



# Family Compass



## Step Inside Our Mission

Welcome to Ridge Kids Academy, Inc.

We are delighted that you have chosen our academy to entrust your family's pride and joy. Our staff is committed to creating an environment that our families and students can call their "second home," built on a foundation of Quality care and strong Relationships. We are dedicated to providing each child with a safe, secure, loving, and educational environment where they feel comfortable and confident as they learn, grow, and develop, celebrating Inclusion and mutual Respect every step of the way. You and your family are invaluable to us, and we thank you for being an important member of our "RKA Family," where Teamwork helps create a positive and even Fun atmosphere.

The following Family Handbook is designed to help us work together with a common set of guidelines, policies, and practices across all locations of our company. It's also here to help you, the family, understand our expectations so we can partner effectively for the well-being of your precious child(ren).

It is your responsibility to review The Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. Family Handbook and seek clarity if needed.

\*If you have any questions regarding the handbooks, or about the policies and procedures herein, please ask a member of the administrative team for clarification. \*

Handbook is Reviewed Annually

Date of Last Update: May 2025

# Table of Contents



## 1) About Our Program

- Programs Offered
- Programs by Location
- Mission, Vision, Values
- Improvement Plan
- Contact Information
- Admin Designees
- DHHR Guidelines

## 2) Employment Basics

- At-Will Employment
- Hiring & Onboarding
- Waiting Period
- Education & Training
- Paid Bonus Structure
- New Hire Paperwork

## 3) Staff Development

- Professional Training
- Performance Reviews
- Wellness Initiatives
- Benefits & Leave

## 4) Curriculum & Educational Practices

- Curriculum Overview
- Student Roles
- Communication Standards
- WV ELSFs
- Rating Scales
- NAEYC Standards
- Lesson Plans
- SEL Policy
- Planning Support

## 5) Daily Operations

- Hours
- Arrival/Dismissal
- Emergencies
- Communication

## 6) Enrollment & Attendance

- Staff Child Benefits
- Subsidy/Financial
- Staff Child Attendance
- Student Attendance
- Authorized Pick-Up
- Late Pick-Up

# Table of Contents

## 7) General Policies

- Community
- Toys
- Meals/CACFP
- Outdoor Activities
- Infant Room
- Supervision

## 8) Keeping Germs Away

- Child Illness
- Staff Illness
- Diapering/Toileting
- Handwashing
- Food Safety
- Head Injury
- Medication
- Sunscreen

## 9) Staff Conduct

- Professionalism
- Dress Code
- Confidentiality
- Reporting Concerns

## 10) Compensation & Payroll

- Pay Schedule
- Overtime Policy
- Deductions
- Paycheck Errors

## 11) Employee Benefits/Leave

- PTO Policy
- Eligibility
- Accrual & Use
- Leaves of Absence
- Separation

## 12) Professional Development

- Continuing Education
- Annual Training
- Child Dev. & DAP
- CACFP/USDA

## 13) Community Resources

## 14) Handbook Agreements

- Employee Copy
- RKA Copy

# The Story of Ridge Kids Academy

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## Our Story

**Ridge Kids Academy began as a small ministry of Pea Ridge Baptist Church, with a simple mission: to nurture the spiritual, physical, and academic growth of children. Since opening our doors in 1993, we've grown from a handful of 21 students to now serving hundreds of children each day, across multiple campuses — always keeping children at the heart of everything we do.**

In 2022, we opened our brand-new 40,000-square-foot Barboursville campus at 60 Victory Place Drive, just off US Route 60 East. This space gave us room to grow, innovate, and provide an even better environment for learning and play. In early 2023, we partnered with MHN to open two additional centers for the children and grandchildren of medical professionals which we opened in August of that year — one on Woodville Drive, across from Huntington High School, and the other on Collis Avenue, just across St. Mary's Medical Center's Campus.

At Ridge Kids Academy, we are committed to high-quality early childhood education and are currently working toward NAEYC accreditation. Our centers are fully licensed by the WVDHS, insured, and follow the codes set forth by the WV Health Department and Fire Marshal ensuring your child's safety and well-being every day.

Every step of the way, we are grateful for the families, staff, and friends who make Ridge Kids Academy a place where children can thrive!!

# Executive Team

05

Dear Team,

Welcome to the Ridge Kids Academy family! You are joining a community dedicated to nurturing growth, creativity, and joy in every child we serve. Our strength comes from caring staff like you, whose commitment to quality, relationships, inclusion, respect, and teamwork makes a difference every day.

As part of our team, you help create a warm, positive, and fun environment where children can thrive. Your contributions are valued, and we hope your time here is both rewarding and inspiring.

Please review the Professional Guidelines & Practices Manual, which outlines your role, expectations, and daily practices. If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out. Remember, every family's situation is unique—always check with administration before taking action on concerns. This manual is reviewed annually to stay current with our mission and values. We're so glad you're here and look forward to the impact you'll make!

Warmly,

Heather Blake

Executive Director

Chief Executive Officer

Heather Blake

[HeatherBlake@RidgeKidsAcademy.com](mailto:HeatherBlake@RidgeKidsAcademy.com)



Welcome to Ridge Kids Academy! We are so glad that you have chosen our center to provide a safe, nurturing and academic environment for your child while you are working. If any financial question should arise please don't hesitate to reach out through Child Pilot. I look forward to getting to know your family.

Chief Financial Officer

Sarah Miller

[SarahMiller@RidgeKidsAcademy.com](mailto:SarahMiller@RidgeKidsAcademy.com)



# Executive Team

06

Welcome to Ridge Kids Academy — we're so glad you're here! I've been with the company since 2008, and while my title of Chief Licensing Officer might sound like I sit around reading rule books all day, what I really do is help make sure our centers stay safe, compliant, and high-quality while we work toward our exciting goal of earning NAEYC accreditation.

Regulations and policies can sometimes feel like alphabet soup (trust me, they make my head spin too), so please know I am always available if you need clarification, have questions, or just want to double-check something. My goal isn't to catch mistakes or make anyone feel stressed — we all mess up sometimes — but to support you so you feel confident in your role. I truly believe that when our staff feels supported, our children and families thrive too. Together, we'll keep learning, growing, and yes — even laughing — as we do this important work side by side.

LauraBeth Meade- Chief Licensing Officer  
Ridge Kids Academy- Executive Team



Chief Licensing Officer  
LauraBeth Meade  
[LauraBethMeade@RidgeKidsAcademy.com](mailto:LauraBethMeade@RidgeKidsAcademy.com)



Chief Academic Officer  
Jessica Mooney  
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Dear Families,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Ridge Kids Academy. As Chief Academic Officer, my focus is to ensure our programs and classrooms provide high-quality, engaging learning experiences for every child.

We are dedicated to fostering curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning in a nurturing, structured environment. By partnering with families, we can create meaningful early learning experiences that help each child thrive.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your child's educational journey.

Sincerely,

Jessica Mooney - Chief Academic Officer  
Ridge Kids Academy - Executive Team

# Leadership Team

07

## Welcome to the team!

We're so excited to have you here! You're joining a team that's more than just a workplace – it's a family built on passion, purpose, and heart. At Ridge Kids Academy, our mission is to nurture growth, spark creativity, and infuse joy into the lives of every child we serve.

What makes this possible is you – our incredible staff. Together, we live out our values of Quality, Relationships, Inclusion, Respect, and Teamwork. These aren't just words on a page; they're the way we show up for each other, for our children, and for our families every single day.

As you step into your new role, know that your energy, talents, and ideas are valued. You're helping create a warm, positive, and truly fun environment where children can grow, discover, and shine. We can't wait to see the impact you'll make and the memories we'll create together.

Barboursville



Directors

Collis



Woodville



Assistant Director



Support Staff



## Board of Directors

President, Meredith Withrow

Vice President, Steve Flouhouse

Treasurer, Connie Forth

Secretary, Kelly Cyrus

Board Members, Samantha McCoy, Sadie Cosco, and Brad Wright

# Our Mission

Mission- Who are we?

At Ridge Kids Academy, Inc., we believe each child has the potential to bring something unique and special into the world. By having a respectful and caring bond with both the student and the family, we as a school are able to create a strong foundation for a beautiful childhood experience for our students. Through active exploration of the world around them, play, interaction with others, memorable experiences, and hands-on learning activities, our students develop and grow every second of every day. We strive to have the utmost respect and love for all children who walk through our school's doors.

We are a family!

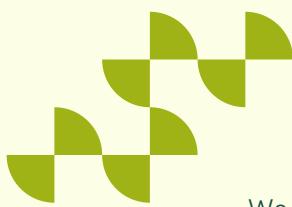


08

**Our vision is to provide a community where all students feel respected, loved, and encouraged to become the best person they can be.**



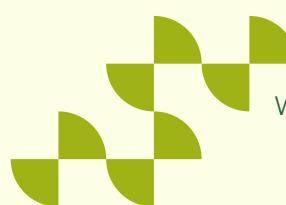
all students are included in our learning environment. We welcome all with open arms and love in our hearts.



We pride ourselves on having open communication with all partners in our business. This allows us to build relationships with all families.



The combined action of the educators and the families working together provides an effective and efficient working relationship. By acting together as a team, we work together to provide the best interests of a common cause for all our children!



We believe every child deserves excellence in learning programs and services to make a difference in their lives and our community.



Respect is essential in building relationships with our students and families that last a lifetime. Respect is a key component of our work as it helps to optimize the talents and diversity we bring into the school as partners in the growth and development of every child.



All children, staff, and families have the most fun at Ridge Kids Academy!



