



Welcome to our Program!

Thank you for choosing our Program. We will do our best to make your Catalyst Kids experience a meaningful one for your child and family.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Introduction

This handbook has information for parents/guardians* of infants, toddlers, preschool children, and school-age children. Some sections may only apply to families with monthly private fees or to families who receive childcare subsidies through the State of California. When a section or policy applies to a certain group only, it will be specified.

We want you to know that nurturing our relationship with your child and family is of the utmost importance to us. We provide a welcoming place for children and peace of mind for families. Our caring, educated, and trustworthy teachers are your partners, ensuring that your child is safe and has fun in a comfortable, home-like setting where each child can be their best self. We are available for any questions you may have, and we strive to learn about you and your child's strengths, interests, and goals.

In the following pages, you will read about each of the age groups and how our philosophy is demonstrated in the Programs. We have a well-developed philosophy and curricula that support children's individual needs, school readiness, academic development, and personal growth. We understand the experts' theories about how children grow and develop, and we carefully observe what children are interested in and how they develop as individuals.

Catalyst Kids' mission is to provide responsive services for communities, families, and children. We are committed to providing children and families with the highest standard of care and enrichment. We keep abreast of the latest child and youth development research and strive to have excellent Programs.

While these policies may seem overwhelming, we want you to know that we are following an extensive set of requirements established by the state of California for your children's education, health, safety, and well-being.

We adhere to all legislated regulations, including licensure of our facilities, program standards, teacher qualifications, group size, and teacher/child ratios. Though these policies and procedures may set a formal tone in this Handbook, your child's learning, growth, and happiness are the most important things to us. We hope you experience a true partnership with us and your child thrives in our program. Again, if you have any questions, please ask.

Definition:

"Parent" and "Parent/Guardian" for the purpose of this Handbook are defined as a biological parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, foster parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian, domestic partner of the parent (as stated in Family Code, Section 297), or any other adult living with a child who has responsibility for the care and welfare of the child.

Table of Contents

Page

Philosophy & Program Overview

- Philosophy4
- Programs and Curriculum Approaches: Preschool, School-Age, and Infant/Toddler.....4
- Staff Development and Quality Improvement5
- **Technology Use Policy**

Creating a Healthy Environment

- Physical Activity & Wellness9
- Health9
- Safety12

Parents/Guardians as Partners

- Parent/Guardian/Center Communication14
- Volunteering 15
- Supporting Catalyst15
- Assessments & Parent/Guardian Conferences15-16
- Child Guidance Policy16
- General Information: Child Information, Center Traditions & Celebrations, Non-Religious & Non-Discrimination Education, Parent's/Guardian's Concerns or Complaints - Center Protocol20

Administration Policies

- Admission & Orientation21
- Enrollment22
- Attendance23
- Code of Conduct: Our Guiding Principles24
- Personal Rights: Child's Rights & Parent's/Guardian's Rights25

Families With Private Fees – For Your Information ONLY

- Fees & Other Information27

Families With State-Funded Childcare – For Your Information ONLY (Important Information for Our Families Receiving State-Funded Care ONLY)

- Eligibility30
- Continued Eligibility31
- Enrollment & Attendance32

Catalyst Kids Office Locations & Contact Information39

Licensing Agency - Center Visitation

- Admission Agreement - Community Care Licensing40

Complaint Policy & Procedures

- Uniform Complaint Policy – Catalyst Kids41
- Uniform Complaint Procedures (External & Internal)42

Family Handbook Receipt43

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org



Philosophy & Program Overview

Catalyst Kids Philosophy

At Catalyst Kids our infant through school-age programs are built on the following beliefs:

All children are competent and capable learners. Each child is encouraged to imagine, learn, and grow through hands-on, active experiences. Through this discovery, children develop deeper connections to their families and community, which creates a foundation for learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable and responsive staff believe learning happens best through authentic and positive relationships with children. We guide children's development based on their interests, strengths, and group experiences where they can creatively explore and discover together.

Trusting relationships between our families and staff are the cornerstone of our Program. Together we promote a safe and nurturing environment that supports each child's emerging abilities and sense of self.

Reciprocal relationships with community-based organizations and school districts result in cohesive services for children and families. We work together to identify the goals and needs of the community and strive to provide optimal support.

Program and Curriculum Influences: All Programs

- **Reggio Emilia**—The city of Reggio Emilia, Italy's early childhood practices have influenced our Programs and curriculum at Catalyst. While the model programs in Italy cannot be duplicated in the United States, many of their concepts align with our philosophy. In Reggio Emilia, Italy, people believe that children are competent; teachers are facilitators; parents and the community are essential partners; environments should be enriched to enhance learning; and that documenting children's work is important. These concepts are all ones our agency embraces and practices at all our sites.
- **California Department of Education/Department of Social Services**—At Catalyst, we align our practices with these agencies' guidelines regarding observation-based assessments, environments, Frameworks and Foundations, Multilingual Language Learners, cultural/diversity awareness, and Inclusion of Children with Disabilities.
- **Developmental Theories**
 - Constructivist Theory—This educational theory recognizes that children's knowledge is built on what they already know and understand.
 - Observational Learning Theory—This educational theory recognizes that children learn through observing and imitating others.
 - Ecological Systems—This framework recognizes that children's relationships within their families, communities, and society have a profound effect on them.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Staff Development and Quality Improvement

Catalyst Kids holds professional development at its core. After hiring staff, we provide comprehensive training on topics including health and safety procedures, program curriculum, and program delivery. Our Education Team provides ongoing and in-depth professional development training for all staff, which is offered throughout the year, including problem-solving/behavior guidance, adult/child interactions, and child and youth development. The opportunities for formal learning begin with a new employee orientation focusing on program overview, philosophy, values, and beliefs.

Catalyst Kids holds continual program quality improvement and evaluation as a foundational pillar for program quality. We see continual program quality improvement as an ongoing four-step cycle of plan, execute, reflect, and adjust. This process helps program staff intentionally and continually improve their practices.

Preschool Program

The Catalyst Preschool Program is inspired by the HighScope Framework. We see great value in children's engagement with materials, activities, and interactions as ways that encourage and challenge what they are observing and thinking. Activities are both child-guided (built on children's natural curiosity) and adult-guided (introducing new ideas and skills as appropriate for their age group and as children are interested and ready). HighScope calls this **active participatory learning** – a process in which children and teachers are partners in shaping the learning experience.

The HighScope Preschool curriculum is a **well-researched**, early-learning curriculum model widely used in the United States and abroad. It fosters prediction, analytical, and problem-solving skills, which have been shown to give children a better chance of succeeding in school and beyond. (*For more information on the HighScope Preschool curriculum, see the HighScope Perry Preschool Study at <https://highscope.org/perrypreschoolstudy>.)

In our preschool/pre-kindergarten **school readiness** curriculum, we are building the foundation for lifelong learning. Children's cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development aligns with California P-12 standards: language arts, math, science, social science, and the arts. (For more information on the California Department of Education, Pre-Kindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines, see <https://www.cde.ca.gov>.)

Our preschool daily routine offers children stability, predictability, and the opportunity for independence. The components that support this age group include:

- Meeting/Greeting Time: An important transition from home to school.
- Plan-Do-Review: During planning and review, children use their emerging language skills to indicate the details of their intended work schedule and reflect on the experience.
- Small Group: Consists of groups of eight to 10 children. Children participate in a minimum of two Catalyst Kids' *Pathways to Literacy* curriculum activities and two math activities each week during small groups.
- Supplemental Small Groups/Learning staff plans additional events and activities that support children's other learning domains and incorporate their emerging interests and natural abilities.
- Full-Day Programs: Children rest or nap after lunch. (Your child's individual needs will be discussed with you.) Children engage in an additional small group or plan-do-review session after nap.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

School Age Program: Before & After School

Our **Child and Youth Development Program** for transitional kindergarten through eighth grade (depending on location) supports and fosters the positive development of young people. This approach encourages youth to build relationships, set goals, make decisions, develop skills, and practice leadership and life skills in a participatory environment. The Program uses the **Search Institute's Developmental Assets and Relationships Frameworks** to support opportunities and relationships young people need across all aspects of their lives. In our Program, we actively cultivate a relationally rich community where you will see our staff expressing care, challenging growth, providing support, sharing power, and expanding possibilities to support each young person to thrive.

This Program is based on the **interests and abilities** of each young person and has an intentional curriculum. To ensure balance, we provide a daily schedule with opportunities for homework, recreation, and pursuing individual ideas. Our Program also reflects the **partnership** between the center, families, the school, the school district, and the community. While each school-age program is unique to the school and community it serves, in this Program, you will see:

- Teaching staff that supports the academic, youth development, and recreational needs of school-age children.
- School-day learning is supported daily through hands-on enrichment activities that blend academics, enrichment, and youth development.
- A daily schedule that includes dedicated time for homework, recreation, fitness, and personal development based on the interests of the children.
- Teachers and young people who co-create and collaborate on activities and clubs emphasizing the arts, engineering, music, cooking, sports, science, community service, fitness, technology, and leadership.
- An understanding that relationships and relational practices may be expressed in many ways based on the individual, community, culture, and other differences.
- A home-like center environment, rich in experience and discovery, and with a touch of whimsy, to represent the young people in the program and community.
- A variety of opportunities for young people to practice twenty-first century life skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.
- A focused program for children in transitional kindergarten and kindergarten that includes programming in all developmental domains using our Catalyst Kids Learning Through Literacy Curriculum.

School Age Program: Camp

Our School-Age Camp Program occurs on days and weeks when school is not in session. During school breaks, our schedule transitions to a full-day camp schedule, which allows young people to use the additional time in our Program to expand their creativity, be more active, and expand their comfort zone in a fun and dependable environment.

While at camp, young people become “campers” and participate in a wealth of diverse, creative, and challenging experiences, while developing various competencies and a positive identity. Our goal is to end each camp day with our campers excitedly anticipating their next camp experience.

During school breaks, this Program transitions into a fun, energetic, and even silly camp culture. Our camp culture values creating a community where every camper feels valued, needed, and important. Everyone is respected for what they individually bring to the camp community. Creating a community experience is the most powerful part of camp.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

School Age Program: Teaching Staff

- Teaching staff facilitate relationship-building through active participation and side-by-side play. They actively participate in all aspects of camp, embodying the camp's culture and transforming the center into a place of exploration and adventure. Leaders transition effortlessly through role model, follower, guide, and friend roles.
- They hold the safety of each camper close to their hearts. They establish supportive and caring boundaries and expectations. They are experts in standard health and safety procedures and have keen observation skills. They create an inclusive community defined by a strong sense of belonging.
- They bring their talents, interests, and upbeat personalities to camp. They share their knowledge and passion with the campers, empowering them to grow. They adapt the Program to meet the needs of their group, creating an inclusive environment that promotes success.

Infant-Toddler Program

Our **Infant/Toddler Program** implements the philosophical practices of WestEd's *Program for Infant/Toddler Care* (PITC). The influences that we adopt from PITC provide us with a framework of quality care that is based on sound child development and family research. PITC incorporates relationship-based care, continuity of care, and primary caregiving practices for every child, which leads to the following working philosophy:

- Families are care partners.
- Young children are unique individuals with varying temperaments, rates of development, and interests.
- Young children are curious, motivated learners who depend on adults for nurturing (support) and guidance. They need to be both respected as learners and protected in their vulnerability. Therefore, planning for a child's care in the Program is a shared experience that includes families and program staff and is individualized for each child.
- Responsive Caregiving: All of our caregivers respond to each child's individual needs for feeding, changing, sleeping, playing, and nurturing.

