



# Curriculum And Education Policies

[www.KidsDepotChildcare.com](http://www.KidsDepotChildcare.com)

5301 Commercial Avenue  
Madison, WI 53704  
608-249-6448

# Table of Contents

CHRISTIAN BASED EDUCATION .....	3
GOALS .....	3
ORGANIZATION .....	4
DESCRIPTION OF ROUTINES .....	4
ARRIVAL TIME .....	4
ACTIVITY TIME .....	4
BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND AFTERNOON SNACK .....	4
OUTSIDE PLAY .....	5
REST TIME .....	5
END OF THE DAY .....	5
END OF THE WEEK .....	5
TRANSITIONS .....	5
FIELD TRIPS .....	6
HOLIDAYS, BIRTHDAYS, AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS .....	6
CURRICULUM AREAS .....	6
ART .....	6
DRAMATIC PLAY .....	7
LANGUAGE ARTS/EMERGENT LITERACY .....	7
LARGE MOTOR SKILLS .....	8
MATH READINESS .....	8
MUSIC .....	9
SCIENCE/SENSORY/COOKING .....	9
FINE MOTOR SKILLS .....	9
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY .....	10

# **CURRICULUM AND EDUCATION POLICY**

Kids Depot provides a year-round, half-day to full-day program for children age 6 weeks through age 5, and a summer school age program for children through age 10. We are a ministry of Calvary Gospel Church. We are licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Division of Children and Family Services. Our program is based on the Developmentally Appropriate Practices curriculum of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

## **CHRISTIAN BASED EDUCATION**

As a ministry of Calvary Gospel Church, we strive to:

1. Help each child understand that God loves each individual.
2. Introduce children to the idea of thanking God.
3. Encourage children, through a non-denominational format, to be kind and considerate of others, and responsible stewards of God's creation.
4. Instill basic Christian values through example and instruction.

## **GOALS**

We strive to help **children:**

- Feel loved as unique and special persons.
- Develop positive ways of interacting with children and adults.
- Develop skills, which foster a sense of competence.
- Gain an understanding and functioning knowledge of the world.
- Develop an appreciation of the interrelatedness of all life and a sense of responsible stewardship toward every person and thing.
- Develop kindergarten-readiness skills: cognitively, emotionally and socially.

We strive to help **families by:**

- Providing a safe place where children can be cared for while they are at work or school.
- Providing professional, competent, loving adults who understand the developmental needs of young children.
- Helping each child grow and develop at an appropriate pace, beginning at the child's current developmental level.
- Providing regular opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their child's progress.
- Providing opportunities for family input and involvement in the center's policies and programs (Advisory Board).

## **ORGANIZATION**

Our year consists of two distinct programs: the “Academic School Year” and the “Summer Program.”

Our Academic School Year Program runs from September 1 to early June. We have groupings for under age one children, one year olds, two year olds, two and one half year olds, three year olds and pre-kindergarten. Typically, each room is staffed by a Lead Teacher and either a full-time or part-time Assistant Teacher, depending on group size. Each classroom’s team has a scheduled planning time each week, to discuss activities and child development matters.

Our Summer Program runs from mid-June to late August. During this time Lead Teachers have the option of a summer break; if so, Assistant Teachers, who are qualified as Lead Teachers, typically assume the Lead responsibility. When new staff members are added for the summer, a minimum of two weeks transition time with the permanent staff is arranged. Consistency and continuity of care are always foremost concerns. In summer, we add a School Age group for children who have completed Kindergarten through age 10. There is central air conditioning throughout the building.

Typical summer activities include:

- Weekly picnic days at area parks and beaches for swimming and play.
- Sprinkler and other play at the center.
- Walks in area neighborhoods.
- Field trips to many exciting and educational places.
- Summer programming at the public library.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ROUTINES**

### **ARRIVAL TIME**

Prior to 7:30, teachers greet the children ages 2 ½ and up in the Firefly Station. It provides a reading/quiet area, computer, dramatic play area, blocks, car & truck area, and a prepared activity at the art table. Children may freely choose their activities, and all are encouraged to assist in clean up.

Children under age 2 ½ are greeted by the teachers in the Inchworm & Bumblebee Stations starting when we open the center at 6:00 AM.

### **ACTIVITY TIME**

In the classroom, children may choose from among classroom materials and special activities the teacher has arranged. Art, science, cooking, music, dramatic play, fine and large motor skill activities are all included.

During this time, the teacher may also have a CIRCLE TIME, when the children come together to sing, do finger plays, hear stories, talk about the weather, choose helper jobs, and share news with one another. With the younger children, this is very brief and is not forced upon them.

