



Roaring Fork Kids (RFK) would like to welcome your family to our childcare center.

We believe the first five years of a child's life is a critical time for nurturing and stimulation. Our staff is committed to helping your child grow socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically through developmentally appropriate activities for individuals and small groups.

Our mission statement and philosophy shape the atmosphere and structure of our school.

Our mission is "To nurture the young child and support Roaring Fork Valley families by providing a creative, respectful, intimate learning environment."

Our philosophy states:

Our school focuses on the whole child, allowing the children to experiment and explore in an environment with developmentally appropriate practices. We believe that children learn best through hands-on experiences within nature, their community, home, and school. Integrating these activities will aid the children in becoming well-adjusted and respectful of their surroundings. One of our main goals is to help children develop respect for themselves, others, and their environment.

We hope your experience with our program helps everyone in your family to maintain continuing employment and/or obtain further education, and provides a positive influence complementing your home life and your child-rearing practices.

Thank you for giving us the wonderful opportunity to care for your children!

## **DESCRIPTION OF ROARING FORK KIDS**

### **Location and Contact Information**

Roaring Fork Kids  
Yellow Brick School Building  
215 N. Garmisch St.  
Aspen, CO 81611

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 4925  
Aspen, CO 81612

Phone: 970-925-3136  
Fax: 970-544-9727  
E-mail: [roaringforkkids@msn.com](mailto:roaringforkkids@msn.com)  
Website: [www.RoaringForkKids.com](http://www.RoaringForkKids.com)

### **Licensing/Accreditation**

Roaring Fork Kids is an accredited program, and the State of Colorado licenses this program for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Guidelines established by the Department of Social Services and followed by this Center include but are not limited to: staff training, education and background checks, regulation of activity schedules and health practices, inspection of building and equipment, and maintaining records and reports.

### **Organization and Funding**

RFK is a non-profit corporation, governed by a Board of Directors. Non-profit status in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code, Section 501(c)(3) is final. RFK is funded primarily by tuition and is subsidized by public and private contributions. RFK is licensed by the Colorado Department of Social Services and meets all state requirements.

## **RFK's Objectives**

1. To provide high quality childcare based on the emotional, physical, and developmental needs of the children.
2. To maintain a safe and stimulating environment for the children.
3. To foster a climate of respect and appreciation for both children and parents by maintaining a staff of responsible adults who are patient, caring, and have a genuine interest in teaching as well as learning from the children.
4. To provide flexible, affordable care for local employees.
5. To enable parents to feel confident and secure in their workplace, knowing their child is loved and cared for while in our center.

## **Hours of Operation**

Roaring Fork Kids is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

## **Rates**

Tuition is billed on per-child/per-day basis. Current rates are available from the director and may be subject to change. Rates are based on the room in which the enrolled child is assigned. A signed contract is required for enrollment.

## **Ages of Children Enrolled**

Children eight weeks to five years of age must be enrolled for two days or more per week, and will be assigned to a classroom based in part on the following criteria:

Infants: Eight weeks up to 18 months old

Toddler I: Children who are self-feeding and walking independently, not younger than 12 months and up to 2 1/2 years

Toddler II: Children who are not younger than 2 years and up to 3 1/2 years

Preschool: Children who are not younger than 3 years and potty trained

Pre-K: Children who are not younger than 4 years old.

Move-up is determined by a combination of age, readiness of the child, and space availability within the rooms. The director will assign children to a room based on input from the teachers and the child's parents.

When a child is to move up to a new room, we request that his/her parents spend some time with their child in the new room to get them accustomed to the new environment.

## Ratios

The maximum ratio of Infants to teachers is 4:1  
The maximum ratio of Toddler I to teachers is 4:1  
The maximum ratio of Toddler II to teachers is 5:1  
The maximum ratio of Preschoolers to teachers is 8:1  
The maximum ratio of Pre-K to teachers is 10:1

## Directors

RFK is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors consisting of parents and other members of the community who share a commitment to children. Current board members' names and phone numbers are listed by the sign-in sheets in each classroom.

