or ward to and from the center.

- i. The center director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant first.
- ii. If written permission is granted, it shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present, including:
  1. The precise location in the center where the sex offender may be present.
  2. The reason for the sex offender's presence at the facility.
  3. The duration of the sex offender's presence.
  4. Description of how the center staff will supervise the sex offender to ensure that the sex offender is not left alone with a child.
  5. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the director and sex offender and kept on file for review by the center licensing consultant.

**Family/Employee Relationships**—Kids West believes in positive relationships between children, families, and staff members. Your child's experience in Kids West will be most positive when parents/guardians and Kids West staff members cultivate feelings of mutual respect and trust. Kids West staff members and parents/guardians are expected to be respectful towards one another. Shouting and profanity are not allowed, and persons engaged in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave and may be dismissed from the program.

**Discharge Policy**—Kids West has the right to terminate services at any time. Termination may occur for any of the following reasons, but are not limited to:

- failure to comply with the rules and expectations set forth in this Handbook,
- failure to comply with the fee agreement and/or payment arrangements,
- circumstances which pose a threat to the health or safety of the child, other children, or Kids West staff, and which cannot be otherwise satisfactorily resolved.

All decisions to terminate services shall be handled by the Program Supervisor in consultation with appropriate District staff, where necessary. Whenever practicable, the Program Supervisor shall ensure that the parent/guardian is notified prior to any decision to remove the student from Kids West of the reason for possible removal and the student and parent/guardian are given a reasonable opportunity to respond to avoid removal. Written notice of the decision to terminate shall be provided by the Program Supervisor to the parent/guardian.

## **Payment Policies**

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**Responsibilities**—Payment will be expected for every child each week school is in session. Full-day care days are optional and do not count as payment toward a regular school week.

Kids West is a self-supporting program financed by these weekly fees. Kids West does not receive any funding from the school district.

Communication regarding payment is important. If you cannot make a payment, call (515) 633-5018. Payment plans and financial assistance may be available (see Financial Assistance on page 7). However, the ultimate responsibility for payment lies with the parent/guardian. Failure to make payment may result in termination of child care services.

**Payment Due Dates**—Kids West services are provided on a pre-pay basis. Payments for Kids West are due on *Monday*, one week in advance of the week your child will attend. Accounts are invoiced on Friday, prior to the Monday due date.

**Methods of Payment**—Payments may be made by cash, check, credit/debit card, or bank account debit. Payments by check can be dropped off at the Kids West sites on Monday mornings only, before school is in session. Payments can also be brought to the Learning Resource Center between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. After-hour payments can be made in the drop box outside the WDMCS Community Education door. Online payments are always accepted.

**Cash Payments**—Cash is only accepted at the Kids West office between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Cash should not be mailed, left in the drop box, or paid at the child care sites. Kids West will not assume responsibility for cash payments if mailed, left in the drop box, or paid at the child care site. All payments must

be accompanied by a payment schedule form. **Please note:** Kids West office staff are not able to make change for cash payments.

**Returned Checks**—If your personal check is returned for insufficient funds, you must make payment within three banking days. A \$35 returned check fee will be charged to your account. If Kids West receives three returned checks, you will no longer be able to pay by personal check. Once personal check privileges have been lost, they will not be reinstated. Kids West reserves the right to suspend or terminate childcare services if problems with personal checks are not corrected.

**Late Payments**—A \$5 fee will be charged for late payments. Payments made with attendance schedules attached allow Kids West to know who will be attending on a daily basis. If we do not have your child's attendance schedule, Kids West cannot assume responsibility for the whereabouts of your child.

Kids West reserves the right to suspend or terminate child care services if payments are chronically late or unpaid. Late payments for full-day care will be accepted only as space permits. All past due balances, including late fees, must be paid before registration for school breaks, summer day camp, or the School-Year program.

**Past Due Payment Procedures**—Kids West accounts must be current to continue child care services. **If your weekly fees are unpaid for three weeks, Kids West services will be suspended.** This means that your child will not be eligible to attend Kids West until the past due balance, late fees (\$5 per week), and regular advance payments are paid up to current week due. Kids West services can be terminated for repeated late payments. If service for the child is terminated, payment of the past amount is required or the account will transfer to an external collections agency.