# Programs Offered by Ridge Kids Academy

09



Ridge Kids Academy is dedicated to supporting our community with various high-quality programs available at three independent locations and Martha Elementary Schools in Cabell County. Our offerings include:

- **Full-Day Curriculum-Based Care (4-5 Days per Week):** A structured program that provides engaging learning experiences for children throughout the week.
- **Full-Day Curriculum-Based Care (3 Days or Less per Week):** Flexible options for families needing care for part of the week, while still providing a comprehensive educational experience.
- **Before and After School Care:** Supervision and enrichment activities for children before school starts and after school ends.
- **Out of School Care:** Catered specifically to Kindergarteners and children aged 6 to 12, this program is designed to keep kids active and engaged during out-of-school times.
- **Summer Care Program:** A full summer of fun and learning for children, available at select locations.

## Important Program Notes:

- On professional development days, and during fall, winter, and spring breaks, out-of-school care will be held at your home location, if you are currently assigned to work in a Cabell County School, you will be expected to report to work at the Barboursville Ridge Kids Academy location, unless otherwise discussed with and approved by your administration.
- We offer the flexibility to enroll school-age students in one center for the Summer Care program and another center for school-year programming. For further details, please reach out to a member of our Executive Team.
- Due to capacity limitations, we have established a waiting list for families wishing to enroll their children. Enrollment on the waiting list is based on specific factors outlined in the "Admission Policies and Procedures" section of our handbook, particularly under the "Enrollment" subsection.

We are committed to providing a nurturing environment that meets the diverse needs of our families and children. Thank you for considering Ridge Kids Academy!

# Programs

## Woodville Drive RKA (CHH)

### Before School Care

Hours: 6:00am-7:30pm  
Serves: Meadows Elem. (K-5)

### After School Care

Hours: 2:30-7:30pm  
Serves: Meadows & Parent  
Drop Off  
(K-12 yrs. old)

### Out of School & Summer Care

Serves: (K-12 yrs. old)  
Hours: 6am-7:30pm

### Full-Day Programming

Hours: 6:00am -7:30pm  
Serves: 6 wks.- 5 yrs

## Collis Avenue RKA (SMMC)

### Summer Care

Hours: 6:00am-7:30pm  
Serves: K-12 yrs. Students

### Full Day Programming

Hours: 6:00-7:30pm  
6Wks. - 5 yrs.

## Barboursville RKA

### Before School Care

Hours: 6:30am-7:30am  
Serves: VOBE, Martha, Davis Creek  
(K-5)

### After School Care

Hours: 2:30-6:00pm  
Serves: VOBE, BMS, Davis  
Creek, Nichols and  
Parent Drop Off  
(K-12 yrs. old)

### Out of School & Summer Care

Serves: (K-12 yrs. old)  
Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm

### Full-Day Programming

Hours: 6:30am -6:00pm  
Serves: 6 wks.- 5 yrs

## RKA Pilot Site

### Martha Elem. School

Afterschool Care  
Hours: 2:30pm-6:00pm  
School Days Only  
Serves: (K-5)

# Curriculum at Ridge Kids Academy

11

At Ridge Kids Academy, our curriculum is rooted in West Virginia State Standards, NAEYC principles, and the Environmental Rating Scale. We use a play-based, strength-based approach that supports joyful learning and celebrates each child's unique interests and abilities.

Our goal is to spark curiosity, build confidence, and help children become lifelong learners through hands-on experiences, self-guided exploration, and critical thinking. Lesson plans are tailored to meet the developmental needs of every child in a nurturing, engaging environment.



## **Physical Development**

- Fine Motor: Activities like cutting, coloring, and building develop hand strength and coordination.
- Gross Motor: Children build strength, balance, and confidence through indoor and outdoor play, running, climbing, jumping, and more.

## **Sensory Exploration**

We offer a variety of sensory activities that let children explore textures, sounds, smells, and movement through music, messy play, and more.

## **Creative Expression**

Art, music, dance, and dramatic play are built into the daily experience. We also offer special weekly Music & Movement classes at no cost, and optional electives (e.g., Kindermusik, tumbling, dance, Zumba, karate) for an additional fee.

# What Children Learn



12

## Language Arts

We build early literacy skills through stories, songs, and art. Children explore letter sounds, handwriting, vocabulary, and storytelling in fun, meaningful ways that help them express their ideas.

## Cognitive Development

Math, Science, & Social Studies are taught through exploration and play:

- Math: Children practice counting, number recognition, sorting, and patterning using blocks and hands-on tools.
- Science: We nurture natural curiosity with activities that involve observing, experimenting, and asking questions.
- Social Studies: Starting with classroom roles and friendships, we help children learn about their community, cultures, and the wider world.

## Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

We teach children how to:

- Understand and express their feelings
- Build friendships and work through conflict
- Practice calming strategies and empathy

## In the classroom:

- Teachers model respectful communication
- Calm-down spaces and coping tools are available
- Teamwork, kindness, and positive choices are celebrated

## How families can help at home:

- Talk about emotions and problem-solving
- Ask about your child's day and relationships
- Model healthy ways to manage big feelings

Together, we help children grow emotionally, socially, and academically.





# Our Roles

## Teachers

Our skilled teachers know how children learn best—through relationships and play. They observe and assess each child, then plan activities that combine child-led exploration and teacher-guided learning.

## Parents

You are your child's first and most important teacher. We invite you to partner with us through ongoing communication and involvement in your child's learning. Got a talent or hobby? Let us know—we'd love to have you share it!

### Communication & Daily Routines

We believe in strong home-school connections. You'll see:

- Daily updates via our parent app (meals, naps, curriculum, diapering, etc.)
- Posted lesson plans and routines in every classroom
- Friendly check-ins at drop-off and pick-up
- Easy access to teachers and admin through messages or scheduled meetings

## Standards-Based & Intentional Planning

We align our curriculum with the West Virginia Early Learning Standards Framework (ELSF) and use the Early Learning Reporting System (ELRS) to plan lessons, track growth, and ensure high-quality programming. This helps us meet every child where they are—and support them as they grow.



# Assessments at Ridge Kids Academy



At Ridge Kids Academy, we believe the best assessments come from knowing each child as an individual. Our goal is to support growth, not test it. Teachers use a variety of simple, yet child-friendly tools to observe development, guide instruction, and build strong family partnerships.

## How We Assess:

Assessments are done by *trusted* teachers in natural classroom settings using methods such as:

- Observations
- Anecdotal notes
- Checklists
- Photos and videos
- Child work samples (drawings, writing, etc.)

These tools help us understand each child's strengths, needs, and learning style, so we can modify or scaffold activities to the individual child's development.



## Why We Assess

Assessment information helps us:

- Individualize instruction
- Guide curriculum
- Keep accurate documentation
- Create future staff development trainings
- Define where the program may be lacking in certain resources
- Track developmental progress
- Identify areas for support or referral when needed

All records are confidential and shared only with staff, IEP/IFSP teams and the child's family.

## Family Involvement

Parents are essential partners in the assessment process. At enrollment, we ask families to complete a developmental questionnaire. Throughout the year, teachers share observations and updates through the Child Pilot app and send home Family Activity Backpacks to help connect learning between school and home.



## Screenings by Outside Providers

With your permission, outside agencies (such as Birth-to-Three or the County Board of Education, etc.) may conduct screenings to provide additional insight. Results are shared with both families and teachers to ensure your child gets the support they need.

## Conferences & Communication

We offer:

- A Meet-and-Greet before school starts
- A Fall Open House
- Two yearly parent-teacher conferences

You're always welcome to request a conference or meeting any time. We believe ongoing communication builds a strong home-school connection and supports your child's growth every step of the way.

# Admission Policies and Procedures



16

## Location Consistency

In an effort to have consistency across all Ridge Kids Academy locations, we all follow the same curriculum, have the same opportunities, and follow the same mission statement and set of core values. We feel that this not only ensures a unified educational experience for children but also reinforces a shared commitment to the mission and core values, fostering a strong community and culture among staff, students, and families.

## Continuity of Care

RKA proudly practices Continuity of Care in our centers. We attempt to keep children in the same classroom, under the same caregiver, for 9 months to a year.

## Confidentiality

All information concerning students and their families, including her/his activities at the center are confidential. We do not share information on file with anyone other than the child's parent or guardian and RKA administration/staff without written permission from a parent or guardian. However, we are required to share all student files with the WV

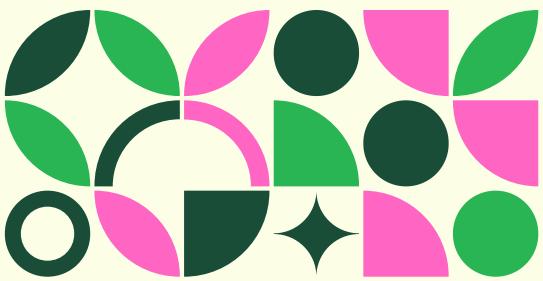
Department of Health and Human Resources Licensing Agent, upon request.

Please be advised, taking pictures or recordings within the establishment or pulling pictures from Child Pilot to post online is strictly prohibited without written permission. If you want to share pictures of your own child, please be sure to hide the identity of others that may be in the picture/video. (Staff, students, therapists, family members)

\*\*If you have agreed to a screening or your child is receiving services from the CCBOE or B23, you agree to allow the two agencies to share information regarding your child and/or their services and progress between administration, the child's teachers, the Monitoring Teacher and/or the therapist(s).