Infant Needs, Services, and Feeding Plans

Together, parents/guardians and center caregivers develop individualized plans for each child. The information parents/guardians provide regarding their infant's needs, services, and feeding plans will assist our center staff in determining each child's specific needs. Parents/guardians will select the recommended infant meal patterns, identify feeding methods and special instructions, and detail the child's likes and dislikes, sleeping patterns, toilet training plan, etc.

Activities and Napping

The center provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities to meet the needs of the children in care, including quiet and active play, as well as **relaxation**. Infants and toddlers are given various opportunities to explore their environment daily in a safe and attentive atmosphere.

Napping infants and toddlers are visually checked and documented at least every 15 minutes.

All infants and young toddlers can rest or nap following their schedule.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Technology Use Policy

We recognize that technology and media are part of everyday life. Our programs aim to create engaging, developmentally appropriate environments where children are focused on hands-on activities, peer connection, and exploration. To support this goal and maintain a safe, inclusive space for all participants, the following guidelines apply:

PERSONAL DEVICES (PHONES, SMARTWATCHES, TABLETS, ETC.)

Personal devices should remain stored in backpacks or designated areas during program hours. This helps children stay fully present and engage in the activities and curriculum.

Smartwatches may be worn but should not be used to make calls, send messages, or record audio/video while in program. Staff may ask children to store their smartwatches with other personal items if they become a distraction or are used inappropriately. If a child or parent/guardian needs to make contact, staff will support appropriate communication. As part of our open-door policy, parents/guardians are welcome to call the center's phone to check in on their child. Families are provided with the center's direct phone number upon enrollment for use in emergencies. While we understand some families use location tracking for safety, out of respect for the privacy of all children and staff, devices with live communication or recording capabilities should not be used during program hours.

PERSONAL HOTSPOTS AND INTERNET ACCESS

Children may not use personal hotspots or mobile networks during program time.

Catalyst Wi-Fi networks include safety filters and protections to prevent access to inappropriate or explicit content. Personal internet access bypasses these protections and makes it difficult for staff to monitor online activity.

TECHNOLOGY IN PROGRAM

Technology may be used during designated program hours in intentional, developmentally appropriate ways to support learning, creativity, and social-emotional growth. It is never used as a reward or punishment and is just one of many tools used to enhance curriculum.

Screen time is age-appropriate, limited, and aligned with guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

PRIVACY AND MEDIA

Personal devices may not be used to take photos, record audio, or video while in program.

Any photos or video taken by staff are used only for internal documentation and assessment, with proper permissions in place. By enrolling in our program, families agree to support these expectations to ensure a safe, respectful, and enriching environment for all children.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children may bring personal devices to the program at their own risk. Staff are not responsible for storing or monitoring these items, and the program is not liable for any loss, theft, or damage that may occur.

USE VIOLATIONS AND PROGRAM RESPONSE

If a child uses a personal device during program hours in a way that causes disruption, violates privacy, or goes against this policy, staff may ask the child to store the device or may temporarily confiscate it. In some cases, the device may be held until a parent/guardian can be contacted to discuss the situation. Repeated or serious violations may result in further action, up to and including restriction of device use at program, suspension, or disenrollment, depending on the nature and impact of the behavior.

Creating A Healthy Environment

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Healthy Eating

(We understand the importance of prioritizing access to nutritious, balanced meals that support your child's growth, development, and well-being. Our staff creates an environment where children can learn about healthy food choices and how to form positive eating habits.

At Catalyst, we embrace allowing children to develop self-help skills and independence to make their own healthy choices. In line with the United States Department of Agriculture's MyPlate Guidelines, our meals include a variety of components from all the essential food groups to promote balanced nutrition.

In our efforts to collaborate with families to support your child in developing a safe and positive relationship with food, we ask that you follow and adhere to the following guidelines:

Special Events and Celebrations: Food brought for sharing must be pre-packaged and store-bought.

Home-Packaged Meals: Pack healthy meals for your child whenever possible. *If assistance is needed, please feel free to reach out to your Center Leader.*

Sharing Food: For the safety of all children, we kindly ask that children refrain from sharing food with others.

If your child has any food allergies, dietary preferences, or special dietary needs, please inform your Center Leader so that we can obtain the necessary documentation and ensure appropriate accommodation.

Life-threatening food allergies (*Anaphylaxis*): All dietary food allergies will require medical documentation. If your child has a life-threatening food allergy, please inform your Center Leader. For the safety of all individuals, if a **life-threatening** food allergy is identified at your child's site, you will be notified and the corresponding food item will **not** be permitted on site.

Dietary Preferences: If your child has specific food preferences, we are happy to store items at the site (*based on site storage capacity*), provided those items are supplied by the family. Please speak to your Center Leader for guidance.

Depending on your child's school district, the school district may provide the food to the Program.

Special Dietary Needs

All special dietary needs will require medical documentation for any accommodation. Please speak to your Center Leader for guidance.

Physical Activity & Wellness

At Catalyst Kids, we believe every child should have the opportunity to engage in a diverse range of physical activity each day. Physical activity is promoted through scheduled active playtime. With a wide variety of play equipment available, children are provided with appropriate indoor and outdoor spaces that encourage large muscle activities, enhance the development of motor skills, and nurture overall health. These activities also promote important social skills, such as teamwork and communication, fostering both physical and interpersonal growth.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Daily schedules include both structured (*teacher-guided*) and unstructured (*child-guided*) time depending on program type:

- **Half-Day Programs** - 30 minutes cumulative
- **Full-Day Programs** - 60 minutes cumulative
- **Before & After School Program 30Fit** - 30 minutes cumulative

During a structured activity, staff establish designated times and spaces for active play, modeling healthy behaviors by actively participating with the children. In unstructured play, children have the opportunity to explore their creativity, use their imagination, and engage in self-directed activities that encourage problem-solving and innovation.

Our school-age children participate in the 30Fit program, which offers 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity as part of our Before & After School Program. This initiative is designed to keep children active, healthy, and engaged throughout the day. Through active play, we help children develop physically and foster a lifelong appreciation for health, while encouraging self-expression, social connections, and independence.

Health

Catalyst Kids maintains a healthful environment for children and staff by meeting and/or exceeding the required Community Care Licensing, County Health Department, and Cal/OSHA standards. Established procedures must be followed to protect everyone from the spread of disease. In the event of an outbreak, additional procedures and guidance will be communicated. Staff and parent/guardian education are an important part of Catalyst Kids' goal of providing a healthy environment.

Immunizations/Physical Exams/TB Tests

Children enrolled in our Infant/Toddler and Preschool Programs must be up to date with immunizations required by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) before their first day of attendance.

Completing a Physical Exam and TB Risk Assessment no more than one year prior to enrollment is required. Both must be submitted within 30 days of enrolling in our Infant/Toddler and Preschool Programs. If identified to be at risk for TB, the outcome of the TB skin test must be documented by the physician. A chest x-ray is required for all positive TB skin test results.

Daily Health Check

Our commitment is to encourage a healthy environment. All children in attendance must be healthy enough to participate in all of the Program's activities.

To limit the spread of illness, upon arrival each day, every child's health status will be checked informally. This health check is casually conducted by staff and includes checking for any signs of injury or illness such as a cough, fever, rashes, or signs of fatigue.

Children may not be admitted if they show signs of illness or injury that significantly limit their ability to participate in the program.

. Parents/guardians dropping off children should remain at the center until the health check is completed. If the child arrives directly from school and is ill or becomes ill during the day and is not able to participate, they will be isolated and parents/guardians or other authorized persons will be called to pick up the child within one (1) hour.

Illness

If your child is ill and will not be attending the Program, please follow these guidelines:

- Notify the center if your child is ill and let us know the reason for each day your child is absent. If your child has a communicable disease (such as strep throat, fifth disease, lice, or impetigo), we must post exposure notices. Your child will not be identified.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- Some illnesses will require a written physician's release for your child to return to the Program. These illnesses could include giardia or strep infections or others deemed necessary by Catalyst Kids' Center Leader.
- Children who have been absent with a fever and other contagious illnesses will be excluded from the Program until: (1) the child experiences a normal temperature the night before through the morning of without the use of fever-reducing medication(s); and (2) symptoms of the contagious illness are minor and improving.
- Children who have been diagnosed with streptococcal infections will be excluded from the Program for 48 hours after the initial dose of a physician-prescribed medication.
- Catalyst Kids may require a physician's written release or physician's written instructions regarding a child's medication, care, or health condition at any time.
- If a child becomes ill at the center, parents/guardians will be notified immediately, and the child will rest supervised by a familiar adult in a comfortable, isolated, quiet area until the parent/guardian arrives to pick up the child within one (1) hour.
- In situations that pose a greater risk to the school or community, the County Health Department will be notified, and Catalyst Kids will take direction from their health officials.

Allergies

Catalyst Kids is committed to accommodating children with moderate and life-threatening allergies. Catalyst Kids has an allergy policy in place to provide guidance and support for your child's requirements, so please alert staff regarding your child's accommodation needs. Additionally, Catalyst Kids' Center staff are available to help support this process and work together to ensure your child's safety.

Medication and Other Health Needs

It is preferred that a child receives medication at home. Please remind your medical provider that your child attends a licensed childcare center and ask for medication to be scheduled to be given at home. Children may not attend if medication is not present, and the necessary forms are not completed.

If this is not possible, please follow the procedures listed below for your child to receive medication at a Catalyst Kids center:

Prescription Medication

- A **Medication Administration Release Form** must be obtained from the center and completed by the parent/guardian and the Center Leader.
- All prescription medications must be current and have a clear, readable, original prescription label from a pharmacy showing the child's name, medication, dosage, frequency of administration, beginning and ending dates of administration, and expiration date. The prescription must be in English.
- Before a child with asthma attends the Program, an asthma action plan signed by the physician is required. Inhalers must be on-site at all times when the child is present.
- Special procedures are in place for administering medications that are classified as controlled substances, such as medication commonly used to treat Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Over the Counter Medication

- All over-the-counter medications require the physician or pediatric health care practitioner to complete and sign the **Medication Administration Release Form**. The parent's/guardian's signature is also required.
- All over-the-counter medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- The physician or medical provider may write a note instead of completing the **Medication Authorization Release Form** as long as the parent/guardian signs the bottom of the release form and the medical provider's note contains all the following information in English:
 - Child's full name
 - Start and end dates, if applicable
 - Medication name
 - Physician's signature
 - Times to be given
 - Dosage to be given

Epinephrine Products

An Anaphylaxis Action Plan signed by the physician is required before a child with a life-threatening allergy can attend the Program. An EpiPen® (or Avi-Q) or Epinephrine nasal spray must be on-site at all times when the child is present. It is recommended that two Epinephrine products always be on-site in case one Epinephrine malfunctions. To ensure all staff are aware of a child's life-threatening allergy, an Allergy Posting form with the child's picture is posted in the kitchen area and classroom if the parent/guardian provides written consent to do so.

Seizure Disorder

A Seizure Action Plan completed by the child's physician is required for children diagnosed with a seizure disorder before attending the Program. When Diastat (or other emergency medication) is prescribed for prolonged seizures, the physician must complete page 2 of the Seizure Action Plan that designates who will train center staff in administering the medication.