You may check your balance at any time using your online account. The Kids West office will also send you a statement if you have debit on your account when invoiced. It is best to correct seemingly small amounts of credit or debit so that your account remains at a zero balance.

**Credits**—Advance payment and scheduling is necessary to ensure accurate food count, staff-student ratio, and other preparations. Fees are not pro-rated or refunded for days your child is absent. Your account will be credited only if the Kids West office is notified of schedule changes one week in advance or if Kids West is canceled due to inclement weather or other circumstances.

**Payment for full-day care is non-refundable.** The only exception is when a scheduled day of care is canceled by the school district due to weather or other emergencies. Then credit will be applied to your account.

**Vacations**—Your child is allowed two weeks of vacation per school year. Vacation would include a week of care that your child does not attend at all. After two weeks of non-attendance, you must pay the weekly one-time rate per child to hold each child's place in the program.

**Accounting Statements**—Accounting invoices are emailed each Friday. A letter showing balance due will be mailed monthly to families with a past due balance on their account. You may also access your account information through your online Kids West account, where you can see and pay your account balance, view statements, and print year-end tax information. Call our Program Assistant at (515) 633-5018 with any questions regarding your account.

**Federal Tax ID Number**—The Kids West federal tax ID number is 42-6004027. This number is printed on the payment form for your reference and is also on your printable invoice/receipt.

**Earned Income/Child and Dependent Care Credit**—You may be eligible for Earned Income Credit or Child and Dependent Care Credit through the federal government if your family earnings are within certain federal guidelines, and if you have one or more qualifying children. For more information and income guidelines, call 1-800-TAX-1040, or contact your local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) clinic for assistance.

## **Tuition**

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**Weekly Rates**—The Kids West weekly rates can be found on the WDMCS website. Second children and any additional should pay the second-child rate.

The minimum payment per week is for one time scheduled. If your child will not attend Kids West during a week school is in session, you may use your vacation time. After two weeks of non-attendance, you must pay the weekly minimum to hold each child's place in the program.

There is no extra charge for collaboration/early school dismissal days. Full-day care rates are for non-school days (conference days, teacher in-service days, and winter and spring breaks) and must be reserved and paid for in advance. You will receive notices of full-day care payment due dates.

**Full-Day Care Payment**—When a week includes a full-day care day, you will need to include the additional fee in your regular weekly payment. **Payment for full-day care is non-refundable.**

**Online Payments**—Credit/debit card payments can be made online through the WDMCS Community Education registration and payment platform—[www.wdmcs.ce.eleyo.com](http://www.wdmcs.ce.eleyo.com). Accounts are created through the Kids West office; if you are a new participant, please call to have an account created for you. Once you have an online account, you may enter your child's Kids West schedule and make your weekly payment.

**West Des Moines Community School District Employee Discount**—Employees of the West Des Moines Community School district may deduct 5 percent when paying for less than four weeks. District employees are eligible for an additional 5 percent discount when paying on time for four weeks for a total advance payment discount of 10 percent. Please write "WDMCS district employee" on your payment form if you and/or your spouse are district employees. The employee discount does not apply to summer payments. If you would like to pay online, please contact the office for information on how to receive the employee discount.

## Financial Assistance

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Financial Assistance is available through the Iowa Department of Human Services. To find information or complete an application, call 866-448-4605 or visit [www.dhs.iowa.gov](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov).

**Kids West Fee Reductions**—A reduction in Kids West fees is available through the WDMCS Community Education office. If your child qualifies for free or reduced lunch at school, you are eligible for a reduction in your Kids West fees. Please call (515) 633-5018 for an application or more information.

## Attendance

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**Arrival and Departure**—Parents/guardians must sign their children in and out each day to ensure safe arrival and departure. iPads are located at the Kids West sign-in table for this purpose.

**Secure Building/Access Code**—When you register your child(ren) for Kids West, you will be given an access code for entrance to the building. There is a keypad outside the Kids West entrance for you to enter your code, followed by the pound or hashtag sign. If another adult will be picking up your child, they will need to have your child's code to enter the building.

**Absentee Reporting**—If your child will *not* be attending Kids West as scheduled, you must notify the site by cell phone. The school office *does not* contact the Kids West staff if your child leaves school early due to illness, doctor appointments, etc. No refunds will be given once the week begins.

Children are not eligible to attend Kids West on days they are absent from school or when sent home due to illness or behavior issues.

