

Caring for Kids 1st  
at  
First Lutheran Church

PARENT HANDBOOK  
2026

1234 SW Fairlawn Road  
Topeka, Ks 66604  
(785) 272-5302

## **You Need To Know:**

First Lutheran is a loving congregation that worships a grace-filled God. There will be opportunities throughout the summer when the pastor will lead faith-building activities where kids will explore how God loves them and God cares for them. These will be meaningful for life long believers or church goers but also for those just learning about God.

## **Welcome**

The 2026 Caring for Kids 1st childcare program is an 11 week, May 26th through August 7<sup>th</sup>, childcare which provides opportunities for youth to enjoy recreational activities, learn new skills, and make new friends. Children take part in arts and crafts, sports, special projects, games and educational field trips under the close supervision of the program staff.

If you have any questions or concerns after reviewing the handbook please call or e-mail [Director@caringforkids1st.com](mailto:Director@caringforkids1st.com).

## **Philosophy and Purpose**

Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> is sponsored by First Lutheran Church as an outreach ministry of the church. It is licensed by the Kansas State Department of Health and Environment and is administered by the Director, and Board of Directors made up of the pastor, 5 dedicated members of First Lutheran Church and a parent representative who currently has or has had a child in the program..

The purpose of our summer childcare is to provide a safe and secure environment. We offer a stimulating atmosphere in which children can grow socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically and spiritually through developmentally age-appropriate practices. We recognize that children learn through play, and we strive to create a climate that will encourage exploration, experimentation, and creativity. Special attention is given to fostering a positive self-concept in each child through creative and structured learning opportunities.

## **Enrollment**

Enrollment is open to any child who has completed kindergarten through the completion of the fifth grade. Enrollment shall be granted without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, religion, physical handicap, national origin and ancestry.

## Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday - 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

## Confidentiality

All children's files are kept confidential. Children's records remain confidential and are stored in a secure location. Access is granted to the director and Childcare workers only on an as needed basis.

## Paper Work

The contract and enrollment form must accompany your child's registration fee. Remember, we enroll on a first come first-serve basis. All forms must be completed and turned in by Monday, May 11, 2026. Failure to do so can cause a delay in the start of your child's care.

The following forms must be completed and on file with the Director before your child may attend.

- Enrollment Form (all information must be complete with numbers and full physical addresses)
- Health History Form - Must list complete names and addresses.
- Emergency Medical Release Form
- Field Trip Permission Form
- Photo Release Form
- Medication Authorization - if needed
- Any other forms which might be necessary.

Parents are requested to update the Director of any changes in address, phone numbers, or emergency contacts/phone numbers.

## Fees

**Summer Tuition Full Time:** \$145 per week per child. For families with more than one child in the program the fee a second or more child is \$125 per week. As long as we are eligible to participate in the USD 501 summer meal program, lunch and a late afternoon meal will be free for all children. If we become ineligible for this program we will charge an appropriate fee for breakfast and lunch. Tuition is due two weeks in advance unless other arrangements have been made with the Director. To return to the summer childcare in future years, all families must have a zero balance from the previous year's childcare before they are eligible to register their children. We have a one-time \$75 activity fee that helps with the cost of field trips, t-shirts, etc.

**Part Time Tuition:** At this time Caring for Kids 1st will not offer any part time summer childcare spots.

**Late Pick Up Fee:** It is Caring for Kids 1st policy to charge an additional fee for late pick up. You will receive one written notice, and then charges are \$1.00 per minute, per child with no grace period. This fee is payable the night of the occurrence or the following morning. If fee is not paid the child will not be allowed to return until it is paid.

**Refund of Fees:** Fees **will not** be refunded when a child is absent for any reason. Our costs remain constant; therefore, refunds, credit for days missed, or make-up days cannot be offered. In case of an extended illness or absence, arrangements may be considered on an individual basis.

**Returned Check Fee:** The fee for a returned check is \$40.00 per check. If a returned check has been received, cashier's check or money order payments will be required for future fees.