Type I & II Diabetes

The Center Leader will provide the parent/guardian with all the required forms that must be completed by the parent/guardian and the physician to accommodate your child with Type I or II Diabetes. After all required forms are submitted and center staff is trained in managing Type I and II Diabetes, your child can begin attending the Program. For more details on our Type I or II Diabetes enrollment requirements, ask the Center Leader for a copy of our Incidental Medical Services plan.

G-Tubes

G-Tube feeding and/or delivery of medication is determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the staffing pattern at the center. For more details on our G-Tube enrollment requirements, ask the Center Leader for a copy of our Incidental Medical Services plan

Medication and School-Age Children

Although California state law permits school-age children to carry certain medications such as asthma inhalers and Epinephrine products while attending public school, the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division prohibits these same children from carrying any type of medication while receiving care from a licensed childcare facility. To comply with CCL, the following policy must be followed at each center:

- Whenever your child needs to carry a medication while attending public school, please meet with your Center Leader to discuss the daily transfer of medication from your child to the teacher. These medications will be stored in our locked medication boxes and released only to a parent/guardian. You will also need to complete the **Medication Administration Release Form** according to the instruction above before medication can be administered.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- Medication will not be accepted or allowed to remain in the center **unless** your child needs the medication during center hours and the required authorization forms are completed beforehand.

Injuries

Children have accidents even with the best supervision. If while attending Catalyst Kids a child has a minor injury during the day, an Injury & First Aid Report will be provided. The report will provide information such as the time, what happened, and any treatment given. If the injury involves the head, the parent/guardian will be called regardless of the severity of the injury.

If a more serious injury occurs, Catalyst Kids will initiate our triage procedures that start with center staff. A staff member who is certified in CPR/First Aid is always on duty at each center all day. Staff will determine the severity of the child's injuries and, as appropriate, will contact the parents/guardians, the emergency contact listed on the Emergency Card and Release Form, 911, Catalyst Kids management, and/or Catalyst Kids Center Leaders. Staff must first tend to the child's medical needs. Staff cannot transport children for medical treatment. If no authorized person is available and medical treatment is needed, an ambulance will be called. Children must have an Emergency Card and Release Form on file at all times. The Emergency Card and Release Form contains consent for medical and/or dental treatment in your absence. Emergency cards must be updated annually.

Please note: All information on the Emergency Cards and Release Forms must be accurate and current.

Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning is a serious health concern, especially for children. Protecting children from exposure is important. At Catalyst, faucets in our facilities used for preparing food and drinking have been tested. Information on Lead Poisoning can be found by clicking this link:

[Lead Poisoning Information.](#)

Safety

Safety is foremost at Catalyst Kids centers. Our staff receives safety training and follows all local, state, and federal regulations. While in our care, children are to remain within sight of staff at all times. The following are some important steps parents/guardians can take to ensure safety at the center:

- All methods of smoking are prohibited anywhere in or near a center.
- While dropping off or picking up your child:
 - Do not leave a child in your vehicle without an adult in the car.
 - Do not leave the engine running in any vehicle when the driver is not in the vehicle.
 - Do not leave animals in your vehicle on hot days.
 - Follow California Child Passenger Safety laws by properly securing your child in an appropriate child passenger restraint system.
- If your child attends a School-Age Program and does not arrive at the center after school and we have not been notified of the child's planned absence, we will initiate our missing child procedures. These procedures may include calling the police.
- Children may not bring anything to Catalyst Kids that may be considered a weapon or pose a threat to others at the center.
- Emergency Cards and Release Forms must be updated at least annually and each time a change has occurred that has affected the information on the emergency card. Consent for medical treatment must also be updated annually.

Disaster/Emergency Plan

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

A disaster or emergency could include an earthquake, severe weather, lockdown, or a loss of utility services at a center that may prevent you from picking up your child. Catalyst Kids Center staff is trained in disaster/emergency preparedness. Written procedures are posted at each center.

Please note: In the event of an emergency or disaster, the following procedures will be implemented:

Please do not telephone the center. The telephone will be used for outgoing emergency calls only.

- Children will remain with the center staff members on the premises or at the designated emergency evacuation site unless an injury requires release to an emergency medical facility. Signs will be posted at centers giving the destination of evacuated children.
- Appropriate news media will be informed of the evacuation so information can be broadcast and printed.
- There will be a specific area for reuniting and signing out children at the evacuation site. Only adults previously authorized on the Emergency Cards and Release Forms will be able to sign out children.

Please note: In rare instances, you may be called to pick up your child early, due to circumstances beyond our control at the center (for example, lack of utilities).

Parents/Guardians as Partners

Parent/Guardian and Center Communications

At Catalyst Kids, we believe that open communication is key to ensuring a positive and successful experience for your child. We highly value your feedback, suggestions, and concerns, and we encourage you to engage with the many communication channels we have in place.

We have an open-door policy and invite parents/guardians to visit at any time, to engage with staff, and so the parent/guardian can interact with their own child(ren). Maintaining a reciprocal, two-way communication process is essential for us to continue providing the best possible services.

As partners in your child's development, our staff are deeply invested in your child's health, well-being, and overall experience. If there are any changes in your family's circumstances—such as health, housing, employment, or other factors—that may impact your family, please share this information with us. Keeping us informed allows us to offer the most supportive care and resources and respond to your child's evolving needs.

We welcome your comments and suggestions and are here to support you and your child. To facilitate meaningful conversations, we kindly ask that you schedule an appointment in advance. The appointment ensures we can dedicate the time necessary to address your child's specific needs or concerns. Please consult with the Center Leader to arrange a convenient time for a meeting. We are committed to maintaining professionalism and confidentiality in all our communications.

Parent/Guardian Information Area

This area provides important updates, including community resources, menus, program schedules, opportunities for family education, and general announcements. We encourage you to check it daily for any new notices or relevant information.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Together, we can create a nurturing and enriching environment for your child.

Parent/Guardian Engagement

At Catalyst Kids, we believe that parent and guardian involvement is key to providing the best possible experience for children. We value open communication and encourage parents and guardians to actively engage in their child's daily activities whenever possible. To further strengthen our partnership with families, we offer parent/guardian meetings, workshops, and special family events throughout the year.

For centers located on school campuses, we may also host Open Houses and other events in collaboration with the school. We welcome you to reach out to our staff to learn about additional ways to participate and stay connected with your child's program. Your involvement is key to the success of our Programs, and we are excited to work together to support your child's growth and development.

Parent/Guardian Advisory Committee

Many of our centers have a Parent/Guardian Advisory Committee (PAC), and we warmly invite you to consider joining! The PAC plays an important role in supporting the development of our Programs and enhancing parent/guardian involvement. Volunteers on the PAC offer valuable recommendations, provide feedback, and contribute to the process of innovation and problem-

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

solving, aimed at helping our center meet the needs of the families. If you are interested in learning more about how you can be part of this meaningful committee, please reach out to the Center Leader.

Other ways to volunteer

There are many meaningful ways you can support Catalyst Kids. Whether you have a few hours to spare or are looking for a more involved role, in-person or virtual, we can find the perfect opportunity for you. You can contribute by helping with events, assisting with administrative tasks, volunteering at your local center, or sharing your professional expertise through speaking engagements, networking opportunities, and more.

Please note that in-person volunteer requests are subject to review and approval. Contact us for more information about volunteer opportunities and requirements.

If you are interested in learning more about ways to become involved, feel free to reach out to us at giving@catalystfamily.org. We appreciate your support and look forward to exploring how you can make a difference!

Family Announcement Approvals

Any communication, including flyers, letters, and announcements that parents/guardians wish to distribute to the center's families or staff, must be approved by the Catalyst Kids/Catalyst Family Inc. before distribution at the center.

Assessments and Parent/Guardian Conferences

Individual Assessments

We have adopted two authentic assessment tools to track the growth and development of children enrolled in our Programs:

- 1) A majority of our Infant/Toddler, Preschool, and School-Age Programs utilize the **Desired Results system**, sponsored by the California Department of Education and California Department of Social Services to document the progress made by children and families enrolled in our Programs. The system is designed to provide information to help improve the Programs and services we offer.

Catalyst uses the Environmental Rating Scale, DRDP Parent Survey, Desired Results Summary of Findings Annual Program Assessment, and CLASS. Catalyst centers complete the Parent Survey and Summary of Findings annually and the Environmental Rating Scale semi-annually.

Desired Results encompasses authentic assessment through observation of children, parent/guardian input, and evaluation of Catalyst Kids environments in the following categories:

- Children are personally and socially competent.
- Children are effective learners.
- Children show physical and motor competence.
- Children are safe and healthy.
- Families support their children's learning and development.
- Families achieve their goals.

- 2) In addition to Desired Results, in some locations, we have adopted the **DESSA Mini** (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment-Mini) to support the social-emotional development of our school-age children and middle school students.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Parent/Guardian/Family Conferences

We are interested in regular and ongoing communication with you about your child's development. The Program schedules family conferences twice each year, but conferences may be scheduled as often as needed to discuss your child's progress. Conferences provide an opportunity for you, the center staff, and/or the Center Leader to share observations and discuss your child's growth, participation, and interests. Children have an opportunity to share their learning and development with you through their portfolios, which includes observations, work samples, and photos.

Child Guidance Policy

We believe children are capable and competent individuals who possess the ability to achieve success within our Programs. Our Programs and policies are designed to promote the development of self-regulation, self-direction, and socially acceptable behavior. Additionally, the health, safety, and overall well-being of all of the children within our Programs are paramount. The California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division requires us to protect the safety and rights of all children at the center.

Our teaching staff plays a key role in attaining these goals. Our staff uses these strategies when working with your children:

- Build positive relationships.
- Respectfully speak with children and families.
- Continually encourage and empower.
- Be sensitive to children's feelings, needs, culture, ability, and situation.
- Consistency and follow through.
- Model and acknowledge positive, pro-social behaviors.
- Use positive reinforcement.
- Develop center expectations and living agreements in partnership with children.
- Interact individually with children and support problem-solving when appropriate.
- Engage children in the problem-solving process (as appropriate).
- Communicate daily with parents/guardian.
- Use natural and logical consequences (when appropriate).
- Partner with elementary school (for school-age children).
- Develop positive behavior and support plans with parents/guardians and child as needed.

It is our goal to help each child make appropriate behavioral choices. To support this important developmental process, we help children learn to identify, regulate, and express their feelings and needs, listen to others, and resolve conflicts. Our group care environments provide numerous experiences and opportunities for children to develop these critical life skills.

We believe that a child's behavior is a form of communication, so we seek to understand what children are trying to tell us. We encourage children to express their feelings and needs in a healthy and safe manner.

Catalyst Kids Positive Behavior Support Plan

Because we view challenging behavior as communication and see it as an opportunity to teach and learn, this Positive Behavior Support Plan outlines important steps we take to support the child, family, and Program. If typical supportive practices do not resolve behaviors, the center team may decide to initiate the following:

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Gather and analyze the contributing factors.

Challenging behaviors can be triggered by a variety of stress factors. These include developmental, environmental, social, and physical sources. Researching and recording this information helps to understand the child in the context of home and center. Behavior Observation Reports will be collected. Due to the confidential nature of this material, these forms are for center use only. The information is analyzed to determine whether modifications to the center environment, daily routine, curriculum, or interactions will remedy the situation, or if the Center Leader, teachers, and family should also meet to share and evaluate their findings.