### **BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND AFTERNOON SNACK**

Children wash their hands before going to meals. All meals are prepared in our kitchen and served in the dining room for children age 2 ½ and up. Children under age 2 ½ are served in their classrooms. A prayer is said before each mealtime. When age

appropriate, children are helped to serve themselves, and they are encouraged, but not forced, to try the foods that they are offered. Children age 2 and older learn to clear their own place settings, and they assist in washing the table afterward.

### OUTSIDE PLAY

Children use the bathroom (and diapers are checked) before getting ready to go outside. They are encouraged to dress themselves, when age appropriate. Staff members are there to help them as needed. Typically, two groups of similar age use the playground at a time. It offers slides, bridge, sandbox, climber and paved tricycle path. Trikes, balls, parachute, and sand toys are stored in the shed. In winter, plastic sleds are available. Pea gravel covers the areas beneath climbing structures for the children's safety.

### REST TIME

Children use the bathroom (or are diapered) and wash their hands before lying down. Parents are asked to send their child's own special blankets, pillows and/or stuffed animals. Each child age one and older has a designated cot and spot in the room to sleep. Naptime is made soothing by darkening the room, and playing music or story tapes to help children relax.

Children who do not fall asleep are welcome to participate in quiet time activities after 30 minutes of quiet cot time until their friends awaken.

Children under age one will sleep in a designated crib that only they use. Their sleeping patterns are on an individual basis. Parents are asked to provide a blanket for their child to use.

### END OF THE DAY

By 5:15, any children age 2 1/2 and up, remaining in the center are brought to the Firefly Station. Children under age 2 1/2 are kept in their classrooms. Teachers will have posted a short note outside of their classroom doors describing briefly a few of the events of the day. Parents are asked to check their child's mailbox daily for any notes or newsletters. There is a notepad outside each room, where parents may wish to leave notes for the Lead Teacher, who may be gone by that time of day. We encourage you to connect with your child's Lead Teacher on a daily basis, either in the morning or evening.

### END OF THE WEEK

Families are asked to clean out cubbies entirely, on their child's last day for each week. This helps keep them tidy, and makes them available for Church School children on Sunday. Nap blankets and pillows must also go home each weekend for laundering.

### TRANSITIONS

Smooth transitions ease anxiety and assure safety and a sense of order for the children and teachers. Transitions can also serve as positive opportunities to extend the learning experiences of the day. Transitions occur when children separate from their families on arrival, between activities in the classroom, and in moving from one area of the building to another.

#### Types of transitions used:

- Concrete objects:
  - Taking an object from one place to another;
  - “Ted, put your toy in your cubby, please.”
  - “Please find a spot at the table to sit down.”
  - “It's time to go to your cubby to put your coat on.”

- Auditory signals:        -Giving sound cues, such as bell, timer, songs, chants, whispering
- saying, "Time to clean up."
- Visual signals:        Blinking or turning off the lights, holding up signs with pictures or words, using hand motions, using the clock; ("When the big hand gets to the 6, we will go to music.")
- Novelty:                Identification games:
  - "Who is wearing blue today?"
  - "Whose name starts with G?"
  - Alternating ways of moving:
    - Hopping, walking backwards, tiptoeing, marching, pretending to be....(anything!)

### FIELD TRIPS

Outings are planned to add fun and variety to the day, broaden children's awareness of their community, and enjoy seasonal changes. Only children age 2 ½ will be allowed to leave the premises. We walk to nearby sites, using walk ropes, discussing safety rules, and teaching about traffic signals. For longer trips, individual classes may use the city bus system or Calvary bus. We may also charter school buses for center-wide outings. Destinations may include museums, pet shops, the Capitol, parks, zoo, grocery store, fire station, Arboretum, Picnic Point, an apple orchard, and parents' work places.

### HOLIDAYS, BIRTHDAYS, AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS

We believe in celebrating special events, and acknowledging holidays being observed in our community. Traditional American holidays, such as Valentine's Day, Independence Day and Halloween, are recognized with special decorations and activities. When the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter approach, children will have activities relating to the religious meaning, as well as the related secular traditions. We invite families from other traditions to share a special holiday of theirs with their child's class, or with the entire center. Purim, Hanukkah, Chinese New Year and Korean New Year are examples of celebrations we've enjoyed.

Birthdays are also important to a child's identity, and they are always celebrated in the classrooms. Parents are welcome to pay a birthday visit to the classroom.