The Board of Directors meets at least once a month. All regular sessions are open to the public, and parents are invited to attend. To add an item of business to the agenda, contact the board chair at least two weeks before the meeting.

Parents wishing to become board members are encouraged to attend meetings. New member elections are held each June, and officer elections are held each January. Board members are elected for a term of 3 years.

## Board of Directors

Joan Valentine (Secretary)	404-5165	joan.valentine@comcast.net
Jenny MacArthur (President)	923-2156	jennyjmac@comcast.net
Connie Holcomb	920-1015	
Sara Haneman	920-9379	sarhaneman@yahoo.com
Larry Mills	923-6206	lawrencemills@juno.com
Ryan Loeb	923-7938	rloeb@aspensnowmass.com

The Board of Directors is primarily responsible for policy and fundraising. Please don't hesitate to call or email any member of the Board of Directors regarding information about RFK. See Grievance Procedures for any complaints or concerns.

## Discipline

We encourage self-discipline through positive guidance (asking the child for the desired behavior) rather than using negative statements. In the case of conflict among the children, we institute the 3 R's: Redirect the children's actions or behavior to something more desirable; Remove the object or the children from the situation; and Respond with love and kindness.

Under no circumstances will an employee or a child be allowed to use physical aggression of any kind against another child. If a serious discipline issue should arise, parents will be consulted and every effort will be made to redirect the behavior of the child. Ongoing discipline problems may result in suspension of the child from the program. In such a case, the deposit and any prepaid tuition would be refunded with no penalty and/or the remainder of any unpaid tuition must be paid in full.

## Incident Policy

This policy may be used when any incident occurs in the classroom which causes concern for the safety or disruption of the learning environment. The following steps should be followed after the occurrence of said incident.

1. The lead teacher or acting lead notifies the director with a detailed report of the incident.
2. Under the guidance of the director, teachers will discuss the incident with parents away from the classroom.
3. Teachers present during the incident will submit an incident report to the administrative staff prior to leaving the center for the day.
4. Director will notify parents of children involved in the incident and arrange for a meeting.
5. If safety of the classroom is in question, both children involved in the incident will be asked to stay at home until the director has met with and resolved the incident with all parents.
6. The lead teacher and co-teacher will be involved in any discussions with parents and will contribute to resolving the behavior that created the incident.
7. Director will notify BOD president and vice president of the situation as soon as possible and may ask board members to assist in resolution of the incident if necessary.
8. Administrative staff will keep a copy of any written documentation in the children's files. All written documentation supplied by parents and teachers will remain confidential.
9. Details of the incident are not to be discussed with any other parent from the program. Any questions regarding the incident must be referred to the director.
10. Every effort will be made to resolve the incident within 3 business days.

This policy is written as a guideline for the administrative staff, teachers, and parents who may be involved in any incident regarding the children at RFK. It is the desire of RFK's BOD and staff to resolve all incidents in a manner that will meet the needs of the child and parents.

### **Non-discrimination Policy**

RFK does not discriminate in enrollment of children or staff, or in the administration of its educational policies and other facility-administered programs, on the basis of national or ethnic origin, race, color, or religion. Diversity in enrollment is an asset we strive to achieve at RFK. Children with special needs are welcome in our program, provided we can meet their needs. Please let us know if your child has any special requirements so that we may review the situation carefully to determine if our program is able to meet his/her needs.

### **Grievance Procedures**

The purpose of the following procedure is to enable RFK to address parent concerns or complaints. Please use the following guidelines:

1. Speak with the teachers in your child's classroom. If the concern or complaint is with one of the teachers or if a situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction, then...
2. Speak with the director. If the concern or complaint still has not been resolved to your satisfaction, then...
3. Speak with a board member or the entire Board of Directors at a monthly board meeting. Board meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Kids First Resource Room.
4. Please document any complaint you have with our program and we will keep it in your child's file. RFK staff will do the same so we can use these procedures as positive learning tools for our center.
5. If a complaint needs to be filed with the State of Colorado, please contact: Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman St., 1st floor, Denver, CO 80203-1714. Phone: 1-800-799-5876.