## Equal Opportunity Establishment

Ridge Kids Academy is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where all children can thrive. We strive to ensure that our programs are accessible and welcoming to every individual, including those with special needs, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our commitment to inclusiveness extends to our admissions, educational offerings, and employment practices. We uphold a policy of non-discrimination and do not allow bias based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic. Our goal is to create a supportive community that values diversity and equal opportunity for all.



# Enrollment



To enroll in a Ridge Kids Academy Program, you must complete an Inquiry Form on our website under the "Enroll" section. If you do not have a location preference, select one and inform our CFO of your choices. Multiple children can be enrolled with a single inquiry per family. After submitting your inquiry, you will receive a PDF form that will give our staff more insight in caring for your child as well as your values and family-structure. Once this is returned to us, we will ask you to follow-up with a face-to-face meeting which your child should also attend.



- When a spot becomes available, you will receive a call followed by a couple emails; one will be a link you follow to create a Child Pilot account, and the other will be a list of required forms and documents we must have before your child may start.
- A non-refundable fee of \$75.00 is required for each child before starting the program and will be due each March to re-enroll for the summer and/or following school year.
- Declining immediate placement into a program when space becomes available, will either incur a part-time tuition fee until you are ready to start to secure the spot or result in being placed at the bottom of the waiting list.

## Program Tuition

Families must choose full-time or part-time at enrollment. Status may only change with program transition or a significant family/job change.

A credit/debit card must be on file. Starting Jan. 1, 2025, a 3% processing fee applies to all card payments. (Veteran families will assume full responsibility for this fee beginning Jan. 1, 2026.)

## Tuition Rates (per child, weekly)

### Infants – 1 Year Old

- Full-Time (4–5 days): \$190
- Part-Time (up to 3 days): \$125

### Two – Five Years Old

- Full-Time (4–5 days): \$175
- Part-Time (up to 3 days): \$115

### School Age (K–6, School Year)

- Out-of-School Days: \$35/day
- Before/After School: \$75/week

### School Age (K–6, Summer)

- Full-Time (4–5 days): \$175
- Part-Time (up to 3 days): \$115

## Annual Enrollment Fee: \$75

## Payment Terms

- Billing: Invoiced Sunday; auto-debited Wednesday.
- Method: Declined/removed cards may require cash pre-payment; repeated issues may result in dismissal.
- No Adjustments: Tuition not reduced for closures, weather, or holidays.
- Vacation: One tuition-free week per year (June–May).
- Hospitalization: Tuition waived with documentation.
- Meals: Included; families must complete CACFP form yearly.
- Withdrawal: Requires 2 weeks written notice via Child Pilot; otherwise, 2 weeks' tuition charged.

## Late Policies

- Pickup: \$1/minute + \$5 every 10 minutes. Repeated lateness may result in dismissal.
- Payment: \$5 weekly late fee. Accounts 4+ weeks past due result in automatic discharge; balance due within 2 weeks. No re-enrollment until balance is paid in full.

## Additional Notes

- Child Care Aware: RKA participates in the Military Assistance Program; families remain responsible for annual registration fee.
- Tax Receipts: Issued annually by email.



## Link and Subsidy Coupons:

### 1. Accepted Subsidy Programs:

- RKA accepts Link and Connect (West Virginia Child Care Subsidy) and West Virginia Child Care Coupons from the WV Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR).

### 2. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Ensure that your subsidy certificate is submitted to your child's building administration.
- Upload a picture of the certificate into Child Pilot.
- Understand the specific days and hours that are covered by your subsidy.
- If the subsidy lapses, private payment will be required.
- You will be billed weekly for any co-pay responsibilities.

### 3. Coverage Details:

- The subsidy includes time for commuting to and from work.
- On days not covered by the subsidy:
  - Daily rates apply: \$41.00 for children under 2 years, \$38.00 for children over 2 years.
  - If you exceed your allotted hours, a fee of \$5.00 per hour will be charged.

### 4. Attendance Requirement:

- Children utilizing subsidies must attend at least one day per month.

### 5. Other Policies:

- All tuition payment terms, guidelines, and late payment policies outlined in the handbook are in effect.
- RKA is currently only licensed to accept West Virginia subsidies but hopes to accept Ohio and Kentucky subsidies in the future.

### 6. Registration Fee:

- There is a \$75 annual registration fee due upon enrollment, regardless of subsidy status.

### WV Subsidy Eligibility Requirements

150% of the poverty level

To be eligible for child care subsidy services in West Virginia, parents must meet income guidelines based at 150% of the poverty level. Once services have been established, income may rise to 185% of the national poverty level.

# Ridge Kids Academy Company Closings

20

## Holidays:

- New Year's Eve & New Year's Day
  - Memorial Day
- Independence Day
  - Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving and Black Friday
- Christmas Eve & Christmas Day



If a holiday should fall on a weekend, the center will be closed either the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday, whichever we designate ahead of time.

## Professional Learning Days:

On-going professional development for staff is a key component of quality programs. We believe it is important to provide these opportunities for our staff to ensure we are providing quality care to all the children and families we serve. RKA will be closed for up to four days during the school year for staff training.

We reserve the right to close to sanitize and disinfect our facilities if we believe that a breakout status has lasted longer than we are comfortable with, and we feel we have exhausted all options for cleaning and disinfecting while children are in the building.

Advanced notice of program closings will be posted on Child Pilot; tuition charges will NOT change during these weeks.

## Weather Related Delays, Early Releases, or Closings

Ridge Kids Academy aims to maintain at least one location open during severe weather conditions, allowing families to attend alternate sites if their home location is closed, just notify us through the Child Pilot App. The Executive Administration will evaluate weather forecasts and local news to make timely decisions regarding delays, closures, or early dismissals, with parents being informed of any changes via Child Pilot. To ensure safety for all, we ask that children be picked up within one hour after any schedule adjustments.

### Attendance Policies & Procedures

#### Consistent Daily Schedule:

At Ridge Kids Academy (RKA), we prioritize quality learning experiences for every child in our program. To ensure that your child fully benefits from our educational activities, we strongly encourage you to have them arrive by 8:45 AM for full-day programs. Arriving on time allows your child to engage in all aspects of our structured routines and ensures they do not miss out on valuable learning opportunities.

Our classrooms are designed with consistent daily routines that help children feel secure and focused. Arriving during ongoing activities can disrupt these routines, affecting not only your child but also their classmates. A consistent start to the day helps foster a sense of community and stability, enabling all children to thrive.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring your child arrives on time, allowing us to provide the best possible learning environment for everyone.



#### Arrival and Departure

For the safety of your child please ensure the following:

- A responsible individual escorts your child to the drop off and from the pickup location.
- A sibling enrolled in our program is not allowed to be the responsible party.

We require such individuals to be 16 years of age or older.

- It is essential that your child is clocked in and out of Child Pilot each day. This responsibility lies with the parent/guardian or an authorized transport person. QR codes are available throughout each building for you to scan and clock your child in or out via the app. If you need assistance with this process, please reach out to a staff member for help.
- You are strongly encouraged to make verbal contact with an employee of RKA in the classroom your child is arriving and departing from. This will guarantee that staff is aware your child has arrived or departed for the day.



## Authorizing Others to Pick Up

Your child's safety is our top priority. Parents/guardians may designate authorized individuals in Child Pilot to pick up their child.

- Only authorized individuals may pick up a child.
- Photo ID is required every time, even for parents. Staff will not release children without verification.
- If only one parent is listed, custody documents may be required.
- Unauthorized or unverified individuals will be refused, and parents will be contacted immediately.

## Late Pick-Up

- Children must be picked up by closing.
- Late fee: \$1 per minute, plus \$5 every 10 minutes.
- Three late pick-ups in a school year may result in dismissal.
- After 30 minutes with no contact, we may notify local authorities or DHHR.



## Absence Notification

- Mark absences in Child Pilot as soon as possible.
- Illness-related absences must be reported immediately (required by DHHR to notify other families).
- If a child misses 10+ consecutive days without notice, their spot may be given to another family.

## Vacations

Families eligible for one vacation week per year must notify the CFO via Child Pilot at least 2 weeks in advance.

## Withdrawal & Extended Leave

- **Withdrawal:** Two weeks' written notice is required via Child Pilot. Without notice, two weeks' tuition will be charged.
- **Extended Leave:** To hold a spot during a leave, families must continue paying at least the part-time tuition rate.

## Community Involvement

Ridge Kids Academy partners with many local organizations to enrich learning and support families. These include the Cabell County Board of Education, WV DHHR, Marshall Health Network, local hospitals, the Cabell County Health Department, WV STARS, Birth to Three, and other state and community agencies. These partnerships bring valuable resources, trainings, and opportunities to our students and staff.

Ridge Kids Academy also owns Willow Ridge Events, LLC, located at our Barboursville campus. Willow Ridge hosts community events and fundraisers that benefit our schools. For rental inquiries, please contact administration through Child Pilot or email the Willow Ridge Director.



## Field Trip & Transportation Policy

**Field trips give children fun, hands-on learning experiences. To keep all students safe, Ridge Kids Academy follows these guidelines:**

- **Transportation:** RKA uses two Multi-Function School Activity Buses (MSFAB) shared across campuses. All buses have 3-point harness seatbelts; booster seats are not needed.
- **Schedule:**
  - During the school year: 1–2 trips.
  - Summer: Ages 5+ attend multiple trips; ages 3–4 may attend a few outings.
- **Parent Options:**
  - Families may choose to transport their own child to and from the trip.
  - Children may also stay home during field trip hours.
  - Please note: If the entire class is on a trip, we cannot keep children at the center.