## CURRICULUM AREAS

Unit or Thematic Planning is a way to organize activities, by providing a particular focus. Many but not all of the weeks in a given classroom may be planned around themes which reflect the interests of the children of that group. Common themes include dinosaurs, space, insects, seasons, farm, zoo, babies, colors and shapes, familiar occupations (fire fighter, police officer, doctor, nurse, etc.), friendship and kindness.

### ART

Through art, children develop fine motor skills, learn by doing, develop self-expression and creativity, experience a variety of materials, learn the use of tools, and develop sensory awareness. Art activities are usually tied to the classrooms' weekly theme. Children are taught how to care for materials and tools, including clean up. The process

of exploring with many art media is emphasized rather than creating a finished end - products from patterns. Teachers plan activities appropriate to the age and interests of their children, and talk with them about their work. Materials are arranged on low shelves accessible to the children. Children's artwork is displayed around the room, in the halls and in the dining room. Occasionally, a child's art work may be featured in our newsletter or other materials. Art enhances eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills, problem solving, visual discrimination, aesthetic and sensory awareness.

Representative activities include painting:

- with varied kinds of applicators such as; toothbrushes, sponges, feathers, hands, feet, fruit, vegetables, marbles, string, Q-tips, and straws
- varying the surface to which paint is applied; boxes, corrugated cardboard, sandpaper, paper plates, tubes, foil
- varying the texture of paint by adding salt, sand, or soap powder, using finger paint or watercolors

Other media for paper include:

- markers
- colored pencils
- chalk
- stamp pads and ink

Modeling media include:

- clay
- play-dough
- silly putty
- papier-mâché

Other materials include: staplers, tape, and glue where age-appropriate. Stringing Cheerios, pastas, lengths of soda straws, paper, Styrofoam pieces and beads are popular.

Projects may correlate with a unit, such as puppets, musical instruments, murals, kites, body tracing and masks.

### DRAMATIC PLAY

Acting out real life or imagined experiences helps young children identify with the world around them. It can be a way for them to express their feelings and cope with emotions. Dramatic play is a way by which children learn by exploring, manipulating, and practicing. They use their verbal skills, and may engage in acting or storytelling. It also helps them develop cooperative interaction in a personal way with peers. Each classroom has a dramatic play area. At times, the book corner, blocks, sensory table, or other classroom equipment may be included in the dramatic play area.

Representative dramatic play set-ups include home and family, bakery, restaurant, post office, library, hospital, pet store, campground, circus, train, airplane, dinosaur, undersea, and space.

### LANGUAGE ARTS/EMERGENT LITERACY

Good communication skills develop early and are the basis for the conflict resolution and learning in all areas of life. Pre-reading is more than learning the alphabet; many skills serve as stepping-stones to reading and writing. Children here are surrounded every day with books, labeled items in the room, names on cubbies and cots, games and puzzles with words. Conversations with friends and teachers build verbal skills.

Computer software offers games and activities to enhance letter and word recognition. Storybook/cassette or cd sets are available in the listening centers.

Listening skills are enhanced with finger plays and rhymes, with taped stories heard independently, following directions, rhyming words, games, identifying letter sounds and discriminating between different sounds, by hearing and moving to music, and by retelling stories in own words.

Visual skills are practiced in naming and describing objects and pictures, in classifying (such as foods, animals, clothing), by use of prepositions (on, under, in, etc.), with games such as "What's missing?", in referring to things by shapes colors, sizes.

Eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills benefit from use of various size markers, crayons, pencils; by use of stencils, magnetic letters and rubber stamps; scissors, hole punchers, staplers, glue, beading and a wide range of manipulatives (peg boards, puzzles, etc.).

Verbal skills develop with repeating songs, finger plays, and rhymes; by creating dialogue in dramatic play; by Show and Tell; by children dictating stories to the teacher; by asking open-ended questions; by the teacher's talking less and listening more.

### LARGE MOTOR SKILLS

Through the use of large muscle equipment, children gain self-confidence, gain social skills, and learn to problem-solve. Physical exercise stimulates the brain and contributes to good health. A child's intellectual and physical development goes hand in hand; both are important to the whole child.

Our Kidzrageous classroom has the "large motor" equipment: riding toys, large wood blocks, cars, trucks, a sensory area, etc. These materials are rotated during the year.

Our outdoor playground has a large climber, slide, bridge, sandbox, tricycles and sleds.

### MATH READINESS

Through free exploration, discovery, and creating on their own, children learn early mathematical concepts such as space, proportion, volume, and one-to-one correspondence. Children are given opportunities to think, question, and problem solve. Math concepts are much more than rote counting, numeral recognition, adding, and subtracting. It is through sorting and classifying, counting, measuring, constructing, and exploring space and shapes that children truly acquire the fundamentals concepts of math. Readiness activities are integrated into all the day's events.