If a child does not report to the Kids West site after school as scheduled, and if the parent/guardian has not notified the site, Kids West will check with the school office and then call the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian is not available, the emergency contact person(s) will be notified. The local police department will be contacted for assistance if necessary.

**Extracurricular Activities**—Kids West encourages participation in school and community activities. Please give the site a written schedule of the activities and method of transportation if your child is to leave for the activity during a Kids West session. Your child can only be released to adults designated on the registration forms.

Your child can attend WDMCS Community Education school year and summer programs only if the class is held at your child's school, or if you arrange transportation to the school where the class is held. Please provide this information to the Kids West staff. Kids West staff are unable to transport or escort children to and from extracurricular activities.

**Late Pick-up**—Please respect the Kids West closing time of 6 p.m. After 6 p.m., a late fee of \$1 per child per minute will be charged for late pick-ups. This fee will be added to your account.



If you are more than one hour late and the Kids West staff has not heard from you, and cannot reach your emergency contact person(s), a staff member will call the local police department for assistance. **Child care services may be terminated in the event of recurring or extreme lateness.**

**Authorized Pick-up**—Your child will be released only to adults designated on the registration forms. Please notify the site team leader, in writing, if there are changes in persons authorized to pick up your child. **Please inform adults picking up your child that they will be asked to show a picture ID before the child will be released to them.**

**Custody/Visitation Agreements**—For the safety of your child, a notarized copy of the custody/visitation agreement *must* be included with your Kids West registration forms if such an agreement affects your child's release from Kids West.

If your custody/visitation agreement changes, notify the Kids West office and your Site Team Leader as soon as possible. Notarized documentation of court-ordered changes should be given to one of the above within 24 hours. Legally, the Kids West staff cannot hold children from the biological or adoptive parent(s)/guardian(s) without a notarized court order. The staff and police department will follow the court order.

Communication with the Kids West staff on custody or visitation issues is very important. If an extended meeting is needed to explain details of the custody or visitation situation, please arrange an appointment with your Site Team Leader to meet before or after Kids West hours.

**Non-Registered Students**—All children attending Kids West *must* be registered in advance for the program. Friends of participants cannot be admitted to the program on a drop-in basis due to staff-student ratio requirements and liability concerns. This includes, but is not limited to, your child's visiting relatives or friends. In addition, registration information and emergency forms must be on file before a student is admitted as a Kids West participant. Non-registered siblings may not attend on full-day care days.

## **Discontinuance of Service**

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**Temporary Discontinuance**—If you wish to discontinue service temporarily but want to hold a place for your child, please notify the Kids West office. Your child's place in the program will be held under the following conditions:

- **For two weeks of non-participation per school year at no charge.** After two weeks of non-participation (vacation), you must pay the minimum weekly payment per child to hold a place in the program. This policy continues through the last day of the school year (see Vacations, page 5).
- **During winter or spring break full-day care.** Kids West full-day care is optional, and payment is not required if your child is not scheduled to attend. The two weeks of non-participation at no charge (see above) are in addition to non-participation in full-day care.
- **During family emergencies.** Please notify the Kids West office if there is a family emergency that will temporarily impact your child's participation in Kids West. Examples of family emergencies include the child's extended illness or hospitalization, either parent/guardian's sudden unemployment, and funerals.

**Extended Discontinuance**—To discontinue service for an extended period of time, contact the Kids West office. You must begin paying the minimum weekly payment to hold a place after two weeks of non-participation. If you choose not to pay the fee, your child will be placed on a waiting list and readmitted to Kids West as space allows. A new registration fee will be charged at that time.

## **Health Policy**

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**Health Screening**—In accordance with DHS policies, Kids West staff will perform a health screening as children enter the Kids West area in the mornings. A temperature check will be performed and children will be asked how they are feeling. Parents/guardians are asked to stay until their child's health is verified.

**Medication**—You must give a written release form to the site team leader if your child is to be given prescription or non-prescription medication during a Kids West session. These forms are available from the Kids West staff. According to school district regulations, the medication must be in its original container with instructions for its use written on the outside. The Kids West staff will administer all medications.