## Field Trip Participation Guidelines

- Children must arrive 15 minutes before departure. For trips leaving 8:30 AM or earlier, please arrive by 8:00 AM and feed your child beforehand.
- A signed permission slip is required before each trip.
- Children may not be dropped off at the field trip site unless parents can provide their own return transportation. Bus seating is limited.
- If you arrive while your child's class is away, you may need to provide alternate care until the class returns.
- Please share any concerns with school administration.

## Chaperone Policies

- To serve as a chaperone, parents must complete RKA's volunteer clearance process. Without clearance, you may still attend but only to supervise your own child.
- Chaperones and guests are responsible for their own admission costs.
- Non-enrolled siblings may attend but are the sole responsibility of the parent.
- Parents may also be asked to cover admission for non-enrolled children and/or contribute toward meals or snacks provided during the trip.

## Parent's Role:

We acknowledge and value that parents are their child's first teacher. Establishing a partnership with the child's family is imperative to the child's success. This can be accomplished through ongoing communication with parents and families, as well as encouraging their frequent participation in their child's program. If a parent has a unique talent, skill, and/or special area of interest they would like to share, you are encouraged to let us know.

### Open Communication:

Open communication is important to us. We believe that strong partnerships between families and teachers help create a smooth connection between home and school.

We work hard to build real relationships with each family so that you feel comfortable sharing information about your child—whether it's a success, a change at home or school, or a concern. Teachers will always greet you in a friendly, professional way. Because they are responsible for supervising children, quick conversations work best during drop-off and pick-up. If a longer or more private conversation is needed, we'll make sure coverage is in place so the teacher can step aside with you.

Daily updates, notes, and any incident reports are shared through Child Pilot to help you stay connected and informed about your child's day.

Working together and keeping communication open helps us support your child's growth, comfort, and success.

Ridge Kids Academy values intentional planning to create meaningful learning experiences. Each teacher receives one hour per week outside the classroom, plus nap time as available, to focus solely on lesson planning. Whenever possible, planning will be scheduled with your “pod mate” to encourage collaboration and consistency.

## Lesson Plan Display & Sharing

- Classroom: Post your current lesson plan in a visible spot so any staff member can step in if needed.
- Parents: Display a copy outside your door—either the full plan or a simplified calendar.
- Administration: Submit your plan to your building administrator, who will review and forward it to the CAO.

## Children Under 2

Teachers must also create monthly individualized plans for each child.

### Planning Ahead & Materials

Plans should stay one month ahead to allow time for materials. Check school stock before requesting items, and set aside or label materials in advance.

### Support

If you need help with planning, reach out to the admin team or CAO, who can provide one-on-one support and guidance.

## Individual Lesson Plans for Children Under 2

### Lesson Planning

Teachers get one hour weekly (plus nap time) for lesson planning, ideally with a “pod mate” for collaboration.

### Lesson Plans

- In Class: Post in a visible spot for coverage.
- For Parents: Display outside your door (full plan or simple calendar).
- Admin: Submit to your building administrator for review/forwarding.

## Under 2

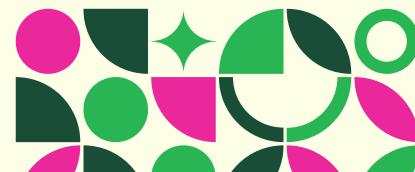
Create monthly individualized plans in addition to the classroom plan.

### Materials

Stay one month ahead, check stock before requesting, and set aside/label needed items.

### Support

Admins and the CAO are available for help and one-on-one guidance.



# Flexibility & Creativity in Planning

26

## Flexibility & Creativity in Planning

Not all lessons need to take place at a table—or even indoors. Many rich learning opportunities happen organically during center time, outdoor play, or child-led exploration.

For example:

If the Dramatic Play center is set up as a restaurant, the children can be given paper tabs and pencils to “take orders,” menus to explore, and props for serving.

In this single activity:

- Taking orders supports literacy (writing) and fine motor skills.
- Role play supports social-emotional growth and communication.
- If playdough is added to “make food,” it becomes creative expression and sensory play.
- Making the playdough together can add science (changes in materials), math (measuring ingredients), nutritional awareness, and even gross motor skills (kneading, rolling).
- 

This example shows how one thoughtfully designed activity can touch multiple developmental domains. Teachers are encouraged to think creatively, integrate subjects naturally, and look for ways to make learning both meaningful and fun.



**Remember: The possibilities are endless when you combine intentional planning with flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness to the children’s interests.**

### Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Policy

**At Ridge Kids Academy, we recognize that children’s social and emotional development is just as important as their cognitive growth. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is intentionally woven into our daily program to help children build skills in self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, relationships, and responsible decision-making.**

### Staff Expectations:

- Model SEL Skills: Demonstrate calm, respectful communication, problem-solving, and emotional regulation for children to observe and practice.
- Create a Supportive Environment: Build trusting relationships with children through warmth, consistency, and positive guidance.
- Integrate SEL Into the Day: Use routines, group activities, play, and teachable moments to practice turn-taking, cooperation, conflict resolution, and empathy.
- Teach Coping Skills: Provide strategies like deep breathing, calm-down spaces, and verbalizing feelings to help children learn self-regulation.
- Positive Guidance: Discipline is never punitive. Instead, staff redirect behavior, help children identify feelings, and guide them toward more appropriate choices.
- Family Partnership: Share strategies with families when appropriate, so children receive consistent support both at home and school.

By prioritizing SEL, staff help children develop the emotional resilience and interpersonal skills that will benefit them for a lifetime.

# Planning and Assessment

27

## Assessments

### Purpose of Assessments

At Ridge Kids Academy, assessments are used to understand each child's development, guide instruction, and strengthen family partnerships. Assessment is not testing – it is an ongoing process of observation and documentation to support each child's growth.

## Assessment Methods

Teachers must be proficient in both formal and informal practices, carried out in natural, distraction-free settings by familiar staff. Approved tools include:

- Observations and anecdotal records
- Checklists
- Photographs or video (with consent)

### Child work samples (drawings, early writing, projects)



## Training & Accuracy

All staff are required to maintain training in effective assessment techniques. Documentation should be objective, accurate, and reflect the child's abilities across different settings and times.

## Using Assessment Data

At Ridge Kids Academy, assessment information is used to support each child's growth and to strengthen our program as a whole.

### Individual Child Level

#### Assessment findings help teachers:

- Plan and individualize instruction
- Adjust teaching strategies and curriculum
- Identify areas where a child may benefit from additional support
- Make referrals when appropriate

### Program / School-Wide Level

After each assessment cycle, the executive administration reviews overall trends to identify areas for improvement. This process may include:

- Scheduling or developing professional development opportunities for staff
- Setting classroom coaching priorities
- Determining Discovery Room focus areas
- Planning center-wide purchases and resource allocation

## Confidentiality

All information about a child — whether observed, discussed, or documented — is confidential. Staff must not share this information with anyone other than:

- The child's parent/guardian
- RKA administration/staff directly involved in the child's care
- WV DHHR licensing staff, when requested by administration

\*\*\*If a child receives services from CCBOE, Birth-to-Three, or other approved agencies and written parent/guardian consent is on file, relevant information (progress, needs, regressions, or service data) may be shared between the agency and RKA staff.

## Family Involvement

At enrollment, families complete an initial developmental questionnaire. Teachers will:

- Monitor progress through daily observations
- Share updates through Child Pilot

Encourage participation in at-home learning activities (e.g., Family Activity Backpack)

## Conferences & Communication

Teachers are required to participate in two formal conferences each year, plus additional meetings when requested. Conferences should:

- Review developmental progress
- Set shared goals with families

Provide examples and ideas for continued growth at home

## Outside Screenings & Referrals

If staff suspect a developmental delay or other special need, the following procedures must be followed:

### 1. Document Observations:

- Record objective, specific examples of the child's behavior, development, or learning.
- Keep notes organized and up-to-date for administrative review.
- 

### 2. Report to Administration:

- Share all documentation with site administration.
- Staff must not raise developmental concerns directly with families until administration and/or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) has reviewed the observations and approved next steps.
- 

### 3. Administrative Review:

- The CAO will determine whether concerns warrant a referral.
- If a referral is appropriate, the CAO or designated administrator will contact the family.

### 1. Family Communication & Support (administration-led)

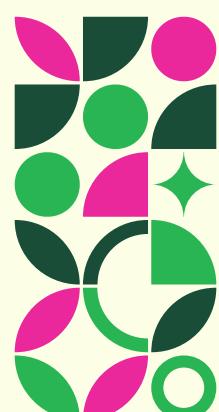
- Families will receive:
  - Documentation and explanation of the concern
  - Suggested next steps they can take
  - Information about available resources for diagnostic evaluation (e.g., Birth-to-Three, County BOE, local therapy providers)

Written parent/guardian consent is required before any screening or referral takes place.



### Staff Action Points:

- Be consistent and intentional in collecting evidence of learning.
- Keep documentation organized and up-to-date.
- Never discuss developmental concerns with families until you've spoken with the administration.
- Approach every assessment with the mindset of partnership and support.



## Staff Child Enrollment

- Complete the inquiry form on our website (one per family). Choose your worksite as preference—placement depends on space.
- Notify admin after submission to receive the PDF enrollment form.
- When a spot opens, you'll get an email with:
  - Child Pilot account link.
  - Instructions to upload required forms within 7 days (or before start date).