Skill areas include:

- Sorting and classifying: sorting objects by size, shape, color; finding the one that is different; picture sequencing; game.
- Counting: books about numbers, finger plays /rhymes /songs; calendars; counting children; counting teaspoons in cooking; games using numbers.
- Identifying shapes and space relations, identifying circles, squares, triangles, other shapes; cutting on straight and curved lines; drawing, tracing, or painting shapes.
- Matching: pairing objects to pictures; one-to-one correspondence, (such as one napkin at each chair)



- Comparing: identifying: position, (on/off, over/under); same and different; size; more and less.
- Patterning: identifying patterns in games, objects, songs, books, beads, blocks, and calendar pieces.
- Graphing: real object, weather conditions, taste tests, sighting of birds or butterflies, etc.
- Measuring: scales for weighing; proportions (whole-half-quarter); height, width, amount; linear; time concepts (yesterday-today-tomorrow, morning-noon-night, before-after, hours-minutes).

### MUSIC

Music is a relaxing, fun aspect of the day. Children have an opportunity both to listen and actively participate in creating their own music. They develop a sense of rhythm, and explore sounds using various rhythm instruments. Free and creative movement is essential to children's enjoyment of music. Learning songs helps build vocabulary, allows children to practice controlling both pitch and volume of their voices, and provides another group experience.

As a culmination of music, the children present short music programs for their families at Christmas and again each spring. We believe these simple programs help children gain self-confidence and experience the fun of performing for their families. But if a child feels uneasy or anxious about participating in such performance, we encourage parents to respect their child's feelings and to have the child sit with them to watch and listen to the others.

Our equipment includes records, tapes and compact discs, rhythm instruments, books of songs and finger plays, and props for creative movement; such as scarves, feathers, and ribbons.

### SCIENCE/SENSORY/COOKING

Through exploration in these areas, children develop an appreciation of the world around them. Science experiences should let children use all their senses in open-minded exploration. For example, cooking provides opportunities for children to note changes in form, liquid-to-solid, liquid-to-vapor, etc. Science experiences are integrated throughout the day's activities.

Tools and objects to observe and handle: magnets, insects, opposites, shadows, color, seeds, machines, plants, rocks, fish, prisms, water, weather, fossils, birds, balance, time, seasons.

Sensory tables may contain water, gravel, sand, corn, seeds, shaving cream, rice, snow, dry beans and peas, etc.

Cooking activities: We offer opportunities for the children to participate in healthy cooking projects.

### FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Small or fine motor skills include eye-hand coordination, problem solving, cognitive understandings, and the pincer-grasp use of markers, crayons, scissors, and eating utensils. They are the basis for fundamentals of pre-math, writing, emergent literacy,

and other learning. Activities enhancing fine motor skills are available in all classrooms, in our Caterpillar Station, and in our family-style meal service.

Fine motor materials include:

- Construction toys: Lincoln logs, Construx, Legos and Duplos, bristle blocks, tinker toys, and wooden unit blocks.
- Games and equipment: Computers, magnetic blocks and shapes, Stick-ees, peg boards and geo-boards, puzzles, sets of counters (such as teddy bears), Lite Brite, stringing beads, pouring and measuring equipment, and medicine droppers.
- Other toys: stencils and templates, dolls and doll clothes, play telephones and typewriters, doll house furnishings, and small vehicles.

## PYSICAL ACTIVITY

Active Play and Inactive Time

- We strive to provide at least 120 minutes of active play time to all children each day - 60 minutes of unstructured play and 60 minutes of teacher directed play.
- We provide opportunities for outdoor play 2 or more times per day.
- We ensure that children are rarely seated for periods of more than 30 at a time.
- We do not withhold active play time for children who misbehave. We do provide additional active play time for good behavior.
- We never watch television and rarely watch videos.

Play Equipment

- We provide fixed play equipment (climbing and balancing equipment) that is extensive and varied for all children.
- We provide portable play equipment (balls, wheeled toys, hoops) that is diverse and available for children to use at the same time.
- Outdoor play space includes an open, grassy area and a track for wheeled toys.
- Indoor play space is available for all activities, including running, when weather does not permit outdoor play.

Supporting Physical Activity

- We provide visible support for physical activity in our 2 - year old classrooms through use of posters, pictures and books.
- Our staff encourages children to be active and often joins the children in active play.

Physical Activity Education

- We provide training opportunities for staff on physical activity at least once each year.
- We provide teacher-directed physical activity education for children, through SPARK and/or Healthy Movement and Active Play curriculum, at least once each week.
- We offer physical activity education to parents at least once each year.