**Illness**—If your child becomes ill during a Kids West session, you will be called to pick them up as soon as possible. Your child will be kept in a quiet area until you arrive. Kids West follows school guidelines for your child's return to school and Kids West as outlined below:

Children should not attend Kids West when they have:

- a fever within the last 24 hours (Children should be fever-free for 24 hours without the help of fever-reducing medicines.)
- diarrhea or stools that contain blood or mucus
- an illness that caused vomiting two or more times during the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is known to be caused by a condition that is not contagious
- impetigo (a skin infection with erupting sores) until 24 hours after treatment has been started
- head lice (until after proper treatment has been given)
- conditions that suggest the possible presence of a more serious illness including fever, sluggishness, persistent crying, irritability, or difficulty breathing
- quarantined because of exposure to a communicable disease

You can help prevent the spread of infectious diseases by keeping your contagious child home from school and child care until they can no longer spread illness to others.

Tuition credit is not given when your child is ill.

**Medical Emergency**—Kids West staff hold current first aid/CPR certificates and will follow recommended procedures if a medical emergency arises. Student injury reports are completed on all injuries that occur during Kids West. Parents or guardians will receive a copy of these reports.

A Kids West staff member will contact you if your child is seriously injured. If you or your child's emergency contacts cannot be reached and emergency care is considered necessary, the staff member will call 911. Please refer to the emergency procedure outlined on the registration/consent forms which you, as parent or guardian, signed at the time of enrollment.

**Dental Emergency**—Should a dental emergency occur where a tooth is damaged or prematurely extracted (excluding the loss of loose baby teeth), a staff member will be called to evaluate the situation. Permanent teeth that have been extracted will be placed in a glass of whole milk until further arrangements are made. The parent/guardian will then be called to make arrangement for the child to be transported to their dentist. In the event that the parents/guardians or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the child's dentist will be contacted by a staff member.

**Hand Washing**—Kids West staff members must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times to prevent or minimize the transmission of illness or disease: upon arrival at school, immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity, before leaving the restroom, before and after administering first aid, and after handling animals. Children will be expected to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times to prevent or minimize the transmission of illness or disease: immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity, after using the restroom, changing from one activity to another, and after handling animals.

**Smoking/Tobacco**—The West Des Moines Community School District is tobacco-free within and upon all district property. School district facilities and grounds, including school vehicles, are off-limits for tobacco or nicotine use, including the use of look-alikes. This policy extends to all students, employees, and visitors. (*Board Policy 908*)

**Hold Harmless Agreement**—Participation in WDMCS Community Education's Kids West program is entirely voluntary. The West Des Moines Community School district and its directors, officers, employees, and agents assume no liability for injury to any child during their participation in Kids West. The parent/guardian will be responsible for paying all expenses associated with any emergency medical care and/or treatment of the child relating to the child's participation in Kids West. The parent/guardian releases the West Des Moines Community School District and its directors, officers, employees, and agents from any liability in connection with the child's participating in Kids West, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

**Mandatory Reporters**—All Kids West and other West Des Moines Community Schools employees working directly with children are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse. Employees are required by law to report any suspicion of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by caretakers as stated below:

***Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting***

Section 232.69 of the Iowa Code requires that every employee of a licensed day care or preschool facility, who, in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or denial of critical care, shall immediately notify the Department of Human Services. Section 232.70 of the Iowa Code requires that each report made by a mandatory reporter, as defined in Section 232.69, shall be made both orally and in writing. The oral report must be made by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human Services within 24 hours of becoming aware of suspected abuse. If the person making the report has reason to believe that immediate protection for the child is advisable, that person shall also make an oral report to an appropriate law enforcement agency. The written report must be made to the Department of Human Services within 48 hours after the oral report.

By law, the oral and written reports shall contain the following information, or as much thereof as the person making the report is able to furnish:

1. The names and home address of the child and parents/guardians believed to be responsible for the child's care
2. The child's present whereabouts if not the same as the parent/guardian's home address
3. The child's age
4. The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries
5. The name, age, and condition of other children in the same home
6. Any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury, the identity of the people responsible for the injury, or in providing assistance to the child
7. The name and address of the person making the report

Legal sanctions for failure to report are as follows:

1. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.
2. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly fails to report is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure (Legal Reference 232.75).

Any mandatory reporter who in good faith makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of a child abuse has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal. Records and/or information pertaining to the abuse may be released to the child abuse investigator without releases required in other situations (Legal Reference 232.73).