During this time, center staff collect documentation that includes the following:

- Time of day and segment of the daily routine.
- Group size and adult/child ratio.
- Where conflicts typically occur.
- Who else was involved.
- What was available for the child to do.

Communicate regularly with the family to discuss the following:

- Changes in school or center environment, friendships, mental and physical health, family structure, and home life.
- The child's history, gifts, strengths, talents, and abilities.
- The child's needs and the family's goals for the child.
- Patterns such as repeated behaviors, consistent times of day, situations that trigger challenging behaviors, etc.
- Brainstorming possible home/school/center preventive strategies.
- Brainstorming family strengths that could contribute to the child's success.

Create a Positive Behavior Support Plan

If the challenging behavior continues after documenting and strategizing with the family, a Positive Behavior Support Plan is created. This Plan is developed at a meeting with the staff and family and reflects mutually agreed-upon strategies for all participants. The action plan will be documented on the Positive Behavior Support Plan Form.

Explore Community Resources

To further support the child, family, and staff the plan will include exploring community resources both formal and informal. Some examples are:

- Family physician.
- Public school support services.
- Mental health professionals.
- Clubs and organizations.
- Catalyst Kids support services.
- Local resource and referral agencies.
- Support from relatives/neighbors.
- Support from the family-identified community supports
- Support from community groups (for example, Girl/Boy Scouts, Camp Fire, 4-H).
- Education opportunities such as classes, webinars, workshops, etc.

Serious and Persistent Behaviors

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Serious, persistent behavior is defined as persistent, consistent behavior that interferes with the health and/or safety of themselves, other children, or staff. The following are examples of serious, persistent behaviors:

- Excessive disruption of the program.
- Endangering the health or safety of children, themselves, staff, or other adults.
- Continual refusal to follow acceptable rules of behavior.
- Use of inappropriate language.
- Consistent inappropriate use of technology, including personal devices.
- Leaving the center premises without permission.
- Theft or damage of center property.
- Possession of any objects that may be harmful to themselves or others.
- Not adhering to school campus guidelines.

If a child continues to engage in any of the above-mentioned behaviors, the following steps will be taken and may involve the elementary school (for school age children):

- Alternative behaviors are discussed with the child.
- Parent/guardian-Center Leader conference will be held. The Regional Director will be notified for support and potential program accommodations will be discussed. A Positive Behavior Plan may be developed in partnership with the parents/guardians to support the improvement of the child's behavior. (For school-age children, the elementary school may be included in Plan development, based on behavior.)
- The parent's/guardian's or the child's failure to comply with the above-listed policies may result in disenrollment from the Program.

If a child engages in serious and persistent behaviors that significantly interfere with the learning of others, are not responsive to guidance, and/or are physically aggressive, destroy property, or cause self-injury without limiting the child's full participation in the Program, a suspension may be deemed necessary. The Program will:

- If a Positive Behavior Support Plan is not already in place, the center will initiate and develop one.
- Give a written notice of action to the parent/guardian.
- Provide referrals to appropriate community resources.
- Develop a written plan to support the child's return to the Program.
- Seek additional consultation.
- Provide the parent/guardian with the appeal process within 14 days of the suspension.

It is important to note that the child may not attend the Program during the appeal process because the suspension involves severe and persistent behaviors that impact the safety of children.

If a child continues to engage in serious and persistent behaviors that significantly interfere with the learning of others, are not responsive to guidance, and/or are physically aggressive, destroy property, or cause self-injury and cannot be reduced or eliminated without limiting the child's full participation in the Program, an expulsion may be deemed necessary. The Program will:

- Provide documentation including details related to persistent and severe behaviors.
- Seek additional consultation.
- Consider additional developmental screening.
- Give a written notice of action to the parent/guardian.
- Provide additional resources and support to transition the child to a more appropriate placement. The Program will complete this process within 180 days.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- Provide the parent/guardian with the appeal process within 14 days of the expulsion.

It is important to note that the child may not attend the Program during the appeal process because the expulsion involves persistent and serious behaviors that impact the safety of children.

Please note: If a school-age child is **suspended or expelled from the elementary school**, he/she will also be immediately suspended or expelled from the Catalyst Kids Program for the same period. Parents/guardians will be required to pick their child up from the elementary school when the school-day is completed.

- If at any time during the course of the Plan, a child endangers the safety of himself/herself or others, the Center Leader will suspend the child with the approval of the Regional Director. A meeting with the staff and family must be held to agree on a specific course of action to prevent the problem from reoccurring before the child can return to the Program.
- When all reasonable resources have been exhausted, disenrollment from the Program may result (after the Approval Process for disenrollment is completed).

General Information

Child Information

- **Child's Personal Space (cubbies, files, etc.)**

Please check your child's personal space (that is, cubbies, lockers, and/or files) in the classroom daily for any treasures that are ready to go home. Use of your child's personal space is an important part of connecting our families to your child's development and center experience. We also ask that your child's space be cleaned out weekly and everything be taken home.

- **Dress for Comfort & Activities**

Children may be involved in activities that require ease of movement. Please have your child wear comfortable clothes and closed-toe shoes. A back strap is required if sandals are worn. Other activities may be messy such as painting, gardening, or cooking. You may want to keep a change of clothes for your child at the center. All items, including jackets, should be clearly labeled with your child's name. If appropriate, your child can bring a special blanket or naptime cuddle toy for naptime.

- **Personal Belongings**

Catalyst Kids is not responsible for any toy, book, record, jewelry, money, electronics, or other personal belongings brought to the center; this includes clothing items. Please have your child leave all valuables at home.

Center Traditions & Events

We are dedicated to fostering environments where every child, family, and staff member feels valued and included. We are committed to understanding and celebrating the home languages, cultural heritages, unique abilities, social identities, contexts, and experiences within the communities we serve. We believe in collaborative decision-making with families to ensure that every child feels a sense of belonging in our Programs. Therefore, our center staff will:

- Learn about families' interests, traditions, special days/events, and experiences.
- Represent children and families' diverse backgrounds within the classroom environment.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- Plan and make decisions about inclusive center events that represent the diversity of their community.
- Collaborate with families in planning for and implementing center events.

Non-Discrimination and Non-Religious Education

We believe that it is not only our similarities but also our differences that help us build a **community of respect** within each child development center. At Catalyst, we strive to be inclusive, respecting each other's worth and uniqueness. We strive to understand each other within the context of family, culture, and individuality. Our Programs are based on interconnected relationships between and among families, children, staff, and the community.

Our Programs do not discriminate based on sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group, identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, in determining which children are served. Catalyst Kids:

- Welcomes the enrollment of children with disabilities.
- Understands the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act to make reasonable accommodations for such children.
- Implements these accommodations.
- Refrains from religious curriculum or worship of any kind.

Parent/Guardian Concerns or Complaints – Center Protocol

The parent's/guardian's concerns or complaints should be addressed immediately to the appropriate staff member to achieve a prompt resolution. Parents/guardians should first bring concerns to the attention of your child's classroom teacher. If the matter continues to be unresolved, then it should be brought to the attention of the Center Leader. If the issue remains unresolved or requires urgent attention, the Center Manager can be contacted. If the Center Manager is unavailable, or the issue remains unresolved, the Area Manager or Regional Director at the nearest Catalyst Kids regional office is the next appropriate contact person. It is recommended that parents/guardians put concerns and complaints in writing as early as possible.

Administration Policies

Admission & Orientation

Our Program serves children from six weeks old through middle school age, although availability may vary by location. Please note that not all our sites are equipped to accommodate children of all ages. Contact your specific site to confirm age eligibility before enrollment. The California Department of Social Services and Community Care Licensing Division designates the specific age range for the program in which your child will be enrolled, and it is posted in the center. This licensing agency requires that parents/guardians complete a comprehensive Enrollment Packet to provide Catalyst Kids with important information necessary to assure your child's safety, appropriate care, and education. Parents/guardians must also complete an orientation to the Program.

Before your child's first day of attendance, we ask that you meet with the Center Leader to review these forms, discuss the policies and procedures of the center, and address any questions you may have about the Program. This parent/guardian conference is required under California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division regulations. We request that you schedule an appointment in advance with the Center Leader.

Orientation

It is important to us that you and your child feel comfortable in our Program. With this in mind, we will plan a thoughtful and individualized transition process for your family to become a part of our "center family." Details of this process will be developed in your initial conference with the Center Leader. Especially for younger children, we ask that you make yourself as available as possible to spend time in our Program and help your child adjust to the new setting. Your support is so important to your child and so appreciated by our Program.

Belonging Position Statement

We are dedicated to fostering environments where every student, family, and staff member feels valued and included. We are committed to understanding and celebrating the home languages, cultural heritages, unique abilities, social identities, contexts, and experiences within the communities we serve. We believe in collaborative decision-making with families to ensure that every student feels a sense of belonging in our Programs.

Therefore, our staff will:

- Learn about families' interests, traditions, special days/events, and experiences.
- Plan and make decisions about inclusive program events that represent the diversity of their community.
- Collaborate with families in planning for and implementing events.

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities

We believe that all children benefit from the Program's inclusion of children with disabilities. Therefore, we make reasonable accommodations necessary to support the full participation of children with disabilities in our Program. Children with disabilities are enrolled in the center based upon collaborative planning and agreement between the family and the Center Leader. If an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) has been developed, families are strongly encouraged to provide a copy prior to the child's first day in the program to support the child's success and help ensure inclusive care.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Collaboration with the family and other professionals supporting the child is important to ensure the child's full participation and inclusion in our Programs. Our staff will need you to complete the Authorization for Exchange of Information form have direct communication with the child's IEP/IFSP team. Our staff will engage in conversation with you regarding your child's IEP or IFSP to better implement accommodations and strategies within our Program. If your child has a specialist, such as a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP), Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapist, Occupational Therapist (OT), etc., who provides services to support your child's specific needs, they are welcome to provide the services in the Catalyst Kids Program if they complete the necessary paperwork to be on our licensed sites. Please refer to the Center Leader for guidance.

Each child's unique needs will be considered on a child-by-child basis. To support inclusion, specific adaptations and accommodations will be examined, and reasonable alternatives explored. Modifications can be made as long as they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the Program and services the center provides or adversely affect the center's operation. We comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Confidentiality Policy

The use or disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and their family shall be restricted to purposes directly connected with the administration of the Catalyst Kids Program.

Enrollment

Enrollment Process

There are standard forms to be completed for enrollment in our Program. Many of these forms are required by the California Department of Social Services, the California Department of Education, or the federal government. We appreciate your patience with this process. More importantly, though, is that your family and child be comfortably introduced to their teacher and that you feel warmly welcomed into our center community. This process can be different for each family, depending on the child's age and needs. For preschool children and younger, sometimes this process can take a week. We encourage you to bring your child to visit while you remain at the center. You may be interested in visiting a second time while your child participates in the Program, and you watch from a distance. You may want to bring your child for an hour the first day you leave them in the Program and gradually extend the amount of time your child stays. You and the teacher can discuss this plan so your child can have a smooth transition into our Program. Older children will adjust more quickly.

We also want you to spend enough time in the Program to feel comfortable. We want you to know that you are always welcome. Please feel free to talk to the teacher or other staff, to offer your advice or suggestions, and to share information about your child.

Holidays/Days of Non-Operation (Childcare is not available on these days.)

