



Member Handbook 2007-2008

OPENING DAY:	Saturday, November 3, 2007
CLOSING DAY:	Wednesday, April 30, 2008
HOURS OF OPERATION	
Mon, Wed, Thu	1:00 to 5:30
Fri	5:00 to 8:00
Sat	9:00 to 12:00
2 nd , 3 rd & 4 th Sun	2:00 to 5:00
VOLUNTEER SHIFTS	
Mon, Wed, Thu	Opener 1:00 to 2:30 – Tweener 2:30 to 4:00 – Closer 4:00 to 5:30
Fri	Opener 5:00 to 6:30 – Closer 6:30 to 8:00
Sat	Opener 9:00 to 10:30 – Closer 10:30 to 12:00
2 nd , 3 rd & 4 th Sun	Opener 2:00 to 3:30 – Closer 3:30 to 5:00
CLEAN UP NIGHTS	
2 nd & 4 th Sun	7:00 to 9:00pm

KidSpace Co-op
365 Belmont Street
Belmont, MA 02478
(617) 484-TOYS (8697)
www.belmontkidspace.org

Welcome to the KidSpace community.

As parents, we've all been there – another rainy day ... subzero temperatures ... end of day meltdowns. Our wonderful outdoor parks can become quite inhospitable during the winter months, but our children still have energy to burn. Enter KidSpace – a place to run, to play, to meet. Bring your children. Bring your friends. Or make new friends from the KidSpace community.

Benefits of Membership

KidSpace Co-op is a creative indoor playspace where families with babies, toddlers and preschoolers can experience a wide range of fun. As a member, you and your children will enjoy:

- A standing “play date” for the winter with a friendly and fun group of children and parents
- Unlimited use of KidSpace during 100+ days of operation
- 10,000 sq ft gym and play areas, including
 - Indoor “active zones” for climbing and riding
 - Several “imagination zones” with dress up clothes, play kitchens, trains and duplos
 - Protected “crawler zone” with 300 sq ft of mats and toys for infants & toddlers
 - Tables and chairs where children can eat snacks, or parents chat over coffee

Membership Philosophy

As members, KidSpace is YOUR KID'S SPACE for winter play – a place where children can play and parents can relax. So please:

- Help make KidSpace fun and safe
- Help keep it clean and orderly
- Supervise your children at all times
- Introduce yourself to other members
- Help the volunteers if they look busy

NOTE: All KidSpace'rs must be members, or trying it out with a first-time visitor pass.

Responsibilities of Membership

KidSpace is a one-of-a-kind community resource – created by local parents for their children. KidSpace Co-op is run by its members – parent volunteers who staff the space, clean the toys, stock the snack station and organize events.

1. Every KidSpace family pays membership dues of \$45 per season per family. Dues are kept low to make KidSpace affordable for all families to participate. Compare KidSpace dues of \$45 for 6 months to even the most affordable of toddler music classes at \$150+ for 2 months – where else could you find unlimited entertainment for your child throughout the bad weather months for only \$45?
2. Every KidSpace family must fulfill a volunteer commitment of three (3) EASY 90-minute volunteer services during the six-month KidSpace season (November through April). KidSpace is run entirely by its members, so all members must volunteer. There are many flexible options to fulfill the volunteer commitment (i.e. working the desk or joining a clean up night), even for parents of small children who have limited time available (in other words, all of us!).

NOTE: The \$10 “First Time Visitor Pass” allows families to “try out KidSpace” to see if their children like it, before spending \$45 for a membership. These first-time visitors fill out membership forms where their \$10 fee will be logged – and later, if they choose to join, their \$10 will be applied toward their membership fee.

NOTE: Some families have asked if it is possible to have a “more money / no volunteering” option for KidSpace membership. KidSpace cannot exist without volunteers to keep the doors open, and so the volunteer commitment is required for all members. Every effort has been made to make the volunteer commitment minimal, easy, flexible and fun.

What happens when I come to KidSpace?

- REGISTER ... When you enter KidSpace for the first time, you will fill out an online registration form, pay dues, and create a nametag.
- SLIPPERS ... Please remove outdoor shoes (you and your children) before entering KidSpace to help us keep the play areas clean. Children can wear socks or slippers – and we have slippers available for sale if you want to purchase them. There are storage bins and plastic bags on the racks inside KidSpace where you can store a pair of slippers there for your child – just make sure to label the bag.
- PERSONAL BELONGINGS ... Please store your personal belongings on the KidSpace racks or in the coat room outside KidSpace – not on the tables. We have limited table space which we need to keep clear for children and parents to use for snacks, etc.
- SUPERVISE YOUR CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES
- CLEAN UP ... Clean the table and/or floor immediately after your child has a snack to make the space usable by other children and parents.
- UPON LEAVING ... Store your nametag and slippers for your next visit.

KidSpace Communications

Most KidSpace communication happens through an email distribution list. Please check your email regularly and respond when necessary, especially if there is a plea for volunteer sign ups.

What is the volunteer commitment of the Cooperative?

All KidSpace member families are required to complete THREE (3) EASY 90-MINUTE VOLUNTEER SERVICES during the KidSpace season from November to April. One of these shifts should be in November or December, which will be busier with new families joining up than in the spring. So, this means if you, your spouse, or your caregiver signs up for two shifts at the desk and one clean-up night, you have fulfilled your volunteer commitment for the season. That's it! (Of course, if you can sign up for more than three shifts, that's great, too). These three shifts could be:

- An OPENER, TWEENER, or CLOSER at the KidSpace registration desk
- Participating in a scheduled CLEAN UP NIGHT
- Or an 'alternative' duty like running the dress-up cloths through the wash or handling some of the administrative work (data entry, finance, scheduling) from home.