## ENROLLMENT AND TUITION

### Enrollment Procedures

Parents are required to fill out enrollment papers two weeks before the first day of attendance. The following forms are required:

1. Application to the program, including a 50.00 non-refundable registration fee.
2. A \$500 deposit to reserve space for your child in our program. The deposit will be applied towards the last month's tuition. A four-week notice is required to withdraw from the program or to change days of attendance; otherwise, your deposit will be forfeited.
3. A signed contract requesting days of the week your child will attend. The contract will state the number of personal days and weekly tuition.
4. Enrollment form, which includes detailed information about your child, a list of who is authorized to pick up the child, who is not authorized (if applicable) to pick up the child, and the legal consent to enroll him/her in group care.
5. Roaring Fork Kids reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment if either the child or the parents are unable to adhere to the RFK program and policies or the center feels it can no longer serve the child effectively. Non-payment of tuition is also grounds for dismissal from the program (see Tuition).
6. Medical information and Certificate of Good Health signed by a physician.
7. Immunization record. Parents who choose not to immunize their child sign the written waiver on the back of the Colorado immunization card. Notice of enrollment of a child who is not or will not be immunized will be provided to the parents of other children enrolled in that child's class.

## Tuition

Tuition must be paid for all scheduled days, even if your child is not present. Tuition is due in advance. Invoices are given out prior to the 1st of each month, and payment is due by the 10th of each month.

A \$25 late fee will be added if tuition is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Extra days and late fees must be paid by the current month's end or the account will be considered delinquent. If tuition is past due by 2 or more weeks your child will not be allowed to attend until the balance is paid.

You may enroll in direct-debit from your checking account to pay monthly tuition. See the administrative staff for direct debit forms. Families with children enrolled 4 or 5 days per week may split monthly payments; see the director for arrangements.

## Tuition Assistance

Kids First offers tuition assistance through the City of Aspen. If needed, please contact them at 920-5363. The Colorado Department of Social Services also offers assistance, and they can be reached at 927-9803.

## Make-Up Days Due to Illness or Absence

You must pay for all scheduled days. To receive a make-up day, you must call the director at 925-3136 and cancel by 8:00 a.m. or earlier if possible, otherwise no make-up day will be given.

If the director is not available please leave a message on the answering machine or a written notice in the office for pre-scheduled absences. Informing only the teacher is not sufficient.

*As of June 1<sup>st</sup> all make up days will expire. The RFK Board made this decision on February 8, 2010.*

Make-up days can be scheduled 24 hours in advance or on the morning of the day the make-up is needed on a space-available basis at the discretion of the management. Consideration will be given to the parent's request based on maintaining quality in the classroom and child/teacher ratios. Additional days may be purchased at your regular tuition rate if space is available. Siblings may share make-up days while both children are currently enrolled. Make-up days end when enrollment ends.

Make-up days are available only for those families that are current with their tuition payments. Make-up days are not available to parents who are late on tuition payments or for children no longer enrolled.

## Personal Days

Personal days are scheduled days off with no charge for tuition. Each child enrolled will be given personal days equal to the number of days he/she is enrolled per week, beginning after the third full month of enrollment.

2 days per week=2 personal days

3 days per week=3 personal days

4 days per week=4 personal days

5 days per week=5 personal days

Personal days are given annually and are to be used within that year. You must notify the director or office coordinator when wishing to apply personal days when your child is absent. Personal days not used do not roll over to the next year.

If your child's enrollment changes, the number of personal days earned will be at the discretion of the director.