## Scholarships

Caring for Kids 1st offers scholarships based on financial need. To apply for a scholarship, please fill out an application and submit it to the Caring For Kids 1st Director. Applications **MUST** be filled out completely, including verification of the last two month's income. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. A copy of the application can be found on our website. [Caringforkids1st.com](http://Caringforkids1st.com) under "Forms."

## Holiday Closings

We will not have childcare on Friday, July 3, 2026. Parents will be expected to pay for a full week during the week of June 29 - July 3, 2026.

## Arrival and Departure

State licensing requires that a parent/guardian accompany their child in and out of the building. Parents are required to initial a sign in/out form each day. Parents must authorize other adults to pick up their child. Please inform staff of these arrangements. No child will be allowed to leave with an unauthorized adult. If the person picking up has not done so before, we will ask to see their driver's license. **On field trip days if the child is not present at time of departure we will not wait.**

## **Absent From Program**

Parents are asked to call and notify our staff if their child will be absent from the childcare on any given day. If you know of vacation dates, please let us know in advance for planning purpose

## **Withdrawal from Program**

If you should decide to withdraw your child from the childcare program for any reason, **written notice must be given.** You will not be refunded the \$145 deposit. You will also be obligated to pay for an additional two weeks of care (\$290 for the first child), (\$250 per child for more than one child) past the last week your child(ren) attended.

## **Disenrollment**

It is the intent of the childcare to meet each child's needs to the best of our ability. Enrollment at Caring For Kids 1<sup>st</sup> may need to be discontinued for children whose educational, developmental or behavioral needs are beyond the scope of the childcare's available resources.

## **Food**

We provide lunch and a late afternoon meal free of charge for all children. We will also provide a morning snack each day. If your child is allergic to any types of food please notify the Director when you enroll. **(If we have no children allergic to peanuts or tree nuts, we will allow peanut and tree nut products. If we have a child with nut allergies we will provide meals and snacks that are nut free.)**

## **Emergency Drills**

Fire drills will be conducted once a month in compliance with state regulations. Tornado drills are conducted once a month during the tornado season. A complete emergency response plan is posted on the parent bulletin board next to the entrance door where students enter when dropped off.

## Medication

Prescription medications and over the counter medicines can be administered by the summer childcare staff that have passed the administering medication class and only when a written authorization form is signed by the parent/guardian and or doctor. Medications must be clearly labeled and in the original container with good standing expiration date. If medication is old and out of date, then it will be returned to the family for their disposal. See one of our staff for an authorization form

## Illness/Exclusion Policy

If a child becomes ill a parent will be notified to pick the child up for the rest of the day. Children may not return until they are symptom free for 24 hours. Your cooperation and understanding is greatly appreciated. If your child is home due to a positive Covid test, please let the Director know. Please do not send your child to summer childcare if they have any of the following:

<b>Conditions for Exclusion from Child Care</b>	<b>Conditions for Returning to Child Care</b>
1. Oral temperature 101 degrees; Auxiliary (armpit) temperature of 100.0F or higher with a behavior change.	1. Free of fever for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication.
2. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs.	2. Symptom free for 24 hours or physician's written approval to return.
3. Diarrhea (two watery stools in a 4 hour period or one large volume watery stool mixed with blood).	3. Free of diarrhea (watery stools) for 24 hours and able to take food.
4. Vomiting, upset stomach with more than just "spitting up".	4. Free of upset stomach and vomiting for 24 hours and able to take food.
5. Yellowish tint to skin or eyes and/or unusually dark, tea-colored urine.	5. Symptom free for 24 hours or physician's written approval to return.
6. Red, watery or draining eye(s).	6. All discharge from the eye(s) has stopped for 24 hours or physician's approval to return.
7. Severe itching of the body or scalp and/or constantly scratching the head (i.e. lice, scabies).	7. After treatment, including free of lice and nits.

8. Infected areas of the skin with crusty, yellow, gummy, dry area or rash, (i.e.: Impetigo, Chicken Pox or Ring Worm).	8. Skin sores are healed or 24 hours after treatment has started or physician's written approval to return.
9. Fainting or seizures (other than pre-existing conditions) or general signs of listlessness, weakness, drowsiness, flushed face, headache or stiff neck.	9. Symptom free for 24 hours or physician's written approval to return.
10. Mouth sores with excessive drooling.	10. Physician's written approval to return.
11. Rash with fever or behavior change.	11. Physician's written approval to return.
12. Known contagious disease while in communicable stage.	12. Physician's written approval to return.