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Holiday (Thursday and Friday)
- Winter Holiday (2 days)
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Identification and Emergency Information

As the enrolling parent/guardian, you will be required to fill out completely the Emergency Cards, Consent for Medical Treatment, and Release Forms included in the Enrollment Packet. Emergency and Release Forms are important because they: (1) identify contact information for the parent/guardian in the event of an emergency; (2) provide alternate emergency contacts, and physician, dentist, and medical information; and (3) provide consent for emergency medical treatment. This information is **critical** for center staff in the event of an emergency. Emergency Cards must be updated annually.

An Authorized Family Representative(s) must show photo identification or, in the event that no such photo identification is available, must be personally introduced to the Center Leader by the parent/guardian before a child may be released to that Authorized Representative.

Keeping the above-mentioned forms current and accurate is important to the center's records. Standard examples include information like address, home/work telephone numbers, work location, emergency contact information, and names of persons authorized to pick up your child. You must notify center personnel of any changes to the Emergency Cards and Release Forms in writing.

Please note: The California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division regulations require that you complete new forms if you transfer to another Catalyst Kids location.

Custody

As the enrolling parent/guardian, you must complete, sign, and update all enrollment forms accurately. By signing the enrollment forms, the enrolling parent/guardian certifies that they have legal authority for the child.

In accordance with California law, parents/guardians with joint legal custody—whether married or not—have equal access to their child's educational information, including conferences, assessments, and family communication records. One guardian may not restrict or dictate the other guardian's access to this information or determine who may be listed by the other guardian as an authorized pick-up. Guardianship and access to a child's educational information may only be changed by a valid court order.

Catalyst Kids strives to remain neutral in all family matters. To help protect the privacy of all families, the program does not share or provide copies of administrative records, including but not limited to, enrollment records, attendance records, financial information, emergency cards, or sign-in/sign-out sheets. Staff are also unable to provide verbal or written statements regarding a child or family situation, except when required by a valid subpoena or court order. Subpoenas may be reviewed by designated administrative personnel.

Attendance

Sign In and Out

The California Department of Social Services and California Department of Education require that when signing the child in and out, the person signing shall use their **Full Legal Signature** and shall record the time of day. Signatures are captured electronically and, as a backup, will be captured with pen and paper if the electronic system is not working.

Catalyst Kids defines **Full Legal Signature** as the signature used upon registration and/or certification by each child's parent/guardian when completing the Emergency Cards and Release

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Forms contained in the Catalyst Kids Child Enrollment Packet. When living in separate households, each parent/guardian must submit their own signed Emergency Cards and Release Forms as part of the registration process.

Additional family representative(s) who are authorized to sign the child in and out must show photo identification at the time of pick up. Children will be released only to the parent or other adult authorized by the parent to drop off/pick up a child. Authorized individuals must meet the minimum age requirement, which may range from 16 to 18 years old, depending on state regulations and center-specific agreements. Please refer to your center's policies for exact age requirements.

Guardians and authorized pick-up individuals are assigned a unique PIN through Hubbe for use when signing children in and out. For security, individuals should use only their own PIN and not share it with others.

If a school-age child is to be involved in any on-site activities (for example, soccer, music, dance, Scouts) that are not a function of our center, you will be required to complete Catalyst Kids' Activity Authorization Forms. An Authorized Family Representative must sign the child in and/or out and identification will be required. Please arrange this with the Center Leader.

Transportation Policy

Our Programs do not transport infants, toddlers, or preschool children in any vehicles or provide daily transportation for students. Public transit, school bus, or commercial vendors provide transportation for field trips. Private vehicles are never used. Catalyst Kids is not liable for personal items that are left on the bus.

Volunteer Policy

Catalyst Kids believes that including volunteers from our communities adds value to our Programs. Most often, these volunteers are students from local colleges or former students that have grown out of our Programs. These volunteers come to us to get work experience, training, and leadership opportunities and they are always supervised by Catalyst Kids staff. Volunteers over the age of 18 with exception to parents/guardians will be required to have a criminal record clearance. Parents/guardians who volunteer over 20 hours a month are required to have a criminal record clearance. All volunteers are required to sign a statement of good health, must receive a TB clearance, and must show documentation of the following immunizations received: Tdap, Measles, Flu (or a signed Flu Vaccination Declination Form). In-person volunteer opportunities may be limited during pandemics.

Code of Conduct: Our Guiding Principles

In our Catalyst Kids center community, made up of staff, parents/guardians, extended family, children, and those who may work or reside near the center, we make it a priority to work together to solve problems. We respect that people have different viewpoints and often see challenges through their own stories or personal perspectives. Sometimes resolving problems becomes more difficult when someone's child is involved or a personal belief is challenged.

As adults, we are the models for our children and help them to learn how conflicts can be resolved reasonably and respectfully. Sometimes children get frightened when adults raise their voices or seem to become unreasonable or even unpredictable. We consider our Catalyst Kids centers to be a safe haven for children where they are respected and treated kindly and where all adults model the same behavior.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Therefore, the following sections related to adult behavior in our Programs are written to ensure the safety of everyone, especially the children. Our ultimate goal is to resolve problems to meet the needs of those involved so that children have a positive experience in our Program. In all cases, even if a resolution is not possible, we expect adults, parents/guardians, and our staff to be responsive, respectful, and reasonable.

Guiding Principles

- We commit to having the most qualified employees who will provide the best care and Program for your children.
- We provide a positive, safe, and harassment-free environment.
- We reflect respect towards peers, our children, parents/guardians, families, culture, communities, and ourselves.
- We expect our employees to maintain the highest degree of integrity, honesty, and professionalism.
- We live within the spirit of all applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards applying to employment and the operation of a childcare center.
- We value diversity and respect differences.
- We believe in open, direct, honest, and respectful communication with our children, families, school personnel, and peers.

Based on these principles, the following behaviors by children, staff, parents/guardians, families, or community members will not be tolerated at the centers:

- Abuse of any kind, physical or verbal (including yelling), or usage of improper language.
- Harassment of any kind.
- Possession of any type of firearm, ammunition, or weapon for any reason, unless required to carry these weapons as part of their employment as a law enforcement officer.
- Possession and/or usage of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Smoking on the center's premises or at any center-related activity.
- Illegal activities including theft and/or damage of property.
- Families and visitors are expected to wear clothing appropriate for a childcare environment.

If these principles and conduct are not followed, suspension and/or disenrollment from the Program may result.

Parent/Guardian Exclusions from Participation at Catalyst Kids Center

The health and safety of children attending Catalyst Kids centers is the most important goal of each Program. It is also our goal to have parents/guardians and parent representatives included as much as possible in their children's lives while at the center. Parent/guardian participation is an integral part of our Program and presents many rewards for children, families, and the Program.

There are, however, some situations where parents/guardians and/or their representatives cannot participate in regular and special activities (including drop-off and pick-up of children) because of our responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff. Some circumstances may require that a parent/guardian or their representative not be allowed any contact with the Catalyst Kids center. If a parent/guardian or their representative needs to be excluded from a center, the parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible. We reserve the right to prohibit individuals from being at or near the center if the health and safety of the children and staff are threatened or compromised. Please ask for a more detailed copy of our Parent/Guardian Exclusion Policy if you are interested.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Court orders may be required to prove custody, guardianship, visitation, or other requests made by parents/guardians.

Personal Rights

We believe in the rights of children and parents/guardians/families. Therefore, the following two sections are taken directly from the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division Regulations:

Child's Rights

In each Catalyst Kids center, each child shall have personal rights, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. To be accorded dignity in their personal relationships with staff and other persons.
2. To be accorded safe, healthful, and comfortable accommodations, furnishings, and equipment to meet their needs.
3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to interference with the daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication, or aid to physical functioning.
4. To be informed and to have their authorized representative, if any, informed, by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the complaint-receiving unit of the licensing agency and of information regarding confidentiality.
5. To be free to attend religious services or activities of their choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of their choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside the facility, shall be voluntary. In childcare centers, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child shall make decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual advisors.
6. Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.
7. Not to be placed in any restraining device, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.

Parent's/Guardian's Rights

As a Parent/Authorized Representative, you have the right to:

1. Enter and inspect the childcare center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
3. Review at the childcare center, reports of licensing visits, and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Complain to the licensing office and inspect the childcare center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent is not allowed to visit your child or take your child from the childcare center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
6. Receive from the licensee the name, address, and telephone number of the local licensing office.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the childcare center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process Form.

Please note: California State law provides that the licensee may deny access to the childcare center to a parent/authorized representative if their behavior poses a risk to children in care.

Families With Private Fees -For Your Information ONLY-

Fees and Other Information

Days and Hours of Operation

Each center operates within the hours authorized by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division and reflects the greatest need in a specific community. Your Registration Agreement will document the hours your child is scheduled to attend the center. We understand our families' schedules may change. If your schedule does change, please contact the Center Leader as soon as possible to discuss how we can meet your needs. We must adhere to specific adult-child ratios and appreciate advance notice from you about schedule changes to ensure our classroom ratios are always in compliance with the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division requirements.

Any changes needed in your child's schedule require submission of a Change Notice Form to the Center Leader by the 15th of the month in writing. Schedule changes require approval from the Center Leader and Enrollment Specialist to be effective. Changes in schedules require a signed Parent Registration Agreement. Changes to schedules will be effective at the beginning of the following month. A Full Monthly Fee payment is required until the effective date of the approved change. Any overpayment of fees will be applied towards monthly fees for the new schedule.

Waiting List Priority

To meet your family's needs, reasonable efforts will be made to enroll your child as soon as possible or when care is requested. In general, enrollment occurs on a first-come, first-served basis. When all program vacancies are filled, a waiting list will be created. However, enrollment is also subject to the Center Leader's discretion to achieve balanced classrooms comprised of children of the appropriate ages and developmental levels. Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee an immediate or specific date of enrollment.

Catalyst Kids families are given priority on the waiting list. The next priority is given to siblings of enrolled children, to avoid fragmenting family childcare plans. In general, priority is given to children with the greatest needs, which is defined as children who are enrolled for the greatest number of hours.

Annual Registration

An initial Registration Fee is charged at the time of your family's enrollment in a Program. An annual Registration Fee will then be charged each year to re-enroll your family and to guarantee your family a continuing place in the Program for that school year. All registration fees are **non-refundable**. There is no guarantee of re-enrollment if your child leaves the Program during the school year. A re-enrollment fee is also charged if your child re-enters the Program after 30 days. Registration Fees are listed on the Center's Fee Schedule and provided to you at the time of registration.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Fees

Fees are generally updated annually, and a current fee schedule will be provided during registration. Rates are subject to change at any time and Catalyst Kids shall provide a 30-day written notice to advise of any changes.

Your child's fees and payment schedule will be calculated based on the selected Program and specific childcare requirements. Any changes needed in your child's schedule or program plan requires a written request to the Center Leader by the 15th of the month and approval from the Center Leader and Enrollment Specialist to be effective. Each schedule change will require a \$35 change fee. Changes in schedules or program plans will require a new signed Parent Registration Agreement. Changes in schedules and payments will take effect at the beginning of the following month.

FEES ARE DUE AND PAYABLE IN ADVANCE. Fees are due on or before the 1st day of each month and are considered late if not paid by the 7th of the month. Make checks and/or money orders payable to Catalyst Kids. An online payment option is available for ACH payments. Please ask the Center Leader about this option.