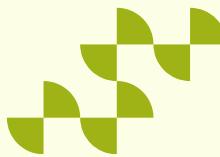


## Fees

- Enrollment Fee: \$75/child (due within 90 days of hire, non-refundable).
- Annual Re-Enrollment Fee: \$75/child, due March 31 for June–May year.

## Authorized Pick-Up & Safety

- Release only to listed adults (16+) with valid ID.
- Do not call parents directly—contact admin for authorization issues.



## Subsidy Rules

- Provide certificate copy to admin + upload to Child Pilot.
- Coverage includes commuting time.
- Families pay weekly co-pays or uncovered days.
- Staff rates if paying privately:
- Under 2 yrs: \$41/day (\$20.50 staff)
- Over 2 yrs: \$38/day (\$19 staff)
- \$5/hour fee if exceeding subsidy hours.
- Child must attend monthly to stay eligible.
- Only WV subsidies accepted.



## Attendance Rules

- Staff must drop off children before clocking in.
- Parents must sign in/out daily on Child Pilot; staff correct missed entries.
- Staff greet every parent/child at drop-off/pick-up.

## WV Link Subsidy

- Apply in person: 611 7th Ave, Huntington, WV.
- Bring birth dates, proof of activity/income, photo ID, WV residency, birth certificates, and foster/kinship docs if applicable.
- Eligibility: 150%–185% of poverty level.
- Staff must apply within 30 days. Submit acceptance/denial to admin.

## If denied:

- Free care while you are working.
- 50% staff discount if child attends when you're not working.

## Custody & Intoxicated Pick-Ups

- Legal documents required for custody restrictions.
- Follow emergency protocol if pickup person is impaired.

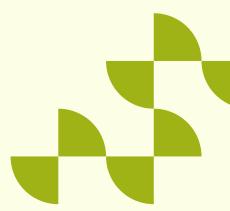


## Continuity of Care

- Same caregiver for 9–12 months when possible.
- Transitions approved by admin.

## Late Pick-Ups

- Report to admin after 5 minutes; law enforcement may be contacted after 30 minutes.
- Late fee: \$1 per minute per child.



## Tuition/Billing

Direct all billing questions to CFO via Child Pilot (Admin-Only chat).



## Community Involvement

Ridge Kids Academy partners with many community organizations to enhance learning, including the Developmental Therapy Group, Link Resource & Referral, Birth to Three, Cabell County Board of Education, DHHR, Marshall Health Network, local hospitals, the Health Department, Fire Marshal, area colleges, and WV programs such as Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist, C.A.R.E.S., S.T.A.R.S., and Healthy Kids WV.

Ridge Kids Academy also owns Willow Ridge Events, LLC, located at our Barboursville campus. Willow Ridge hosts community events that support our schools, with proceeds benefiting RKA programs. For rental information, contact administration through Child Pilot or email the Willow Ridge director.

## Toys from Home

Ridge Kids Academy provides all toys and learning materials needed for children's development. To avoid disruptions, children should not bring toys or electronics from home.

If a child arrives with an item, staff should store it, inform the parent, and return it at pick-up. Ongoing issues will be addressed with the parent, child, and administration.

Teachers may schedule special "bring from home" days or clubs, with advance notice to parents and voluntary participation. All items must be labeled with the child's name; staff may label with parent permission.

RKA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Comfort items ("stuffies") are allowed during nap time.



# Meals & Nutrition

Ridge Kids Academy (RKA) is committed to providing nutritious meals in alignment with USDA and CACFP guidelines to foster healthy eating habits in children. Staff play a key role in ensuring meals are safe, balanced, and supportive of each child's dietary needs.

## Meal Schedule & Service

- Breakfast: 8:00 a.m. – Children must arrive by 8:30 a.m. to receive breakfast. Late arrivals must wait until lunch.
- Lunch: Typically served 11:00–11:30 a.m. (varies by age/location). No child may be served lunch more than 30 minutes past scheduled time.
- Afternoon Snack: 2:15–2:45 p.m.
- Evening Snack: At Collis Ave and Woodville Drive locations, served to children not picked up by 6:00 p.m.
- Menus: Posted in Child Pilot and around each center.
- Meal Charges: No additional fees for meals or snacks, regardless of income.

## BREAKFAST MEAL PATTERNS

Serve Milk, Grains\*, Vegetables or Fruit

COMPONENT	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS
Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Vegetables, Fruit or Both	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Grains	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq

\* Meat and meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component at breakfast a maximum of three times per week. oz eq = ounce equivalents

## LUNCH & SUPPER MEAL PATTERNS

Serve all 5 components

COMPONENT	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS
Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup	1 cup*
Meat & Meat Alternates	1 oz	1 1/2 oz	2 oz	2 oz
Vegetables	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Fruit	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Grains	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq

\*A serving of milk is not required at supper meals for adults

oz eq = ounce equivalents

## SNACK MEAL PATTERNS

Serve 2 of the 5 components

COMPONENT	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS
Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Meat & Meat Alternates	1/2 oz	1/2 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Vegetables	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup
Fruit	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup
Grains	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq

oz eq = ounce equivalents



## Infant & Toddler Feeding and Dietary Policy

Ridge Kids Academy prioritizes each child's health, safety, and individual needs.

### Milk & Substitutes

- Lactaid/Lactose-Free Milk: Requires a doctor's note confirming lactose intolerance or medical need.
- Other Milk Alternatives (almond, soy, oat, etc.): Require a completed Special Dietary Needs Form signed by a doctor.
- Cow's Milk: Not served to children under 12 months. Children over 14 months must transition from formula to milk or a doctor-approved substitute.

### Breastmilk

- Accepted at any age.
- Each campus offers a private, comfortable space for breastfeeding or pumping.

### Bottles & Feeding Guidelines

- Cereal cannot be added to bottles without a doctor's written instructions.
- Children under 4 months receive only breastmilk, formula, or water unless otherwise prescribed.
- Bottles are only allowed for children under 15 months unless medically required.

- No bottles with cut nipples, on cots, or containing juice (unless medically necessary).

### Formula & Cereal Provided by RKA

- RKA offers iron-fortified formula and cereal, but brands may vary by purchase.

## Parties & Special Snacks

- **Birthday/Special Snacks:** Must be prepackaged or commercially prepared. Ensure enough for all children.
- **Class Parties:** Teachers may post sign-up sheets for parents.
- **Allergy Safety:** Follow any additional restrictions in classrooms with life-threatening allergies.



### Meals from Home

Families may send meals from home.

Staff must:

Serve the center-provided meal first, allowing the child to explore and eat freely.

Offer the child's lunchbox afterwards.

Limit high-sugar foods to one serving per meal (candy, snack cakes, etc.).

Never serve soda, energy drinks, or sweet tea.

Children are not required to eat or drink anything they do not wish to.



### Dietary Restrictions & Special Diets

- **Dietary Restrictions Policy**
- Families with medical, religious, or personal dietary needs must submit a Special Dietary Needs form (doctor's note if required).
- Staff must follow all written instructions and check labels for allergens.
- Religious/personal preferences: parents may provide written instructions or send alternative foods.
- Alternatives may only be heated or combined by staff; no extra prep without admin approval.
- All foods must meet nutritional guidelines; noncompliant items may be returned.
- Children may bring 100% juice in the morning, but RKA does not store juice.
- Staff must always verify dietary needs and follow written guidance.

# Outdoor Play Policy

33

Outdoor play is a required and intentional part of our daily program. Staff are responsible for ensuring children have regular outdoor opportunities unless specific health or safety concerns prevent it.

## Weather Guidelines:

### Outdoor Play & Weather Guidelines

- Required Outdoor Time
- Children 2 and older: at least 90 minutes daily (split AM/PM if possible).
- Children under 2: at least 60 minutes daily (split AM/PM if possible).
- Weather Guidelines
- Follow the Child Care Weather Watch Chart.
- Cancel outdoor play if:
- It is raining.
- Temp/wind chill is below 10°F.
- Heat index is 90°F or higher.
- Air Quality Advisory/Warning is in effect.



## Outdoor Play & Weather Guidelines

### Required Outdoor Time

- Children 2 and older: at least 90 minutes daily, preferably split between morning and afternoon.
- Children under 2: at least 60 minutes daily, preferably split between morning and afternoon.

## Weather Guidelines

- Use the Child Care Weather Watch Chart for decisions.
- Outdoor play must be canceled if:
- It is raining.
- Temperature/wind chill is below 10°F.
- Heat index is 90°F or higher.
- An Air Quality Advisory/Warning is in effect.

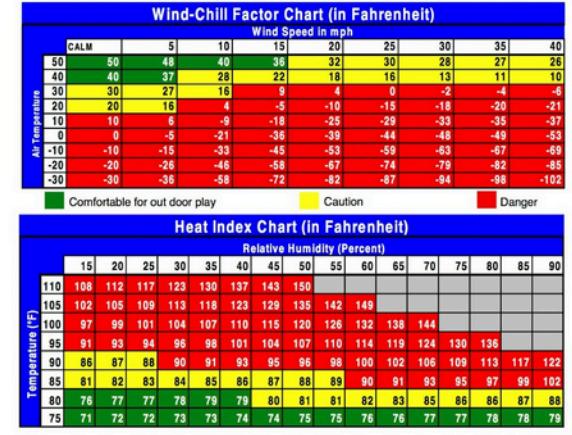
### Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill	
• 30° is <b>chilly</b> and generally uncomfortable	
• 15° to 30° is <b>cold</b>	
• 0° to 15° is <b>very cold</b>	
• -20° to 0° is <b>bitter cold</b> with significant risk of <b>frostbite</b>	
• -20° to -60° is <b>extreme cold</b> and <b>frostbite</b> is likely	
• -60° is <b>frigid</b> and exposed skin will freeze in 1 minute	

Heat Index	
• 80° or below is considered <b>comfortable</b>	
• 90° beginning to feel <b>uncomfortable</b>	
• 100° <b>uncomfortable</b> and may be <b>hazardous</b>	
• 110° considered <b>dangerous</b>	

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

## Child Care Weather Watch



### ✓ Staff Responsibility Summary:

- Check the Weather Watch Chart before taking children outside.
- Ensure children meet clothing and footwear requirements.