**No Pets**—We cannot welcome pets into our schools. Student safety and the cleanliness of the building are put at risk when animals accompany their owners for a drop-in visit at school. There may be exceptions. If your student is bringing a pet for show-and-tell or for a class project, please contact the principal for permission before the animal comes to school. Animals which are kept at school for instructional purposes will be in good health with no evidence of disease, be of such disposition as to not pose a safety threat to children, and be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. Documentation of current vaccinations will be available for all cats and dogs. Pets, animals, and/or their cages will not be allowed in kitchens, sinks, or food preparation areas due to health and sanitation guidelines.

**Special Needs**—If your child requires medication administration, restroom assistance, or otherwise has special needs, please notify the Kids West Program Supervisor (515-633-5017) at the time of enrollment in Kids West. If your child's needs change, please notify the Program Supervisor as soon as possible of any changes in the care your child requires at Kids West. Some children may require accommodations or modifications to the Kids West program or rules in order to enjoy an equal opportunity to participate in Kids West. Accommodations will be provided to qualified students with disabilities on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

**Suggested Attire**—Your child should dress appropriately for active indoor and outdoor activities, crafts, and games. Comfortable, casual play clothes and shoes are ideal. Participants play outside, weather permitting. Weather changes occur quickly, so children need to be dressed in a manner to reflect any seasonal changes in weather. The Kids West on-site staff reserves the right to limit some activities based on a child's attire; for example, keeping a child indoors on a cold day if they are wearing shorts. Your child may be asked to bring an old shirt to wear over their clothes for certain craft activities.

# Behavior Guidelines

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Kids West strives to provide a positive, supportive environment for all children. Kids West staff will set clear limits, use positive guidance and redirection as needed to assist children in developing socially acceptable behavioral and emotional controls. Logical consequences will be used that are appropriate to the age and development of the child; see Item B, below, for further explanation.

Maintaining a positive environment also involves the support of parents/guardians. We strongly encourage you to review the following behavior guidelines with your child and work as a partner with Kids West staff to review any issues that may arise during your child's participation in Kids West.

**A. Behavior Expectations**—A positive Kids West environment requires everyone's support. The following behaviors are considered inappropriate or unsafe for children participating in Kids West:

1. Behavior that unreasonably disrupts the environment.
2. Defying or disregarding Kids West staff directions.
3. Profanity or abusive language.
4. Verbal or physical threats to others.
5. Physically aggressive behavior or unwelcome physical contact with others.
6. Behavior that constitutes bullying or harassment in violation of District Policy no. 502.2.
7. Leaving the students' designated area without permission.

**B. Response to Behavior Incidents**—When inappropriate behavior occurs, the following interventions may be utilized. Determinations about the appropriate response to a child's behavior are within the sound judgment of Kids West staff, based on the circumstances involved and the severity of the behavior:

**1. Redirection**

- Compliment on the child's good behavior while redirecting to another activity.
- Encourage social skills by discussing resolutions to confrontation.
- Intervene and introduce the child to an activity in a new perspective.

**2. Timeout**

- "Timeout" shall be defined as positive time away from the group or activity.
- A period of time out shall not exceed one minute per year of age of the child.
- Identify the child's inappropriate behavior and discuss possible alternatives to the situation.

**3. Timeout Away from the Group**

- Utilized when redirection and "timeout" within the area is either inappropriate under the circumstances or where previous efforts have been ineffective at stopping the inappropriate behavior.

**4. Send Child Home**

- When the child fails to respond to the previous measures taken by the Kids West team and/or when the behavior creates an unsafe environment for the child or others.
- The decision to send a child home is within the sole discretion of Kids West leadership staff.

**5. Prohibited Methods of Discipline**—Kids West staff will never use as a form of discipline:

- Corporal punishment, defined as intentional physical punishment of a student. It includes the use of unreasonable or unnecessary physical force, or physical contact made with the intent to harm or cause pain. Examples include, but are not limited to, spanking or shaking a child.
- Punishment which is humiliating or frightening, or which causes pain or discomfort to the child.
- Children will not be punished due to illness.
- Children will not have Kids West- or home-provided breakfast, lunch, or snack taken away as a punishment.
- No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.