Method of Payment

Families can make payments online directly from a checking account (for example, Direct Deposit/ACH). Catalyst also accepts payments made by check or money order (payable to Catalyst Kids and mailed to: Main Operating—Tuition Lockbox, P.O. Box 104435, Pasadena, CA 91189-4435). Please indicate the exact payment amount and include your Family Identification Number, center name, and your child's/children's full name(s) in the memo line. Checks must be mailed by the 1st of the month to avoid delays or additional fees.

Late Fee Payment

If non-payment results in disenrollment of services, reinstatement to any Catalyst Kids Program will require a payment of any unpaid balance in full. Any unpaid balance will require payment in full before re-admission to any Catalyst Kids Program.

Parents/guardians with delinquent fees may request the establishment of a reasonable delinquent fee repayment plan before the effective disenrollment date. To continue receiving subsidized childcare services, you must pay all current fees when due and comply with the provision of your repayment plan.

Optional Fees

We offer additional services when schools are closed and centers are open, such as our Camp Programs. The full day of care may be covered in our All-Inclusive Plans options, while the School Days Only Plans options may require additional fees for specific service dates. Ask your Center Leader about specific options available to meet your needs. Once you have submitted your Camp Registration, you will be financially responsible for the fee, regardless of your child's attendance, to pay for scheduled staff and purchased camp materials.

Refund Policy

Catalyst Kids maintains a strict **no refund or credit policy**. Refunds or credits will not be issued for temporary closures, illness, or if a child or parent is exposed to or contracts a contagious illness, or any other reason. However, if a center closes before the start of the

school year, and the child is unable to attend any center for the entire school year, a refund may be granted.

Field Trips, Special Events, Activity Fees

Field trips and special events/activities are an integral part of our Program, and your child is encouraged to participate in them. Parents/guardians are welcome to attend any field trip or special event. If the school-age Program site adjourns to a park, staff and children will make use of the facility with prior notification. You will be notified in advance of each field trip, advised if there is any special fee needed, and asked to sign a permission slip before the day of the trip. In a few cases, you may be asked to provide lunch during the summer or other vacation periods.

Absences

Children being in attendance is very important to Catalyst Kids. Consistent attendance is essential in a childcare center because it supports children's learning, social development, daily routines, and overall sense of security and belonging.

Please notify the Center Leader by phone or in writing as early as possible regarding your child's absence. Monthly Fees guarantee your child's place at the center; therefore, no monthly fee credits or makeup days will be given for any reason. Monthly fees remain the same whether or not your child attends.

Returned Check Fee

Catalyst Kids assesses a \$25 fee for any returned payments, including both physical checks and payments made through MySchoolBucks via Direct Deposit/ACH. If a payment is returned, you will be notified by phone and/or e-mail and will be expected to pay within 24 hours. Non-payment of fees may result in disenrollment of services. If two checks are returned from the bank, Catalyst Kids reserves the right to request cashier's checks or money orders for a period of one year following the last returned check. If a check is returned due to a bank error, a letter of explanation from the bank will be accepted and the service charge will be waived.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Catalyst Kids assesses a \$25 Late Pick-Up Fee per child for any part of a fifteen-minute increment you are late to pick up your child(ren) after the Program's designated time ends. For example, if your child's Program ends at 6:00 p.m. and your child is not picked up until 6:01 p.m., a \$25 Late Pick-Up Fee will be assessed. Late Pick-Up Fees will be charged to your account and must be paid in full by the seventh (7th) day of the next month. Please note: The Late Pick-Up Fee is per child.

Withdrawal from the Program

Parents/guardians must provide **written** notice of their intention to withdraw their child(ren) by the fifteenth (15th) of the month to avoid being charged for the next month's fees. Parents/guardians are responsible for paying the fees for the remainder of the current month after giving notice of withdrawal, regardless of their child(ren)'s attendance during that period and regardless of the child(ren) moved to another Catalyst division. No refunds will be provided for fees paid for the notice period or any portion of the next month's fees if the thirty-day (30-day) notice requirement is not met. A refund will be given for any overpayment of fees. Please allow two to three weeks for the refund to be processed. If you wish to re-enroll your child back into the Program, there is no guarantee that a spot will be available, and a non-refundable Registration Fee will be charged.

Suspension

Catalyst Kids works closely with our school partners, and suspension/exclusion of a school-age child from the school will result in suspension/exclusion from Catalyst Kids for the same period. Your child must be picked up within one hour of notification of suspension. The full monthly fee payment remains due to Catalyst Kids for the duration of the suspension; no credits will be issued for this absence.

Disenrollment of Services

If a child/parent/guardian/family is disenrolled from a Catalyst Kids Program for failure to follow Catalyst Kids policies and procedures and/or state guidelines, services may be unavailable for a minimum of one year from the date of disenrollment. If there is an overpayment of fees, a refund will be due. Families cannot be re-enrolled into any Catalyst Kids Program until any outstanding fees are paid in full.

Families With State-Funded Childcare -For Your Information ONLY-

If you are enrolling your child into a Subsidized Program, please read this section thoroughly so that you understand your specific responsibilities and obligations. The Desired Results Development Profile online data is shared with the California Department of Education (CDE) and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) per contract requirements.

The following section contains information that is important if you receive a childcare subsidy from the California Department of Education and the California Department of Social Services. These rules are set by the California State Legislature and must be followed to remain in the subsidy program. Please ask your Center Leader or the agency representative for further explanation of the subsidized program.

Waiting List

Catalyst Family maintains a current waiting list following admission priority. Families are contacted in order of priority from the waiting list as vacancies occur. Children who are CPS/At-Risk are first priority.

Eligibility

For a family to receive childcare services, they must be deemed eligible in one (1) of the categories of eligibility listed below:

- Child Protective Services (CPS)/At Risk
- Income Eligibility - Employed
- Income Eligibility - Self-Employed
- Income Eligibility - Self-Certification
- Current Aid Recipient
- Homeless
- Family resides in an approved Neighborhood School Boundary
- Exceptional Needs (California State Preschool Program only) To be eligible for childcare and development services, you, as the enrolling parent/guardian, must live in the State of California while services are being received. Before admission into the subsidized program, you must complete a Catalyst Kids Eligibility Application. The Eligibility

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Application is based on income and family size. Documentation to verify eligibility and need (if applicable) will be collected and reviewed before enrollment.

Income Eligibility

Your family's total countable gross income must meet the income guidelines as established by the California Department of Education and California Department Social Services.

Need Eligibility (This requirement is not applicable for Part-Day Preschool Programs.)

To be eligible for a childcare subsidy, you must have at least one need status, in addition to being income eligible. The California Department of Education and California Department Social Services has identified the following categories of need:

- **Child Protective Services/At Risk:** Must have a written referral from the Department of Health and Human Services, Child Protective Services (CPS) unit or another person qualified to make the referral. The referral shall be dated within six (6) months of the certification. Contact your agency representative for details.
- **Employment/Self-Employment:** The applicant's employment must preclude the supervision of the child.
- **Seeking Employment:** Limited to not less than 24 months. The 24 months begin on the first day of certification for job seeking. Care is limited to less than 30 hours per week.
- **Seeking Permanent Housing:** Limited to not less than 24 months. The 24 months begin on the first day of certification for seeking permanent housing. Care is limited to less than 30 hours per week.
- **Homeless:** Identified as not having permanent or adequate living arrangements, or shared housing with other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of adequate alternative accommodations; living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals; having a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and are migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in the circumstances described above.
- **Vocational Training:** limited to six (6) years from the initiation of services for vocational training or twenty-four (24) semester units (or its equivalent) after the attainment of a bachelor's degree whichever expires first.
- **Education Programs:** English Language Learner (ELL)/English as a Second Language (ESL)/General Education Diploma (GED)/High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate. Services for education programs are limited to a total of six (6) years from the initiation of services for the education program.
- **Parent/Guardian Incapacitation:** A legally qualified health professional must provide a statement of parental incapacitation, including the specific days and hours of care needed. ~~The referral shall be dated within six (6) months of the certification.~~
- **Exceptional Needs (California State Preschool Program (CSPP only))** is defined as a child with an active IFSP (early intervention services) or IEP (special education services). A copy of the IFSP or IEP will be required to meet the Exceptional Needs option.

Continued Eligibility

Once your child has been enrolled in the subsidized program, eligibility for childcare services is not less than 24 months.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- **Income:** You must report if, within 30 calendar days, your income exceeds 85 percent of the State Median Income (SMI). For CSPP, you must report if your income exceeds 100 percent of the State Median Income (SMI).

If there has been a change in your status and additional childcare hours are needed, contact an agency representative to discuss available options.

Recertification of Eligibility and Need

After initial certification and enrollment, the California Department of Education, and California Department of Social Services require your declared need and eligibility to be recertified. At the time of recertification, you will be required to update your file with current income documentation and other supporting documentation as requested.

Any changes in the contracted hours of care must be supported by the necessary documentation requested before the service changes become effective. Recertification and changes will not be approved without the appropriate documentation on file. Failure to comply with the recertification requirements will result in disenrollment.

Migrant Program Only – General Requirements

To receive state or federal-based Migrant Program services, families must meet all eligibility and need requirements, including having at least one parent or guardian earn at least 40% of their gross income from fishing, agriculture, or agricultural-related work.

If the center operates in federally funded public migrant housing, the first fourteen (14) days of the enrollment period shall be reserved for residents of the public migrant housing center.

Enrollment & Attendance

When a center is able to enroll children based on available funding and licensed capacity, families are contacted for enrollment. As the enrolling parent/guardian, it is your responsibility to accurately complete and sign all Enrollment and Certification (Recertification) documents prior to the child being admitted into our Program. By signing the Enrollment and Certification (Recertification) documents, you are also certifying that you have legal authority for the child. California law is clear that parents (married or not) who have joint legal custody have equal access to all information regarding the child, including enrolling and making changes to the enrollment information. Only orders by a court of law can change parental access to a child's information. The above-mentioned law does not include access to information regarding the enrolling parent/guardian.

Admission Priority

For Infant/Toddler and School Age Children

Enrollment Priorities

First Priority: The child is a recipient of Child Protect Services or At-Risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited

Second Priority: Income Ranking Order
Within each ranking, prioritize as follows:

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- 1) Exceptional needs
- 2) Dual Language Learner
- 2) Earliest application date

For Migrant Families

Children of migrant agricultural worker families shall be enrolled in the CMIG program based on the following priorities:

1. The family moves from place to place.
2. The family has qualified under subparagraph (1) above within the past five years and is currently dependent on its income on agricultural employment but is currently located near agricultural areas.
3. The family resides in a rural area and depends on seasonal agricultural work.

For Part-Day California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

First priority: Priority for services to CSPP 3- and 4-year-old children who are recipients of child protective services or who have been determined to be neglected, abused, exploited or at risk thereof.

Second priority: Priority for services to all 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities and from families with incomes below the income eligibility threshold. This priority is for children with disabilities who are enrolling in CSPP after the percentage of funded enrollment set aside.

Third priority: Priority for services to eligible CSPP 4-year-old children not enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten, not including children with disabilities with incomes above the income threshold, in the following order:

Eligible children who were enrolled in CSPP as a 3-year-old.

Children whose families have the lowest income ranking based on the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling Eligibility Table at the time of enrollment.

According to the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling Eligibility Table, the child with a primary home language other than English shall be enrolled first when two or more families have the same income ranking.