## Safety First

- Infants (birth–12 mo.) must always be placed on their backs in safety-approved cribs.
- Cribs must be empty—no blankets, toys, bumpers, or devices. One infant per crib.
- Staff must stay alert, present, and monitor infants while they sleep.
- Sleep sacks allowed, no loose blankets.

## Crib & Linen Hygiene

- Sheets removed daily/after use; placed in hamper.
- Mattresses disinfected and air-dried.
- Crib bars/plexiglass wiped when soiled.

## Non-Approved Sleep Items

- If infant falls asleep in swing, car seat, etc., transfer immediately to crib.

## Pacifiers

- Parent choice.
- Must be labeled, sanitized daily, stored properly, and checked for damage.
- Short clips only ( $\leq 6"$ ).

## Jewelry/Teething Items

- No amber necklaces, jewelry, or neck items.
- If present, remove and return to parent at pickup.



## Shoeless Classroom

- Families drop off at doorway; staff greet and gather updates.
- Anyone entering must remove shoes or wear covers; socks preferred.

## Meals & Bottles

- Parents provide 3–4 clean, labeled bottles daily, no overnight storage.
- Breast milk labeled with name/date/time; discard after 2 hrs. unrefrigerated.
- Parent formula: full can/bottle left at center. RKA also provides iron-fortified formula.
- Never add cereal without doctor's note.
- No bottles in cribs, propped, or carried around.
- Staff must hold/supervise infants while feeding.

## Solids & Snacks

- Parents provide food/snacks.
- Follow parent direction (one at a time, baby-led, or both).
- Always check before introducing new foods.

## Communication

- Families share feeding updates/changes.
- Staff document intake and child's response daily.

To help your child feel comfortable and safe at school, please send the following items clearly labeled with their full name:

### Daily Supplies

- Diapers & Wipes: Pack enough for at least 5 diaper changes per 8-hour day.
- Diaper Cream: If needed.
- Extra Clothing: At least 3 seasonal changes. May be left at school or brought daily.
- Sleep Sack (optional): Blankets are not permitted in cribs.
- Sunscreen: April–September only.
- Family Photo(s): We'll display or make a book to comfort your baby.
- Crib Sheets: Please send 2 labeled sheets.

Cribs are sanitized and sheets are changed daily or between uses, whichever is more frequent.

### Feeding Policy

- Bottles: Send 3–4 clean bottles daily. All bottles go home each night to be sanitized.
- Formula/Breast Milk:
  - Label breast milk with your child's full name, date, and time expressed.
  - If bringing your own formula, leave a full container at the center.
  - You may opt to use our iron-fortified formula (brand may vary).
- Baby Food/Snacks: Please send what your child needs daily.

### Feeding Safety Notes:

- No bottles in cribs, no propping, and no bottles while crawling or walking.
- Cereal cannot be added to bottles unless we have a doctor's note.
- Let us know when your child is ready to start solids—we'll follow your lead (purees, baby-led weaning, or a blend).

### Labeling Guidelines

- Everything must be labeled—clothes, bottles, sunscreen, etc.
- Use waterproof labels or write with permanent marker and cover with clear tape.
- For bottles, a labeled rubber band is a great removable option. Add date/time if needed.

### Lost & Found

Please check the lost and found weekly. Items not claimed after 7 days may be donated.

Thank you for helping us keep your baby safe, cozy, and well-prepared every day!

# Screen Time & Media Policy for Children

36



## Do's ✓

- Allow screen media only for children over age 2.
- Limit use to 75 minutes per week per child for educational or physical activity purposes.
- Choose developmentally appropriate, educational content that supports learning, collaboration, or active play.
- Integrate technology into children's play and projects, not as a stand-alone activity.
- Stay actively engaged with children during media use: discuss content, connect to real-life experiences, and encourage interaction.
- Offer alternative non-screen activities at all times.
- Include all planned media use in your lesson plan or daily schedule.

## Don'ts ✗

- No screen time for children under age 2.
- Do not exceed the 75-minute weekly limit per child.
- Do not use media as a babysitter, filler, or substitute for play, socialization, or physical activity.
- Do not use media with violence, aggression, profanity, or inappropriate content.
- Do not use media without prior approval and planning.
- 

## Social Media & Professional Conduct

Ridge Kids Academy values the trust families place in us, and we are committed to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality both inside and outside of work.

Because social media is such a visible platform, what we post—even on personal time—can reflect on us as professionals and on Ridge Kids Academy as a whole. Our policies align with the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct, WV Department of Human Services (Child Care Licensing), Cabell County Health Department (CCHD), and other regulatory agencies that require us to maintain the safety, dignity, and confidentiality of children, families, and staff.

To remain in compliance with these standards:

- Protect the confidentiality of children, families, and co-workers. Do not post pictures or information about children or families without written parent permission.
- Do not post content that reflects illegal or unsafe behavior (e.g., drug use, underage drinking, violence).
- Do not post negative, disrespectful, or harassing comments about families, children, co-workers, supervisors, or Ridge Kids Academy.
- If you identify yourself as an employee of Ridge Kids Academy on your profile, understand that your personal posts may still reflect on the program. Use professionalism at all times.
- Remember: any posts that undermine the reputation, safety, or compliance of Ridge Kids Academy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

## Media and Outside Inquiries:

Staff are not authorized to speak on behalf of Ridge Kids Academy. All media inquiries or requests for comment must be referred to the Executive

# Dress Code Policy at Ridge Kids Academy



At Ridge Kids Academy, comfort, safety, and readiness for play are key! Please follow these dress guidelines to help your child have a successful day.

## **Everyday Attire**

Children should come dressed in comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that allows for active play, outdoor time, and occasional messes. Avoid fancy or restrictive outfits.

## **Footwear**

All children 6 months and older must wear safe, sturdy shoes every day—no flip-flops, crocs without straps, or open-toe sandals.

Tip: Keep an extra pair of tennis shoes and socks in your child's cubby for convenience.

## **Change of Clothes**

Please keep at least one full extra outfit (top, bottom, socks, and shoes) in your child's cubby or backpack at all times.

Accidents, spills, or messy play can happen even with older children.

If your child does not have a spare set when needed, we may contact you to bring clothing promptly.

## **Swim & Splash Days**

On pool or splash days, send your child with a swimsuit or extra knit play clothes and a towel. Please label all items with your child's name.

## **Special Events & Field Trips**

Watch for notices in newsletters or class messages about upcoming trips or events that may require specific attire or RKA shirts.

## **Extra Clothes Supply**

We have limited extra clothing and cannot guarantee available sizes. Please ensure your child's cubby is stocked to avoid delays in care or participation.



## School Supply Donation & Personal Supply Guidelines

We're grateful for your support in keeping our classrooms stocked and children comfortable! To help us maintain high-quality care and learning environments, we ask each family to contribute supplies once per year, based on your child's age group:

## Annual Supply Donation Schedule

- Infants & Toddlers (6 wks – 2 yrs): Bring supplies in January
- Preschoolers (3-5 yrs): Bring supplies in September
- Kindergarten & School-Age: Bring supplies in May (for Summer Kick-Off)

If your child enrolls outside this window, please try to donate supplies within 30 days of enrollment.

♥ Donations are always welcome year-round!



## Supplies for Children Under 2 Years

- 2 packs of chubby crayons (8+ count)
- 3 packs of chubby markers (8+ count)
- 1 pack of finger paint
- 1 pack of fruit/veggie pouches (12+)

## Items for All Ages

- 1+ packs of dry erase markers (chubby & fine)
- 1+ pack of Sharpies
- 2+ rolls of Scotch tape
- 1 ream of white copy paper
- 2+ boxes of tissues
- 4+ containers of Lysol wipes
- 3+ rolls of paper towels
- 1 bottle of surface disinfectant
- 4+ packs of baby wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Command hooks or strips

## Daily Essentials

- Please clearly label all items with your child's name.
- Diapers or pull-ups (5+ per day)
- Wipes & diaper cream
- 2-4 full changes of seasonal clothing (more if potty training)
- 2 sippy cups (if not yet using open cup)
- Water bottle (if using open cup)
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Sunscreen (April-September)
- Family photo(s) for classroom display

## Supplies for Children 2 Years & Older

- 1 pair of child scissors (blunt tip)
- 1 plastic pencil box
- 1 box of crayons (24+)
- 4 boxes of markers (10 count)
- 6 glue sticks
- 1 bottle of glue
- 1 pack of Play-Doh (4+)
- 1 set of colored pencils

## Kindergarten & School-Age

- Each child will have a labeled cubby or hook. You may leave a backpack or bring it back and forth daily.
- ❤ Daily Essentials
- Water bottle (labeled, cleaned daily)
- Full set of seasonal clothing
- ☀ Summer Add-Ons
- Towel
- Swimsuit
- Flip-flops/slides
- Sunscreen & face stick
- Toothbrush (in travel case)
- Toothpaste

## Toddlers to Kindergarten (12 months – 5 yrs)

- Nap Supplies
- Extra-large fitted crib sheet (for nap space)
- Blanket (soft and cozy)
- Travel-size pillow (no full-size pillows, please)
- Comfort item (pacifier, special blanket, small stuffed animal)
- 🚫 No bottles or sippy cups allowed in nap areas.
- ❤ Nap items are washed weekly, or sooner if needed.