## School Closures

1. FRK will be closed one day for spring cleaning.
2. RFK will be closed for one full week.
3. FRK will be closed one day for fall cleaning.
4. RFK will be closed one day in the fall for a teacher in-service day.

The exact day of the school closures will be posted in advance.

## Holidays

RFK is closed Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day. If Christmas falls on a Saturday we will close on the preceding Friday. If Christmas falls on a Sunday we will close the following Monday.

A sign-up sheet will be placed in each of the classrooms for Christmas Eve. We use the sign-up sheets to find out how many staff members we will need. If your child's room is closed on this day because no one needs childcare, you will not be charged for the day.

If your child's room is open you will be charged as usual and you will receive a make-up day for an advance absence notice of at least one week prior to the day.

## **Snow Days**

RFK will follow the Aspen School District snow closure plan. Call the Aspen School District hotline at 925-3760 or listen for school closures on radio stations KSPN and KSNO. It will also be recorded on our answering machine (925-3136). During public school holidays the RFK answering machine will be updated by 6:30 a.m. and an e-mail will be sent to parents by 6:45 p.m.

## **Insurance**

Roaring Fork Kids has a liability insurance policy in place. If your child has an accident while at Roaring Fork Kids, please contact the director for information. We encourage every family to have personal insurance.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

We value open communication and parent involvement. Parent-teacher conferences are available any time at the request of the parents. Written records of your child's progress and behavior will be kept in your child's file. We welcome you to visit and participate whenever you have time.

### **Parent Participation**

Roaring Fork Kids is a non-profit center both in legal status and in reality. Through parent participation we manage to maintain the high standard of early childhood education offered here. Your sharing of ideas and efforts is vital to the economic stability of the center and to the success of your child's experience with us. When you participate, you foster a sense of belonging and community and form a school-family partnership that enriches your child's experience and our program.

RFK requires each family to donate one hour per month to activities such as field trips, staff workdays, fundraising, or special events. You may also fulfill this requirement as a board member. There are numerous other opportunities as well; feel free to approach the teachers or office staff for ideas. If you do not work your 3 hours per quarter you will be billed \$250 (January-March; April-June; July-September; October-December). You are responsible for logging your hours with the director or on the volunteer sheet in the classrooms. Please know we appreciate everything you do.

### **Sign-In and Pick-Up**

The State of Colorado requires each parent to sign in when the child is dropped off and sign out when the child is picked up.

Please remember to leave a phone number where you can be reached throughout the day and any pertinent information on the sign-in sheet in case of an emergency.

It is the responsibility of the parents to pick up and drop off their children. For your protection, your child will only be released to those designated in writing on the enrollment form. Please update our records as needed with any changes to your mailing address, phone numbers, or persons authorized to pick up your child.

\*\*We recommend that your child be at school by 9:00 a.m. so he/she will not miss out on any of the activities. If your child's class is not at the school upon your late arrival, it is your responsibility to find your child's class.

If you pick up your child after 5:30 p.m. a late fee of \$5.00 will be charged plus an additional \$1.00 per minute after 5:35 p.m. This late fee must be paid directly to the teacher on duty unless prior arrangements have been made with the director and staff.

If your child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m., the director will be notified and local authorities will be contacted. If the parents and/or emergency contacts still cannot be contacted, Social Services will be called to pick up the child.

### **Personal Belongings**

Please label all clothing items, especially snowsuits, hats, boots, and gloves. Please include a change of clothes and a supply of diapers each day (infants and toddlers).

Bringing toys from home is discouraged. Children find them difficult to share and sometimes the items are misplaced or broken.

Comfort items such as a stuffed animal, doll, or blanket are permitted at naptime and should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Children are not permitted to bring anything to RFK that poses a real or imaginary danger to other children. We request that toy guns, swords, action toys/figures be left at home as they promote aggressive behavior.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION**

### **Meals and Snacks**

Snacks are provided twice a day; a menu is posted in each classroom. Water is available at any time throughout the day. Parents must provide a ready-to-eat lunch; please label all containers, cups, and bottles.

