



Statement of Philosophy

Kids Central Incorporated is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, respectful, and inclusive environment for all children and families. In accordance with the requirements of the Office of Head Start Head Start Program Performance Standards, the Virginia Department of Education Child Day Center Licensing Standards, and all applicable federal and state laws, all employees, consultants, contractors, substitutes, interns, and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, ethics, child safety, and confidentiality.

All staff are responsible for supporting children's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through positive relationships, active supervision, and developmentally appropriate practices.

Standards of Conduct

All employees, consultants, contractors, substitutes, interns, and volunteers shall:

1. Respect Children and Families

- Respect and promote the unique identity, dignity, culture, language, and background of each child and family.
- Provide services without discrimination or stereotyping based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, family composition, or socioeconomic status.
- Maintain professional and respectful relationships with children, families, coworkers, and community partners at all times.

2. Ensure Child Safety and Active Supervision

- Provide active supervision of children at all times, including during classroom activities, outdoor play, meals, toileting, rest time, transitions, and transportation activities.
- Never leave a child unattended or unsupervised while under program care.



- Follow all program procedures related to child supervision, ratios, attendance tracking, emergency preparedness, safe sleep practices, and child release procedures.
- Immediately report any suspected child abuse, neglect, safety concern, or licensing violation in accordance with Virginia mandatory reporting laws and program procedures.

3. Use Positive Guidance and Appropriate Discipline

Staff shall use positive methods of child guidance that support children's self-regulation, emotional development, and learning.

The following actions are **strictly prohibited**:

- Corporal punishment or physical discipline of any kind
- Hitting, spanking, shaking, grabbing, pinching, or physically restraining a child except when necessary to protect the child or others from immediate harm and in accordance with approved procedures
- Binding, tying, or restricting a child's movement
- Taping or covering a child's mouth
- Yelling at, shaming, humiliating, threatening, intimidating, or using derogatory language toward a child
- Verbal abuse, sarcasm intended to demean, ridicule, or frighten a child
- Emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, or intentionally ignoring a child
- Withholding food, water, rest, toileting, or other basic needs as punishment
- Using food, toileting, or rest time as punishment or reward
- Punitive or humiliating toilet-learning practices
- Isolation or seclusion of a child
- Any conduct that could reasonably be considered abusive, neglectful, exploitative, or harmful to a child's physical or emotional well-being



4. Maintain Confidentiality

- Protect the confidentiality of all personally identifiable information regarding children, families, and staff in accordance with program policies, the Head Start Act, FERPA, HIPAA when applicable, and all state and federal confidentiality laws.
- Share confidential information only with authorized individuals on a legitimate need-to-know basis.
- Refrain from discussing confidential information in public areas, on social media, or with unauthorized individuals.
- Safeguard all written, electronic, and verbal records containing confidential information.

5. Demonstrate Professional Ethics and Integrity

- Conduct themselves in a professional, ethical, and responsible manner while representing Kids Central Incorporated.
- Follow all agency policies, procedures, licensing standards, and applicable regulations.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and families.
- Refrain from soliciting or accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, loans, or items of significant monetary value from vendors, contractors, families, or individuals seeking to do business with the agency, unless permitted by agency policy.
- Report conflicts of interest or unethical conduct to management immediately.

6. Maintain a Safe and Respectful Workplace

- Contribute to a workplace environment that is free from harassment, bullying, intimidation, discrimination, retaliation, violence, or disruptive conduct.
- Refrain from the use of profanity, threatening language, or inappropriate behavior while on duty or representing the program.
- Cooperate with monitoring visits, licensing inspections, investigations, and program reviews.



Reporting Violations

All staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers are required to immediately report any known or suspected violation of this Standards of Conduct Policy, child abuse or neglect, child safety concern, or licensing violation to a supervisor or designated administrator. Reports may also be made through established grievance or whistleblower procedures without fear of retaliation.

Failure to report suspected misconduct or safety concerns may result in disciplinary action.

Conduct Violations and Corrective Action

Violations of this policy are considered serious offenses and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, removal from volunteer service, contract termination, mandatory retraining, reporting to licensing authorities, or referral to law enforcement when appropriate.

Kids Central Incorporated reserves the right to place an employee on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation involving child safety, misconduct, or licensing concerns.

Annual Review

Employees will acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Kids Central Incorporated Standards of Conduct Policy at the time of hire and annual.



Employee Acknowledgement Statement for the Standards of Conduct Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish the requirements for Standards of Conduct. By signing this Standards of Conduct policy acknowledgement, you agree to adhere to all the provisions. You also demonstrate your understanding that any violations of this policy will be considered a serious offense subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If you have any questions or uncertainty regarding the content of this policy, you are required to consult your supervisor or contact the human resource department. This should be done prior to signing and agreeing to the Kids Central Incorporated attendance policy.

I have read and understand Kids Central Incorporated's Standards of Conduct Policy, and I understand the requirements and expectations of me as an employee.

Signature

Date