# Immunization Policy



## Requirements

- All children must be up to date (UTD) on immunizations before starting at RKA.
- Records signed by a licensed provider must be submitted before the first day.
- Exceptions: Foster care or homeless children on a physician-approved catch-up plan (with projected dates).

## Exclusions

- Children without proper documentation or physician-approved catch-up plans cannot attend.
- No medical, religious, or personal exemptions are accepted.

## Communicable Disease Response

- If a vaccine-preventable illness (e.g., measles, chickenpox, pertussis) is confirmed, all non/under-immunized children are excluded until cleared by a doctor or health authority.
- Families will be notified of exposures, exclusions, and return requirements.

## Administrator Procedures

- Verify and file records before enrollment.
- Review foster/homeless catch-up plans with CLO.
- Keep all records confidential.
- Notify administration of suspected or confirmed cases immediately.

## Staff Action Points

- Confirm records at enrollment; no admittance without them.
- Accept only physician-verified exceptions (foster/homeless).
- Follow exclusion steps if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.



# Supervision Policy <sup>40</sup>



At Ridge Kids Academy, the safety and well-being of enrolled children is our top priority. To ensure proper supervision, the following guidelines are in place:

1. **Responsibility Upon Arrival:** Ridge Kids Academy staff assume responsibility for children as soon as they enter the classroom.
2. **Supervision of Infants, Toddlers, and Twos:** Children aged 0 through 2-years-old are always supervised by staff who maintain both visual and audible oversight. This means that caregivers must be able to see and hear the children at all times (regardless if the child is asleep or awake) to respond to their needs promptly.
3. **Supervision of Preschool Students:** Children aged 3-5 years are primarily supervised by sight. Staff members may allow for brief intervals of supervision by sound; however, it is essential that teachers frequently check on children who are out of sight to ensure their safety.
4. **Supervision of School-Age Students:** Children who are enrolled and attending a RKA program that are in kindergarten or higher will be kept in sight most of the time. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as staff frequently check on children who are out of sight. Staff may permit kindergarteners and school-age children to leave the teacher's supervision (out of sight and sound) for no more than 10 minutes, so long as the children are in a safe environment (e.g., go to hall bathroom, report to an office, or meet another staff member in a different location of the building).

Staff will check on any children who do not promptly (within 10 minutes) return to the group as expected or if an adult at the child's destination does not confirm his or her arrival.

5. **Attendance Monitoring:** Each student should be checked in or out upon entering or leaving the building. This is the responsibility of the person that is dropping off or picking up. If the drop off person doesn't check the child in/out then a staff member will do this as soon as they are made aware. Failure to check your child in or out profusely will result in a charge of \$3.00 per time the staff/administration must fix the time. A back up record of attendance is kept on a paper sheet that the staff should carry with them throughout the day. Classrooms are responsible for regularly updating attendance records throughout the day. This involves counting children frequently and matching the number present with their names on the attendance sheets.
6. **"Name to Face" Headcount:** A "Name to Face" headcount is conducted throughout the day, especially during transitions between activities and when moving between designated areas within the center. This practice helps verify that all children are accounted for at all times, particularly at every threshold. By adhering to these supervision policies, Ridge Kids Academy can help ensure a safe and nurturing environment where children can learn and explore confidently.

# Keeping Germs Away At RKA!

## Child Illness and Exclusion Policy

This serves as a quick guide for CHILD exclusion policy. Please reference the Family handbook for further details and see the Staff exclusion guide below for details pertaining to staff.

### ⚠ General Rules

24 hrs symptom-free (no meds)

48 hrs if outbreak

Too sick for outdoor play = too sick for school

Always use the longest exclusion if multiple symptoms

Doctor's release required when noted

### 🍏 Gastrointestinal (GI)

Fever → 24 hrs fever-free (48 hrs outbreak)

Vomiting → 24 hrs vomit-free (48 hrs outbreak), must eat normally

Diarrhea (infectious) → 24 hrs diarrhea-free (48 hrs outbreak) or doctor's release

Diarrhea (non-infectious) → Same as above, or doctor's note if food/medication-related

Campylobacter / Giardiasis / Salmonella / Shigella → Exclude; doctor's release required

### 咳 Respiratory

RSV, Flu, COVID, Norovirus, Adenovirus → Exclude at least 5 days; symptoms improving

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) → 5 days after starting antibiotics, doctor's release

Meningitis → Viral: 1 week | Bacterial: 48 hrs antibiotics + doctor's release

### 👀 Skin / Contact

Chicken Pox → All blisters crusted, no new blisters x 48 hrs, at least 5 days from onset

Hand, Foot & Mouth → At least 5 days; no new/oozing sores; eating normally

Impetigo → 48 hrs after antibiotics; blisters covered

Ringworm → After treatment begins; proof of treatment; cover lesions

Head Lice → Exclude until no live lice remain (nits recommended to be combed out)

Pink Eye →

Allergy/chemical: doctor's note

Bacterial/viral: 24 hrs after antibiotics, no discharge

### 🧩 Miscellaneous

Strep Throat / Scarlet Fever → 24 hrs after antibiotics

Mono → Under 4 yrs: 30 days | 4+ yrs: 7 days | Doctor's release required

Hospitalization / Surgery → At least 24 hrs or 1 full school day after discharge + doctor's note

Measles / Mumps / Rubella / Hepatitis A → Exclude per doctor's release & timeline

Other Illnesses → Always follow exclusion chart + doctor guidance

✓ Always check with admin if unsure.

✓ Follow CDC, CCHD, and DHHR updates during outbreaks.

## Toileting Policy

- Our program is dedicated to maintaining a safe and hygienic environment for all children, particularly those who are not yet fully toilet trained. The following procedures are implemented to ensure proper care:
- **Diapering Procedures:**
  - For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within a waterproof outer covering to prevent any escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering will be changed as a unit.
  - Soiled cloth diapers and clothing contaminated by urine or feces will be immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or unnecessary handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- **Regular Checks:**
  - Staff will check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or soiled at least every two hours while children are awake and immediately upon waking.
- 
- **Changing Procedures:**
  - Diapers will be changed promptly when wet or soiled.
  - Staff will change children's diapers or soiled underwear in designated changing areas, ensuring that this is not done elsewhere in the facility.
  - Each changing area will be separated by a partial wall or at least three feet from other areas used by children and will be exclusively used for a designated group.
- **Cleaning Frequency**
- The facility will routinely clean and sanitize all surfaces according to the guidelines outlined in the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table (pages 65–67). Ventilation and sanitation methods will be prioritized over the use of sprays, air fresheners, or deodorizers to control odors in occupied areas and custodial closets.
- 
- **Standard Precautions**
- We adhere to standard precautions to minimize the risk of infection:
- Surfaces that may come into contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of materials that can be sanitized.
- Staff are trained to use techniques that minimize contact with mucous membranes or openings in the skin when handling potentially infectious body fluids.
- In the event of spills involving body fluids, staff will clean them up immediately with detergent, then rinse with water. After the area is clean it should be sprayed with a bleach solution to disinfect and allowed to air dry.
- Nonporous surfaces will be sanitized according to the procedures for sanitizing designated changing surfaces as described in the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table.
- Rugs and carpeting will be cleaned by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and through shampooing or steam cleaning as necessary.

Staff will properly dispose of any contaminated materials.



# PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

## Volunteers/Visitors

We value the unique contributions individuals have to offer our programs. Whether it be teaching a new language, reading a story, rocking a baby, or helping prepare a holiday craft, we welcome all opportunities for persons to visit our center and /or volunteer their services. To ensure the safety of our children and the quality of our programs, ALL volunteers must receive prior approval from the RKA administration, schedule their services in advance, and will be required to fill out several volunteer forms such as the following:

1. Confidentiality Statement
2. Employee/Substitute/Volunteer Statement
3. Communicable Disease Statement
4. Federal Criminal Background Check including FBI Fingerprinting
5. State of West Virginia Criminal Background Check
6. WV CPS/APS check

Any individual that places the safety of our children at risk will NOT be allowed to participate in our programs.

Note that background checks and fingerprinting may take up to six weeks to return to the center. No one will be allowed to volunteer until all materials have been authorized and returned to the center by the officials.

\*ALL volunteers and visitors must sign in at the front desk prior to reporting to the classroom.

## Appeals and Grievances

At RKA, we prioritize open communication to address any concerns parents may have regarding their child's care. We recommend that parents first discuss any issues directly with the involved staff to seek clarification and collaboratively find a resolution. If concerns persist or require immediate administrative attention, contacting the center's director is encouraged. For unresolved issues, parents can escalate the matter to a member of the Executive Team, as we strive to ensure all families feel heard and satisfied with the care provided.

## General Disclaimer

We understand that not all policies and procedures can be applied to all situations. Under such circumstances, the Administration in charge reserves the right to assess each situation and make decisions regarding the proper course of action.

## Biting Policy

- Parents of both children are notified once the situation is under control.
- An incident is documented in Child Pilot for review/signature.
- First aid is provided as needed.
- If a child bites 3 times in one week, they will be sent home; suspension may follow.
- A parent/BIP meeting will be held to create an action plan.
- Persistent, disruptive biting may lead to discharge if all supports fail.