- C. Written Documentation**—Whenever a child’s behavior results in a timeout away from the group, or where a student has received three or more time-outs in one week, a written notice documenting the incident(s) will be provided to the child’s parent/guardian.
- D. Behavior Intervention Meeting**—If the student’s inappropriate behavior continues, a behavior intervention meeting may take place with the parents/guardians, Site Team Leader, and a member of the Leadership team. If the student has an IEP or 504 Plan, the District’s Director of Special Education or designee will be consulted.
1. The meeting will discuss actions that may be taken to aid in the child’s success. For children with a disability affecting their behavior, the Team, including the parent/guardian, will discuss whether accommodations are required to enable the child to successfully participate in Kids West.
  2. A Behavior Contract may be developed by the Team, including the parent/guardian. The Contract will be individualized based on the student’s needs, and will contain a statement of the expectations for the child and responses/consequences if the child does not meet expectations.

Parent/guardian participation and support is very important where a child’s behavior poses a significant disruption to the Kids West environment. Parent/guardian refusal to participate in a Behavior Intervention Meeting may result in the child’s removal from Kids West.

- E. Suspension**—A child may be suspended from the Kids West program if the child’s behavior constitutes a serious violation of the behavior guidelines set forth in Section A of this policy, or if the child’s continued presence constitutes a threat to the health or safety of the child or others. A parent/guardian will be notified of the suspension in writing. Prior to the student returning to Kids West, a Behavior Intervention Meeting will be held as described in Section D, above.
- F. Termination of Services**—Kids West staff is committed to meeting the needs of all students. However, there may be situations where Kids West cannot meet an individual child’s needs. Kids West may terminate services if:
1. The student is unable to successfully meet the behavior expectations set forth in Section A above, following the implementation of a Behavior Contract and/or any accommodations required because of the student’s disability;
  2. The child’s continued presence constitutes a threat to the health or safety of the child or others; or
  3. Kids West is otherwise unable to meet the individual child’s needs.

In the event of termination, the parent/guardian will be provided with written notice of the decision to terminate services.

**Biting/Injury Policy**—In cases where a mark is left on another child as a result of biting or other injury, the staff will notify both parents and/or guardians as soon as the situation is under control. The staff will complete an incident report listing the details of the incident for the children involved. Documents will be held by the staff until parent/guardian pick-up. At pick-up time, the parent/guardian of the individual student will be shown and asked to sign one copy of the report that will be placed in the students’ file for documentation.

In situations where biting occurs, the following first aid procedure will be followed:

- For a surface bite, ice will be applied to reduce any swelling or bruising.
- For a bite that breaks through the skin, the area will first be cleaned with soap and water. The bite mark will be bandaged and child will be monitored for any changes. Should changes occur, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

**Cell Phone Policy**—Children are discouraged from bringing cell phones to Kids West. Telephones are available at all Kids West locations, and staff members will assist in making all necessary calls. Kids West is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones. Cell phone use during Kids West may result in confiscation of the phone.

**Toys and Electronics from Home**—Please do not send toys or hand-held electronics from home. We cannot guarantee the safety of toys and electronics brought from home. Staff will take the toys and electronics brought from home and keep them until the parent/guardian arrives for pick up.

## Weather Policy

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**District Guidelines**—Kids West uses West Des Moines Community School district buildings and abides by the district’s weather policy regarding school closings. In the event of severe weather or weather-related emergencies, the following policies are in effect:

**School Cancellation**—If school is canceled or online for the day, Kids West will be canceled. District school buildings are not available for our use if school is closed.

**School Late Start**—If school starts late, Kids West will also start late. For example, with a two-hour late school start, Kids West will open at 8:30 a.m. instead of 6:30 a.m. and continue until school begins.

**School Early Dismissal**—If school dismisses early, Kids West begins at time of dismissal. Parents/guardians are asked to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible so that they and the staff may travel home safely. Kids West will announce closure time based on anticipated weather conditions.

**Outdoor Play and Field Trips**—Kids West office and on-site staff will monitor extreme weather conditions when making decisions regarding outdoor play and field trips.

**Full-Day Care Cancellation**—If weather is severe, or an emergency arises during full-day care, the decision to cancel Kids West or Kids West Summer Day Camp will be made at 5:30 a.m. We will credit your account for any session Kids West cancels if you have paid in advance.

**Closing Announcements**—Up-to-the-minute information about cancellations, dismissals, and closings is available on the district website ([www.wdmcs.org](http://www.wdmcs.org)), Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/wdmcs](http://www.facebook.com/wdmcs)), and Twitter account (@WDMCS). In addition, information is provided at the district weather hotline at 515-633-5555.

