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## Answers to Commonly Asked Questions

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### ***How long is the waitlist? What are my chances of getting my child enrolled?***

The length of the waitlist depends upon the ages of your child. In general, there is a longer wait for infants and toddlers than for preschool age children. Unfortunately we have no way of knowing exactly how long a wait may be because it depends upon a number of different factors. We give priority for enrollment in the following order (by date of application):

1. GeoKids employees
2. USGS employees
3. Siblings
4. Federal employees
5. Non-Federal employees

We send a waitlist update letter to all families each spring. *Please fill it out if you would like to remain on the waitlist. We do remove those people who do not return the update letter.*

### ***What about siblings?***

When your child has been at the center for a minimum of 6 months, your other child(ren) will then receive sibling priority on the waitlist.

### ***Do you provide meals?***

Parents provide each child's lunch. We heat and refrigerate foods in our infant room, but not in other rooms. We provide 2 snacks, morning and afternoon. The snack coordinator purchases snack food weekly following nutritional guidelines. The snack fee is added to your monthly tuition statement.

### ***How is napping handled?***

Naptime is called rest time or down time. For infants, they are on their own napping schedule. When children are old enough, we start to put them on a group rest/nap schedule from about 12:30 or 1:00 to 3:00. For older children or those who do not sleep, they can rest on their mats with books and get up and do quiet alternative choices such as drawing or puzzles.

### ***Do you allow cloth as well as paper diapers?***

At present we find that disposable diapers are the most beneficial in group care due to the need for a healthy and sanitary environment.

### ***How do children move up through the program?***

Children move up through the program as a group. We place children in their age range when they first enter and transition children in August every year to their next classroom. We believe that the cohesiveness of a peer group is very important for continuity care.

***How do I work my co-op requirement?***

During your enrollment process, you will receive a co-op request form. You choose your first, second and third choices and we attempt to match each family to the co-op times they desire. In order to maintain continuity and stability for the children your co-op times are set for the whole year.

***What other obligations do I have as a parent?***

Other parent responsibilities include 16 Fundraising hours, Co-op Training, Health and Safety meeting, Room meetings and two General Membership meetings.

***What are the teacher's credentials and experience?***

The teachers have a variety of educational and practical experiences. Most of our staff has been at GeoKids for one to seven years.

***How do you handle discipline?***

Discipline is handled through limit setting. At GeoKids we see limit setting as part of a larger goal of positively guiding children toward self-direction through an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. We do this by modeling desirable behavior; by listening when children communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. By encouraging children to participate in decision making and conflict resolution at the level they are capable; by explaining why a limit exists; and by encouraging children to participate in everything that concerns them and to do as much as they are capable of doing themselves.

***What about holidays and birthdays?***

In celebrating holidays in the classroom we consider three main points. First, based on our operational vision, the celebration of holidays should be based on what children are able to do and what their interest are. Second, the celebration of any holiday or cultural event should occur in the context of other kinds of activities related to a particular cultural group. Third, holiday celebrations are often a very personal affair for families. In seeking to understand and validate the different families and cultures represented in the classroom, it is important for staff to examine ways to honor each group, not simply a portion of the group in the classroom. Birthday celebrations in school can often be overwhelming for the child. A special healthy treat served during morning or afternoon snack may be adequate.

***Does my child need to be toilet trained? Do you provide training?***

Toilet training is not required before a child enters GeoKids. We work with children on an individual basis as he/she shows readiness.

***What types of activities do you offer? Is my child obligated to participate?***

One day a week, children in our preschool program go to Burgess Park for a gymnastics class. If you choose to have your child participate, there is an extra fee that ranges from \$100 - \$130 for a 9-12 week session. Every Thursday morning, Ana Caminos comes to sing with the children for group music time in each classroom. Your Annual Membership fee of \$80 pays for this activity. At other times during the year, children will venture out on walks and field trips.

***Do you offer Tuition Assistance?***

A Tuition Assistance program is available to eligible families. Applications are accepted twice yearly for September to February and for March to August. Applicants must apply for each award period they would like to be considered for.