## Suspension & Disqualification

### Before Disqualification:

- **Observe/document behaviors.**
- **Meet with parents and create a Behavior Plan.**
- **Adjust classroom strategies as needed.**
- **Consider classroom/location transfers.**
- **Review progress with the family.**

### When Termination May Be Considered:

- **Ongoing danger to self/others.**
- **Constant one-on-one attention needed.**
- **Physical/emotional harm inflicted.**
- **3+ major behavioral incidents in a week.**

### Process:

- **Final decisions made by the Executive Team.**
- **Licensing/subsidy supervisors may be consulted.**
- **Parents notified in writing; 2-week notice typically given unless immediate termination is required for safety.**





## Ridge Kids Academy

### Discipline, Guidance, & Behavior Management Policy

At Ridge Kids Academy (RKA), our approach to discipline is rooted in respect, compassion, and growth. We believe children's behavior is a form of communication—and that it offers powerful opportunities for learning. Our focus is not on punishment, but on guiding children with patience, consistency, and love.

### Philosophy of Positive Guidance

- We use preventive strategies, such as clear expectations, redirection, and natural/logical consequences.
- Guidance is always age-appropriate, respectful, and adapted to the individual child's needs and circumstances.
- Staff aim to build trusting relationships, support emotional regulation, and foster social problem-solving skills.
- We react with proportion and intentionality: not everything is a big deal, and we avoid overreactions or blanket consequences.

### When Challenging Behavior Occurs

- Staff prioritize safety and calmness first. Once calm is restored, they help the child identify and express their emotions appropriately.
- The goal is to teach—not punish. Children are supported in developing self-control, empathy, and coping skills.
- If a behavior is recurring or concerning, the teacher will notify the administrative team. Staff or administrators will then communicate with the child's family.

### Physical Aggression & Safety Incidents

- If a child physically harms other children, staff, or property three times in one week, they will be sent home.
- The one-hour pick-up policy applies. A \$20/hour fee will be billed for delays over 60 minutes.
- Before a child can be sent home, behavior must be documented and parents notified of prior incidents.
- Both families involved in an aggressive incident will receive incident reports:
  - The aggressor's report will include a cropped image of the injury only.
  - The injured child's report will follow standard procedures with no identifying details of the aggressor.
  - Descriptions must be subjective and factual, with no biased or speculative language.

### Supervised Breaks & Behavior Support

- Short, supervised breaks may be used to help a child regain control.
- Staff attempt to delegate behavior guidance to someone familiar with the child to increase success.
- Significant behavior concerns are addressed privately and individually, with open communication between staff, administration, and parents.

RKA strictly forbids any discipline that includes physical, psychological, or emotional harm, such as:

- Physical punishment (e.g., hitting, shaking, excessive exercise, or placing items in the child's mouth)
- Psychological punishments (e.g., ridicule, threats, shaming, or negative comments about a child or their family)
- Harsh or intimidating language
- Supervised isolation without adult presence
- Forcing one child to discipline another
- Group punishments for individual behaviors
- Seeking or accepting parental consent for prohibited methods

 We follow WV Licensing guidelines requiring written policies that emphasize positive guidance, redirection, and conflict resolution.

### Behavior Guidance Techniques

- Active supervision to prevent misbehavior
- Teaching emotional literacy (naming and understanding feelings)
- Modeling and role-playing expected behaviors
- Offering meaningful choices and respectful reminders
- Using redirection and consistent routines to support transitions

### Responding to Negative Behaviors



When conflicts arise, staff:

- Address the situation calmly with all children involved
- Encourage reflection and help children explore alternative responses (e.g., asking for help, using words, taking a break)
- Notify parents as needed via written or verbal communication

### Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)

A BIP will be created when:

- A child exhibits dangerous, repeated, or escalating behaviors (e.g., biting, hitting, elopement, self-harm)
- Redirection and other strategies are not effective

The BIP Process Includes:

- A team meeting with the family, teacher, admin, and relevant support staff
- A documented, individualized plan with clear strategies and goals
- Progress updates shared with families
- Plan placement in the "All About Me" binder in the classroom (must be reviewed by all new or rotating staff)

If a child has three or more BIPs for the same behavior, a follow-up meeting will be scheduled to explore additional interventions.

If more than 3 serious incidents occur in a single week, a brief suspension may be considered to allow for a reset—for both the child and classroom.

### Final Note

We believe relationships come first. Our approach is guided by the understanding that behavior is an expression of a child's needs—and our role is to teach, model, and support with care.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's behavior or guidance methods used, please contact your campus Director or Administrative Team.

## Community Resources for the Tri-State Area

Link Resource and Referral:  
611 7th Ave, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304)525-9540

Services: child care referrals, subsidizing child care payments\*, resources on various parenting issues.

Huntington-Huntington Area Public Library (Main Branch)  
2550 3rd Ave, Huntington, WV 25703  
Phone: (304) 529-5700

Services: Storytimes, parenting resources, early literacy programs, community events, food and clothing pantry referrals\*, and GED classes.

Cabell County Family Resource Network  
600 6th Ave, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304) 526-0222

Services: Parenting classes, family support programs, early childhood development resources.

The Children's Therapy Clinic & Pediatric Center  
1325 5th Ave, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304) 525-7722

Services: Pediatric therapy, developmental assessments, early intervention services.

Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)\*  
1741 16th St, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304) 526-5260

Services: Nutrition assistance, breastfeeding support, health screenings for pregnant women and children, monthly food vouchers

West Virginia Birth to Three Program  
1024 4th Ave, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304) 523-0600

Services: Early intervention for children with developmental delays.

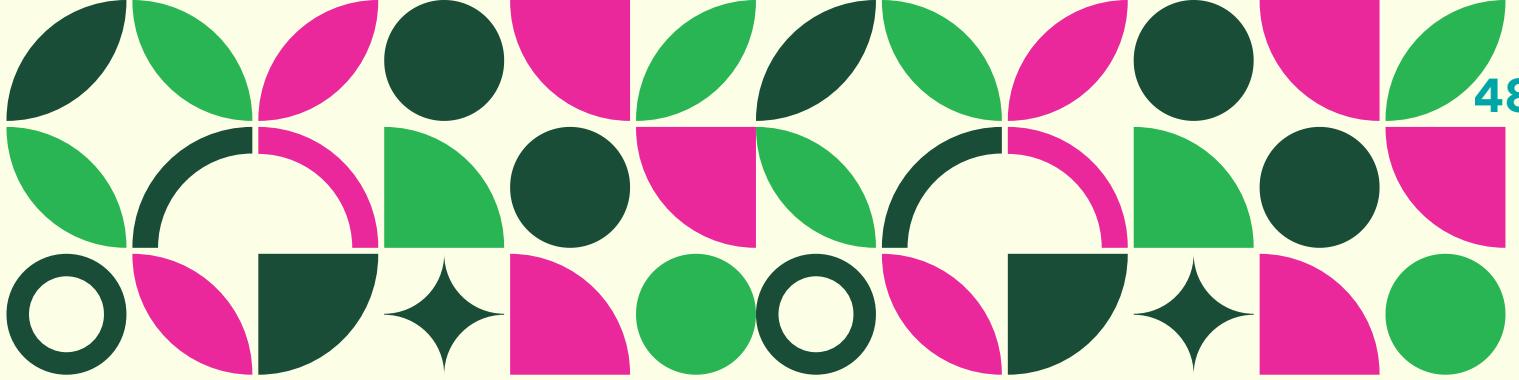
Cabell County Health Department  
703 7th Ave, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304)523-6483

Services: Health Clinic, Immunizations, Smoking Sensation Support, Food Handlers Certification.

Facing Hunger Food Bank  
1327 7th Ave, Huntington, WV 25701  
Phone: (304)523-6029

Services: Food and Household donations

Huntington Parent Support Group (Local support for parents)  
Contact through local community centers or online platforms like Facebook for upcoming meetings and resources.



Parent I \_\_\_\_\_, the  
parent/guardian of

\_\_\_\_\_,  
hereby attest that I have read and understand the Ridge Kids Academy  
parent/family handbook.

I understand that I am responsible for adhering to the policies within  
the handbook. I understand that at any time, I may access the  
handbook digitally at [WWW.RidgeKidsAcademy.com](http://WWW.RidgeKidsAcademy.com) or I may come to  
an administrator's office to ask for a paper copy.

If I have questions, I understand it is my responsibility to seek  
clarification from a member of the administration or from the CLO.

I understand that the administration may make changes to this  
handbook at any time, and I will be notified within 30 days of policy  
changes via the Child Pilot app.

At this time, I am (choose ONE)  
Requesting a paper copy of this handbook be given to me.  
I am choosing to access and read the digital copy of this handbook on  
the RKA website.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## RIDGE KIDS ACADEMY INC. GROWING SINCE 1993

### Ridge Kids Academy Copy

I \_\_\_\_\_, the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, hereby attest that I have read and understand the Ridge Kids Academy parent/family handbook.

I understand that I am responsible for adhering to the policies within the handbook. I understand that at any time, I may access the handbook digitally at [WWW.RidgeKidsAcademy.com](http://WWW.RidgeKidsAcademy.com) or I may come to an administrator's office to ask for a paper copy.

If I have questions, I understand it is my responsibility to seek clarification from a member of the administration or from the CLO.

I understand that the administration may make changes to this handbook at any time, and I will be notified within 30 days of policy changes via the Child Pilot app.

At this time, I am (Choose ONE)

- Requesting a paper copy of this handbook be given to me.
- I am choosing to access and read the digital copy of this handbook on the RKA website.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_