If there are no families with children that have a primary home language other than English, the family that has been on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first.

Fourth priority: Priority for services to eligible CSPP 3-year-old children, not including children with disabilities that are above the income threshold, in the following order:

Children whose families have the lowest income ranking based on the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling Eligibility Table at the time of enrollment.

According to the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling eligibility table, the child with a primary home language other than English shall be enrolled first when two or more families have the same income ranking.

If there are no families with children with a primary home language other than English, the family on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first.

After all otherwise eligible children have been enrolled, the contractor may enroll the following children in the order listed:

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Children from families with no more than 15 percent above the eligibility income threshold may be enrolled. Children from families enrolled under this exception may not exceed 10 percent of the participating CSPP's total contract enrollment. Priority shall be given to 4-year-olds before 3-year-olds.

Children with disabilities within this priority shall not count towards the 10 percent limitation.

For CSPP Neighborhood School sites operating within the attendance boundaries of a qualified FRPM school, the contractor may enroll CSPP 3- and 4-year-old children whose families reside within the attendance boundary of the qualified FRPM elementary school without establishing eligibility. These families shall, to the extent possible, be enrolled in income ranking order, lowest to highest.

Children enrolling in the CSPP to provide expanded learning and care to Transitional Kindergarten.

Childcare services will not be denied, nor will they be assigned a lower priority to a family that needs less than full-time services.

The California Department of Education (CDE) may grant a waiver to the priorities specified above for the contractor to serve specific populations. Requests may not include waiver of the fee schedule or admission of ineligible families. Waiver requests shall be submitted to the CDE and approved prior to implementation.

For Full-Day California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

First priority: Priority for services to CSPP 3- and 4-year-old children who are recipients of child protective services, or who have been determined to be neglected, abused, exploited or at risk thereof. If an agency is unable to enroll a child in this first-priority category,

Second priority: Priority for services to all 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities from families with incomes below the income eligibility threshold. This priority is for children with disabilities who are enrolling in CSPP after the percentage of funded enrollment is set aside.

Third priority: Priority for services to eligible CSPP 4-year-old children not enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten, not including children with disabilities with incomes above the income threshold, in the following order:

- Eligible children who were enrolled in CSPP as a 5-year-old.
- Children whose families have the lowest income ranking based on the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling Eligibility Table as published by the SSPI at the time of enrollment.
- When two or more families have the same income ranking, according to the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling eligibility table, the child that has a primary home language other than English shall be enrolled first.
- If no families with children have a primary home language other than English, the family that has been on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first.

Fourth priority: priority for services to eligible CSPP three-year-old children, in the following order:

- Children whose families have the lowest income ranking based on the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling Eligibility Table as published by the SSPI (~~full name with acronym in parenthesis after it~~) at the time of enrollment.
- When two or more families have the same income ranking, according to the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling eligibility table, the child that has a primary home language other than English shall be enrolled first.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

- If no families with children have a primary home language other than English, the family that has been on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first.

After all otherwise eligible children have been enrolled, the contractor may enroll the following children in the order listed:

- Children from families with no more than 15 percent above the eligibility income threshold may be enrolled. Children from families enrolled under this exception may not exceed 10 percent of the participating CSPP's total contract enrollment. Priority shall be given to 4-year-olds before 3-year-olds. Children with disabilities within this priority shall not count towards the 10 percent limitation.
- The contractor may enroll CSPP 5- and 4-year-old children from families that meet eligibility criteria without establishing a need for services. Within this priority, contractors shall enroll families in income ranking order, lowest to highest, and enroll 4-year-olds before 5-year-olds.
- For CSPP Neighborhood School sites operating within the attendance boundaries of a qualified FRPM school, the contractor may enroll CSPP 5- and 4-year-old children whose families reside within the attendance boundary of the qualified FRPM elementary school without establishing eligibility or a need for services. To the extent possible, these families shall be enrolled in income ranking order, lowest to highest.

"CSPP eligible 4-year-old children" means children who will have their fourth birthday on or before December 1 of the fiscal year in which they are enrolled in a CSPP or a child whose fifth birthday occurs after September 1 of the fiscal year in which they are enrolled in a California state preschool and whose parent or guardian has opted to retain or enroll them in a CSPP.

"CSPP eligible 3-year-old children" means children who will have their third birthday on or before December 1 of the fiscal year in which they are enrolled in a CSPP. Children who have their third birthday on or after December 2 of the fiscal year, may be enrolled in a CSPP on or after their third birthday.

For California Department of Education (CDE) and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Programs, families will have categorical eligibility if they have a member of its household who is certified to receive benefits from Medi-Cal, CalFresh, the California Food Assistance Program, the California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, the Federal Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, Head Start, Early Head Start, or any other designated means-tested government program, as determined by the department.

Please note:

For CSPP, 5 percent of subsidized enrollment is reserved for children with exceptional needs. Only the child in the family who has exceptional needs may be enrolled under this eligibility criteria.

Hours of Service

The childcare hours of service are determined upon certification and specified in the Parent Registration Agreement:

- Days and hours per day requested.
- Effective date of proposed reduction of service level.
- Acknowledge in writing that they may retain their current service level.

If a family requests a change to the current service level (including an increase in childcare hours), an update will be necessary to reflect approved hours. Contact your Agency

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Representative or Center Leader immediately if your schedule needs to be adjusted to suit your childcare needs. Schedule changes must be approved before they become effective.

Notification of Changes

You must notify your Agency Representative or Center Leader if your family income exceeds the 85 percent State Median Income (SMI) for CSPP 100 percent of the State Median Income (SMI).

A Family's Right to Voluntarily Request Changes

At any time, a family may voluntarily request to reduce a family fee or increase their certified schedule and shall provide applicable supporting documentation for the requested change.

Family Fees

Families enrolled in the state or federally funded program may be required to pay a fee. (This requirement is not applicable for Part-Day Preschool Programs.) A Family Fee is charged based on the California Family Fee Schedule.

As the enrolling parent/guardian, you will be assessed either a full-time monthly fee or a part-time monthly fee, based on hours of care certified for the month, your family gross income, and your family size. Families with a certified need of less than 130 hours per month will be assessed a part-time monthly fee while families with a certified need of 130 hours or more per month will be assessed a full-time monthly fee.

Please note: You may be eligible for a credit to your Family Fee if you are paying other childcare costs that Catalyst Kids is not able to subsidize.

Method of Payment

Families can make payments online directly from a checking account (for example, Direct Deposit/ACH). Catalyst also accepts payments made by check or money order (payable to Catalyst Kids, and mailed to: Main Operating—Tuition Lockbox, P.O. Box 104435, Pasadena, CA 91189-4435). Please indicate the exact payment amount, and include your Family Identification Number, center name, and your child's/children's full name in the memo line. Checks must be mailed by the first (1st) of the month to avoid delays or additional fees.

Other Childcare (OCC) Receipt

If Catalyst Kids cannot meet all of your needs for childcare, for which eligibility and need have been established, Catalyst Kids will grant a fee credit equal to the amount paid to the other childcare provider. Catalyst Kids will apply the fee credit to the family's subsequent fee billing period. Families using the other childcare receipt are responsible for the first month of family fees. Families are not allowed to carry over the fee credit beyond the family's subsequent fee billing period.

OCC receipts are due by the seventh (7th) of the following month. For OCC receipts to be applied to Family Fees, the OCC receipt must have the following:

- Date the OCC was issued.
- Last name and first name of the child whose fee the OCC is being applied to.
- The dates childcare services were provided.
- Signature from the childcare provider.

If the OCC receipt does not have all the requirements listed above, the OCC will not be processed.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Catalyst Kids cannot, under any circumstances, recalculate fees based on a child's actual attendance.

FAMILY FEES ARE DUE AND PAYABLE IN ADVANCE. **Fees are due on or before the first day of each month and are considered late if not paid by the seventh (7th) of the month.** Make checks and/or money orders payable to Catalyst Kids. An online payment option is available for ACH payments. Please ask the Center Leader about this option.

Please note that if a check is returned for insufficient funds, only other payment methods (money orders, cashier checks, or paying online) will be accepted for one year.

Late Family Fee Payment

Family fees must be paid in advance and are due on or before the first (1st) of each month. The monthly bill is given or mailed out during the week of the twentieth (20th) of each month prior to the month in which care is given. The bill will state your full-time or part-time monthly fee. **If Catalyst Kids does not receive payment in full by the 7th business day of the month, on the 8th business day, a Notice of Action will be issued to disenroll services.** Services will end two (2) weeks from the date the Notice of Action is issued, with an additional five (5) days if mailed.

Parents/guardians with delinquent fees may request the establishment of a reasonable delinquent fee repayment plan before the effective disenrollment date. To continue receiving subsidized childcare services, you must pay all current fees when due and comply with the provision of your repayment plan.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Children must be picked up according to their contracted hours. For example, if you work or are in training from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., your contracted hours may be 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Therefore, your child should be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.

If you are going to be late because of an emergency, you must arrange with another authorized parent/guardian to pick up your child. You must contact the center to notify them before your scheduled pick-up time.

Children participating in the Part-Day Preschool and any other Programs with designated program end times must be picked up at the same time that the Program ends. If you are late picking up your child at the designated time, your child(ren) may be disenrolled from the Program.

Catalyst Kids assesses a \$25 Late Pick-Up Fee **per child** for any part of a fifteen-minute (15-minute) increment if you are late to pick up your child after the center closes for the day. For example, if your child's Program ends at 6:00 p.m. and your child is not picked up until 6:01 p.m., a \$25 Late Pick-Up fee will be assessed. Late Pick-Up fees will be charged to your account and must be paid in full on or before the first (1st) of the next month.

Please note: The late pick-up fee is **per child**.

Additional Supplies

The center will supply diapers for all children who need them. Please let the center know if you will supply your own diapers.

Attendance Expectations

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

At the time of enrollment, you were approved for a specific number of hours per week, which helped determine the funding your family received for subsidized care.

Consistent attendance is essential for your child to fully benefit from the Program. Children are encouraged to attend on all the days they are scheduled for, and we recommend maintaining a 95 percent attendance rate.

Absences

You, as the enrolling parent/guardian, must notify the Center Leader by phone or in advance in writing regarding your child's absence no later than the time the child is scheduled to attend that day. The reason for absences and a **full legal signature** must be written on the Sign-In and Out sheet by the parent/guardian or authorized center staff. **Family fees remain the same whether or not the child attends.**

Excused Absences

- Child illness, including medical, dental, and mental health appointments.
- Parent illness, including medical, dental, and mental health appointments.
- Government or self-imposed quarantine of the child or parent due to potential or actual exposure of a contagious disease.
- Spending time with parent or other relative due to court-ordered custody or visitation.
- Observance of a religious holiday or absence due to a ceremony of the student's religion.
- Any absence to accommodate the needs of a child with a disability, including services received as part of the individualized education program (IEP) or individualized family service plan (IFSP).
- Any days for which a contractor is required by law to hold a child's space in the program to comply with due process requirements.

Family Emergency

- Lack or disruption of transportation that directly impacts the child's participation in the program.
- Court date or court-ordered appointment for any person living with the child.
- In process of moving to another home
- Illness, quarantine, or hospitalization of a sibling
- Severe illness, death, or funeral of a relative
- Utility emergency impacting the household
- Severe weather conditions that directly impact the household such as weather alerts, disasters, or fire
- Extreme family crisis includes, but is not limited to, loss of housing, domestic violence, being a witness or victim of a crime, or community concerns that make it unsafe for the child to participate in the program, as determined by the parent.