The district’s emergency notification system also will be used to notify families of unplanned cancellations, early dismissals, or other emergencies. Calls are made to home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, and/or work numbers as provided to the school and entered into the Infinite Campus data system. This information is also shared with local television and radio stations. This information is provided as a service for students, families, staff, and community members when school must be cancelled or dismissed early due to weather conditions or other emergencies.

## Safety Policy

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**Safety Policy**—All measures will be taken to ensure that all team members are well-trained in all emergency procedures. Fire and tornado drills will be completed once per month. Other emergency procedures will be covered periodically at the discretion of the Program Supervisor. All team members will receive and maintain training in CPR, First Aid, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting, and Infectious Disease Control. As another measure of safety precautions, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that their child’s file is current with phone numbers, emergency contacts, and pick up permission forms.

## Emergency Procedures

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**Fire and Bomb Threat Evacuation Procedure**—In the event of fire or smoke, the fire alarm will be activated. Children will be evacuated according to the diagram posted in the Kids West area. Attendance will be taken once evacuated. The police will be contacted. Emergency Cards and First Aid kits will be taken, and parents/guardians will be contacted as warranted.

**Tornado, Earthquake, and Flood Procedure**—Kids West staff will receive notification of a tornado warning on the weather radio and will then notify other staff of the warning. Children will be evacuated to the tornado safe area according to the diagram posted in the Kids West area. Attendance will be taken once children are in their safe area. In case of a tornado, earthquake, or flood causing structural damage to the building, the children will be transported to an evacuation site. The police will be contacted. Emergency cards and first aid kits will be taken, and parents/guardians will be contacted as warranted.

**Blizzard and Power Failure Procedure**—When West Des Moines Community Schools dismisses early due to a blizzard, Kids West asks that the parents/guardians come as quickly and safely as possible to pick up their children. As ratios allow, we will start sending team members home. If parents/guardians are unable to immediately pick up their child, a ratio-sufficient number of our team, including an on-site supervisor, will stay with the children as long as necessary. Our closing time will be 5 p.m.

In the case of a power failure, parents/guardians should come as quickly as possible to pick up their children. If evacuation due to power failure is deemed necessary, the children will be transported to an evacuation site. Attendance will be taken before leaving the site. All closures will be at the discretion of District Administration. Emergency cards and first aid kits will be taken, and parents/guardians will be notified as warranted.

**Chemical Spill Procedure**—In the case of a chemical spill, the children will be evacuated in the same manner as a fire drill. If the area is considered unsafe and an evacuation is necessary, Kids West will transport the children to an area deemed safe by the authorities. Attendance will be taken before leaving the site. The police will be contacted. Emergency cards and first aid kits will be taken, and parents/guardians will be notified as warranted.

**Suspected Intoxication in Parent/Guardian or Visitor Procedure**—If a Kids West staff member suspects intoxication in the parent/guardian picking up a child, the on-site supervisor will contact an emergency contact and request that they pick up the child instead. The on-site supervisor will then inform the parent/guardian suspected of intoxication of the pick-up plan. A visitor who is suspected to be intoxicated will be asked to leave the center immediately, and the parent/guardian of the child the visitor was here to see will be contacted.

**Intruder Procedure**—In the case of an intruder entering the Kids West area and creating a hostile situation, a staff member will contact the police if needed. Whenever possible, children will be taken to a safe area in the building. Kids West will then proceed as directed by the police.

**Lost or Abducted Child Procedure**—The on-site supervisor will be immediately notified of a lost or abducted child. Procedures will be put in place to locate the child. If the child is not found, the parent/guardian, as well as the police, will be contacted. Kids West will then proceed as directed by the police.

## **District Policies**

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For 2021-2022 District Policies, please see a WDMCS district handbook or visit <https://discover.wdmcs.org/board-policies>.



WDMCS Community Education  
Learning Resource Center  
3550 Mills Civic Parkway  
West Des Moines, IA 50265-5556

Phone 515-633-5018  
<https://commed.wdmcs.org/>

WDMCS Community Education is an outreach department of the West Des Moines Community Schools. We provide opportunities for learning, service, and fun to people to all ages. We look to serve the needs of our community by connecting people, ideas, and resources.