## **Behavior Agreement**

The success of Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> is dependent upon a strong parent-child and parent-staff relationship. To formalize that relationship as well as to highlight the personal responsibility of each person involved, we ask everyone to make themselves available when arriving at First Lutheran Church to pick up your child, so that Caring for Kids 1st staff can share any information to the parent without any outside interruptions.

Rules for Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> Childcare:

1. Be respectful
2. Be responsible
3. Be safe

Consequences:

First Step: Re-direct the child and make child aware they need to change the behavior.

Second Step: Discuss the behavior problem with the child and remove the child from the activity to a safe, quiet space. When the childcare provider determines the child is ready to correct the behavior they may rejoin the activity.

Third Step: Director or authorized employee will make documentation of behavior and discuss with parent at pick-up time.

Fourth Step: Director and/or pastor and/or executive board member will discuss with parents if behavior continues and steps 1-3 are not working. At this time the appropriate action will take place for the behavior that has not been corrected.

Parents with a child demonstrating frequent inappropriate behavior or behavior that does not improve with repeated attempts by staff to help them correct it may be told their child will not be able to return to the program.

Corporal punishment, in any form, is expressly contrary to the philosophy and purpose of Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> and will in no instance be administered.

## **Visiting and Volunteering**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit or volunteer at any time. All regular volunteers are required to pass a KBI Background Check.

## **Toys**

Children are asked to leave toys and valuables at home. Toys are not allowed to be brought to Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> childcare except when specifically authorized for special events by the Director. Caring for Kids 1st is not responsible for any stolen or damaged items brought from home. Caring for Kids 1st has a no weapons policy including pretend ones. Imaginary guns, swords, weapons made from construction blocks, or any other manipulative will be redirected into other non-violent creations. No shoes with wheels will be allowed at anytime due to safety reasons.

## **Cell Phone and Tablet Policy**

Children are not allowed to have cell phones at Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> childcare. If you need to contact your child while they are here you may call and ask to speak to them. If we see your child's cell phone we will take it away and place in the office until you pick up your child. Tablets are also not allowed unless specifically approved by the Director for a special event or activity. Please do not talk on your cell phones when you drop off or pick up your child. We would like to be able to talk with you without interrupting your phone call if the opportunity fits.

## **Clothes**

Children should wear play clothes with sneaker/gym shoes and socks. Sandals, flip-flops, crocs, etc. are allowed to be brought in a backpack and worn at appropriate time.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

It is our top priority to ensure the health and welfare of every child in our care. The following is a list of guidelines that parents need to follow:

1. We require that all parents conduct themselves appropriately when dropping off or picking up their child.
2. All discussions regarding Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> childcare or any child in our care shall occur outside of the presence and hearing of the children.

3. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior on the part of either parent or any other authorized pick-up adult may, at the discretion of Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> staff, be grounds for the immediate termination of services.
4. If Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> staff suspect that someone authorized to pick up the child is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the adult will be asked by staff to not take the child, and staff will contact parents or other emergency contacts listed in the file to pick-up the child. If the adult insists on taking the child, staff will notify the police.

Caring for Kids 1<sup>st</sup> also supports children of divorced parents. It is important to list both the mother and the father on paper work including current residency, employer and phone numbers, if both parties will be authorized for pick up. Step-parents should also be listed, if they will be authorized to pick up or drop off a child as well. It is also important that pick up and drop off arrangements be made in advance and written documentation is on file in the office. State law is very clear that both parents of a child shall have equal rights. We have no authority to withhold a child from either parent, or to prohibit either parent from visiting their child at our site. In the event of sole legal custody has been granted, or other orders have been entered by the court limiting a parent's right to pick up or drop off their child, we must be provided with a copy of such court order or decree. In an emergency situation limiting either parent from picking up or dropping off their child, all paper work must be on file in the office.