Best Interest Days

- Parent/Family vacation or day off work
- Child is tired/unable to participate in classroom activities/program
- Sibling field trips
- Visiting with a family member
- Family bonding

For **CDSS programs**, children get 10 Best Interest Days per contract year

For CDE programs, children enrolled in CSPP classrooms that operate fewer than 220 days get 10 Best Interest Days during the contract year. For children enrolled in CSPP classrooms that operate more than 220 days will get 20 Best Interest Days per contract year.

For children who are experiencing homelessness, or have an incarcerated parent, or are recipients of protective services, or are at risk of abuse or neglect, do not have limited Best Interest Days

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Any absence that is not an excused absence shall be considered unexcused

For CDE Programs

Catalyst Kids will attempt to contact Parents/Guardians through a variety of communication methods as unexcused absences are accrued and share strategies that the program and family can use to improve individual attendance

When a child has a total of 3 unexcused absences in a contract year, Catalysts will inform the Parent/Guardian in writing, within one business day, of the number of unexcused absences that have been accrued by the child and further shall inform the parent/guardian that continuing to accrue unexcused absences may result in termination of preschool services. Catalyst will repeat this process when the child has additional unexcused absences at intervals of no less than 6 unexcused absences and then 9 unexcused absences.

Catalyst Kids will disenroll any child from the program in the event the child has more than 10 unexcused absences in a contract year.

Other Reasons for Absences

- Bad weather (not extreme)
- Child didn't feel like getting up
- Personal business/family business
- Parent/guardian/child overslept
- Any absences not falling into Best Interest or Excused Absence definitions

Non-contracted days:

- Catalyst Kids holidays
- Other days to be determined at time of certification
- Suspension from elementary school or any Catalyst Kids center

Disenrollment of Services

If your child is disenrolled from a Catalyst Kids Program and has unpaid family fees, your child will not be re-enrolled in the Program until all outstanding fees are paid in full.

Disenrollment may result from failure to adhere to any rules established by Catalyst Kids that include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to provide requested documentation by the due date.
- Submission of fraudulent, false, or misleading information or documentation.
- Failure to complete re-certification.
- Failure to pay assessed Family Fees by the due date.
- Family's gross monthly income exceeds the state income guidelines as defined by the California Department of Education and California Department of Social Services.
- Failure to comply with Catalyst Kids policies.
- Failure to comply with any other or any additional regulations set forth by the California Department of Education and California Department of Social Services.
- Abandonment of Childcare Services. It is the expectation that your child participates in our Program based on their approved schedule. We understand that life situations occur (illness, family emergencies, etc.) and request that you notify us within 24-48 hours if such a situation occurs. However, if your child is absent for more than seven (7) consecutive days without contacting us, we will reach out to you in many ways via the contact information we have on file. Please make sure we have the most current information in the file. If there is no response, the Enrollment Specialist will make one final attempt to contact the parent at 15 calendar days via phone or text. If there is no response after 30 consecutive days, a Notice of Action (NOA) for disenrollment based on abandonment of care will be issued to the last known address.

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Fraud Policy (“Fraud” is defined as a deliberate deception for unfair or unlawful gain.)

Families enrolled in state or federally funded programs must meet the Eligibility and Need criteria. All documentation supplied to Catalyst Kids regarding verification of need and eligibility must be complete, accurate, and true. Any fraudulent, false, or misleading information provided to Catalyst Kids to establish initial or ongoing eligibility and/or need for childcare, including address, use of care, employment or student status, family size, income, or eligibility relating to medical incapacitation, will be grounds for disenrollment.

Appeal Process

If childcare services are changed or discontinued, you will be issued a Notice of Action in advance that states the effective date and reason for the Action. If you have questions after receiving the Notice of Action, please immediately contact your agency representative in your region.

If you, as the enrolling parent/guardian, do not agree with a decision made regarding your eligibility for services, you have the right to file an Appeal and request a Fair Hearing and should immediately contact the Regional Contact Person listed on the back of the Notice of Action.

Procedures for appeals are outlined on the reverse side of the Notice of Action. This may also include submitting an appeal to the California Department of Education or California Department of Social Services if an appeal has been denied by Catalyst Kids. If an appeal is submitted to the California Department of Education or California Department of Social Services, childcare may continue during this process.

A Parent Appeal pamphlet from the State of California is given to you with your initial certification into Catalyst Kids. Additional copies are available upon request.

If you appeal a decision, childcare will continue during the Fair Hearing process. However, if the Appeal is denied, services may end immediately.

Catalyst Kids Office Locations & Contact Information

Corporate Office/Bay Area Regional Office

350 Woodview Avenue
Suite 100
Morgan Hill, CA 95037-8105
(408) 556-7300

Oxnard Regional Office

200 East Bard Road
Oxnard, CA 93033
(805) 738-7900

Sacramento Regional Office

4540 Duckhorn Drive
Suite 202
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 830-3300

South Regional Office

5 Park Plaza
Suite 950
Irvine, CA 92614
(949) 553-4440

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Licensing Agency – Center Visitation

Admission Agreement 101200 (b) (c)

- The Department of Social Services or Licensing Agency shall have the authority to interview clients, including children or staff, and to inspect and audit clients or facilities without prior consent.
- The Department of Social Services or licensing agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the client, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the client.
- Appropriate identification from the licensing agency will be obtained prior to the interview.

Community Care Licensing

All Catalyst Kids Programs are licensed through the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Department (DSS/CCLD). The DSS/CCLD is a statewide agency that sets the standards for health, safety, and educational requirements in childcare programs. If you would like more information or have any questions regarding licensing, visit their website at <http://www.cclcd.ca.gov> or contact the regional office closest to your child's program.

Los Angeles

El Segundo Regional Office
300 North Continental Boulevard
Suite 209A, MS 29-13
El Segundo, CA 90245
(424) 301-3077

Orange County

Orange County Regional Office
750 The City Drive
Suite 250, MS 29-10
Orange, CA 92868
(714) 703-2800

Riverside County

Riverside Regional Office
3737 Main Street
Suite 70, MS 29-12
Riverside, CA 92501
(951) 782-4200

Solano County

Rohnert Park Local Unit
101 Golf Course Drive
Suite A-230, MS 29-11
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
(707) 588-5026

San Mateo County

San Bruno Regional Office
851 Traeger Avenue
Suite 360, MS 29-24
San Bruno, CA 94066
(650) 266-8800

El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo Counties

Sacramento Regional Office
2525 Natomas Park Drive
Suite 250, MS 19-852
Sacramento, Ca 95833
(916) 263-5744

Monterey and Santa Clara Counties

San Jose Regional Office
2580 N. First Street
Suite 300, MS 29-08
San Jose, CA 95131
(408) 324-2148

Ventura County

Santa Barbara Regional Office
6500 Hollister Avenue
Suite 200, MS 29-09
Goleta, CA 93117
(805) 562-0400

Alameda County

Oakland South Regional Office
1515 Clay Street
Suite 1102, MS 29-855
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 622-2602

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Complaint Policy & Procedures

Uniform Complaint Policy – Catalyst Kids

Catalyst Kids' mission is to provide the community with the highest quality programs and services for children, families, and providers. We strive to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships and practices. We welcome feedback and suggestions from parents/guardians, families, and providers about our Programs and services. We recognize that there are times when there appears to be a mismatch between what a family deems to be in their best interest and Catalyst Kids' policies and procedures that derive from local, state, and federal regulations. Our agency desires to handle all issues that arise as fairly and quickly as possible.

Catalyst Kids prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender, age, disability, religion, national origin, medical condition, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other consideration made unlawful by local, state, or federal law.

Individuals, agencies, organizations, families, providers, students, and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding an alleged violation of federal and/or state law(s) by our Programs. Our agency prefers that complaints be filed directly with us first so that we can work to arrive at an equitable solution.

However, if any party is not satisfied with the services rendered and wants to express or file a formal complaint, we will handle such complaint in the following manner:

- We will provide the complainant with the information about their rights and guidelines for filing a formal complaint with the appropriate government agency or department that has jurisdiction over the Program.
- When a written complaint is brought directly to any staff manager at Catalyst Kids, they will acknowledge receipt, in writing, within three to five working business days.
- Catalyst Kids will conduct an internal investigation regarding the issue or complaint. Senior Catalyst Kids management will decide on the composition and size of the team conducting the investigation, depending on the nature and severity of the issue. An independent party will be designated to coordinate and conduct the investigation.
- The family and/or provider will not be negatively affected in the continued usage of our services due to their action of filing the complaint.
- We will treat the family and/or provider with respect in the investigation of the complaint.
- We expect the family and/or provider to provide necessary information and cooperation in the investigation of the complaint.
- We will allow the employees who are involved in the situation to give an account of the events and explain their perspectives.
- The decision will be communicated to the complainant in writing within 30 days. Any extenuating circumstance that might require more time will be communicated at least one week before the date the decision is due.
- An officer of Catalyst Kids will make the final decision on the outcome of the investigation, should there be any conflict or disagreement about the initial decision made by the in-house independent investigation.
- The time limit during which a complaint can be filed is governed by our funding terms and conditions, and in the absence of those terms, the time limit is two years.
- Remedies may be sought in federal or state court if the family and/or provider are not satisfied with the final decision of the agency.

Uniform Complaint Procedures – External & Internal

Uniform Complaint Procedures (5CCR 4600-4687)

Where to File a Complaint:

External:

Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the appropriate agency.

- For licensing issues, complaints are to be sent to the local offices of the Childcare Program. Please contact their main office for the appropriate location.

Community Care Licensing Division, Childcare Program Office
744 P Street, MS T9-15-48
Sacramento, CA 95814

- For CDE Child Development Division Programs, complaints should be sent to:

State Department of Education
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street
Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

- For CDSS Programs, appeals should be sent to:

California Department of Social Services
Childcare and Development Division
744 P Street, MS 9-8-371
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-9142
Fax: (916) 654-1048
CCDDAppeals@dss.ca.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

- For Irvine Unified School District Programs, any grievances that remain unresolved at the conclusion of the site procedure may enter the formal Irvine Childcare Programs (ICCP) Grievance process. Please contact the ICCP Administrator at (949) 724-6635 to learn more about the ICCP Grievance Process.

Internal:

- Annually, we will notify our employees, regional offices, individuals, agencies, organizations, families, providers, students, and interested third parties of our complaint procedures in writing.
- A notice will be visibly posted at all centers and office locations where the agency operates.
- The notice shall be in English and, where necessary, in the primary language or mode of communication of the recipient of the notice as required by law.
- A copy of the Complaint Procedures shall be available free of charge.

To be updated by Board: Catalyst Kids Board approval: **March 4, 2025**

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org

Family Handbook Receipt

Please print and sign the acknowledgment at the end of the Handbook, and bring the completed form to your center.

If you are unable to print, your center will also have printouts of the acknowledgment available.

I have received a copy of the Catalyst Kids Family Handbook.

I read all policies of this Handbook, including lead poisoning information, and agree to them.

I read all policies of this Form and agree to it.

I understand that failure to follow these policies may lead to disenrollment of childcare services.

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Center Leader Name (Please Print)

Center Leader Signature

Date

Visit Our Website at www.catalystkids.org