If your child has a food allergy, please alert the staff and include this information on the enrollment form.

*RFK is a PEANUT FREE environment.*

## Outdoor Play

Each day's activities will include outdoor play, except in extreme weather. The infant and toddler classes may choose to take the children for a buggy ride around town. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing for outside time, and apply sunscreen in the morning as needed. We will re-apply it in the afternoon.

## Illness Policy

Our program is not staffed or licensed to care for ill children. Please keep your child at home if he/she is symptomatic.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be notified and required to pick up the child immediately. It is the parent's responsibility to provide alternative care at this time.

Your child's exposure to, or exhibiting symptoms of, any communicable disease (such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, whooping cough, strep throat, RSV, etc.) should be reported immediately to the staff. A notice will be posted in each classroom to inform other parents, and outbreaks of certain diseases will be reported to the Center of Disease Control.

## Guidelines for Excluding Children Due to Illness

Children will not be excluded from RFK due to a cold. A child with a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater will be excluded from the program whether or not symptoms are visible.

Other reasons a child would need to stay at home or be excluded from the program include any condition which prevents the child from fully participating in the day's activities. Our concerns are that the child is comfortable in a group situation, is not contagious, and does not require one-on-one care.

At his or her discretion, a teacher or director may exclude a child from RFK for any single or combination of symptoms including chronic cough, runny nose, fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or discomfort.

Parents must respect the judgment of the teacher and director regarding their child's health and ability to attend school. Please be considerate of the other children, families, and staff who may be affected when your child is feeling unwell.

A child can be re-admitted to school after being on antibiotics for 24 hours, 24 hours after the last time he/she vomited, and after 24 hours of being free of a fever. If the child is still uncomfortable, please allow him/her to stay home until they are feeling better.

## Administering Medication

A child on antibiotics should be kept at home for the length of time recommended by the doctor. Please obtain permission in writing from your doctor prior to returning a child to school who is still taking a prescription medication.

Whenever medication is to be administered by staff at RFK (whether prescription, over-the-counter, or homeopathic), a parent must fill out a Consent to Administer Medication Form in the presence of a staff member. All types of medication must come with a doctor's prescription indicating dosage and frequency. The form will be posted in the classroom, and staff will indicate on the form each time the medication was given.

## In Case of Emergency

You are required to provide an emergency telephone, cellular, or pager number on the sign-in sheet each day your child attends.

In the event of a medical emergency, the parents will be notified, an ambulance will be called, and the child may be transported to Aspen Valley Hospital.

All staff members are trained in first aid and infant/child CPR. An accident report will be filled out by a teacher and sent home with a parent for any incident, whether medical treatment was required or not.

Evacuation notices are posted in each room of the building in case of fire or other disaster. In case of an evacuation, tune to KSPN or KSNO for our location. The fire department schedules fire drills and practices evacuation procedures at least once a year for our building.

## Transportation

The staff conducts occasional field trips and excursions off of school property. Permission to include your child is on the registration agreement. Children not walking but able to sit may be toured around the neighborhood in a buggy, stroller, or wagon. *Children who walk confidently and obey instructions* may visit various places around town with their teacher. Public transportation may be used for swimming, skiing lessons, or to visit local parks. Parents are welcome to chaperone any scheduled field trips.

## Child Abuse

All childcare centers licensed in the state of Colorado are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to Social Services (920-5350) or the police. If your child has any unusual birthmarks or Mongolian Spots, please inform the staff at the time of registration so that it can be noted on the enrollment form.

Anyone attempting to pick up a child when visibly under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to provide an alternate driver before the child is released.

*Thank you for reading this Parent Handbook. We hope you found the information helpful. If you have any questions regarding any of our policies, staff or school as a whole, please feel free to ask the director. We look forward to nurturing and teaching your children.*

*Welcome to the Roaring Fork Kids' family!*