Bottom line, the idea is to get as many people involved as possible to keep the workload easy and manageable. In addition, our committees could use ANY amount of time you or your family can share ... a couple of hours once or twice is okay! If you are interested in working on or co-chairing one of these committee, please contact Ellen at 617-489-2191 or ellensch@verizon.net. The committees include clean up, design, events, fundraising, logistics, membership, publicity, snacks & supplies, toys & facilities, and volunteers.

Can you "work a shift" at KidSpace when you have young children?

Each family, based on the ages and temperaments of their child/ren, will have a different experience working the registration desk in KidSpace. Many parents are able to keep an eye on their kids while working the desk. Others find that they need a different strategy. In the past, parents have:

- Kept their children near the registration desk (only appropriate for some families)
- Volunteered when a friend, spouse or caregiver was available to watch the kids in KidSpace
- Volunteered with a friend at KidSpace to help keep an eye on each other's children
- Volunteered on a weekend day when they could come alone and leave the kids at home
- Found it easier to sign up for clean-up nights than work a shift at the desk

Also, if you are a new volunteer, you can be paired with a seasoned volunteer. Please make sure to mark this on the sign-up sheet. If you are working with a seasoned volunteer, you will be able to "tag team" your time together at the desk.

Finally, if you are unable to find a way to “work a shift” at the registration desk, you can also fulfill your volunteer commitment by coming to three Clean Up Nights – and you will feel good knowing that KidSpace is a clean, healthy place for your children to play.

KidSpace Golden Rules

SLIPPERS

- Please remove outdoor shoes before entering KidSpace (slippers or socks are recommended). These can be stored in the slipper bins at KidSpace

SUPERVISION

- Children must be accompanied by a parent/caregiver at all times
- Children, even older children, must be supervised at all times

PLAY SPACE – GYM

- No snacks or drinks in the gym
- Tricycles, Cozy Coupes and Flying Turtles are to be ridden only in the gym
- Use the “kiddie” basketball hoops only. Balls should not be thrown at the large basketball hoops.
- GYM POLICY ... ESPECIALLY PARENTS OF OLDER CHILDREN:
 - Stay in the gym with your child – especially if he/she is riding a tricycle or flying turtle. You cannot know what he/she is doing if you are not in the gym.
 - Stop your child if he/she is riding too fast, playing ‘bumper cars’, or harassing other children.
 - Make sure your child understands these rules, and remove him/her if necessary.
 - Help make the gym safe for both younger and older children.

PLAY SPACE – INFANT AREA (i.e. on the colored mats)

- No snacks or drinks in the infant area
- Only infants and crawlers are allowed in the designated infant area
- Please wipe down any infant toys that have been “mouthed” by your child

SNACK AREA

- No peanut butter or peanut snacks
- Do not leave snacks unattended on tables
- All snacks and drinks, sippy cups, and juice boxes at the tables and chairs only
- After snacks, please wipe down tables and place garbage in cans

SICK CHILDREN

- Please do not bring your child to KidSpace if your child has had a fever in the past 24 hours
- Please use good judgment in deciding whether to bring your child to KidSpace if they have a cold

RESTROOMS & DIAPERS

- All children must be accompanied to the bathroom
- All diapers should be changed in the bathrooms
- Please bring plastic bags to dispose of dirty diapers
- DIAPERS CANNOT BE LEFT IN THE BATHROOM CANS – use the diaper pail inside KidSpace

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

- Place backpacks and coats on the racks in KidSpace or in the coat area at the bottom of the stairs
- Keep tables and chairs clear of coats and bags, as these are reserved for snacks and conversation
- Please keep strollers in the coat area at the bottom of the stairs (unless occupied by a sleeping baby)

CLEAN UP

- Wipe down any toys that your child has “mouthed” or dirtied through sticky hands, etc.
- Wipe down the snack table and chairs after your child is finished
- Help straighten any area your child has used, e.g. dress up clothes, trains, etc.
- Before closing, join the daily clean up by putting toys and equipment away

KidSpace Organization

Where are membership dues spent? KidSpace expenses are kept minimal through the use of volunteer staffing and donated goods and services, but there are still many expenses KidSpace must pay for – including rent, liability insurance, supplies, equipment upgrades and printing.

KidSpace Co-op is a program run by the Belmont Parents' Network, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization as registered with the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Your \$45 membership dues are not considered tax-deductible by the IRS or Commonwealth. As a nonprofit, the Belmont Parents' Network is permitted to receive donations for programs and operations, and donors will receive an acknowledgement for tax purposes.

When making purchase for supplies and equipment, KidSpace is exempt from paying Massachusetts Sales Tax. The attached Reimbursement Form and Proof of Nonprofit Status can be used by volunteers when shopping for KidSpace.

Frequently Asked Questions

When does KidSpace close?

WEATHER – If the town of Belmont declares a snow emergency (i.e. no street parking is allowed), KidSpace will be closed. If Belmont schools are closed but there is not a snow emergency, KidSpace may be open. Call KidSpace at (617) 484-8697 to see if it is open before you come.

LACK OF VOLUNTEERS – Unfortunately, it occasionally happens that volunteers cannot be found for every day of operation. In this case, KidSpace will be closed. Every effort will be made to post the closing on the KidSpace bulletin board, but last minute volunteer changes might make that impossible. If the door is locked on a regularly scheduled day of operation, feel free to become the volunteer and open and close KidSpace according to normal procedures.

CONFLICT WITH PAYSON PARK CHURCH SCHEDULE – It also occasionally happens that the Church has a special event or activity which conflicts with the KidSpace schedule. These closings will be posted on out bulletin boards.

Do I need to be a Belmont resident?

No. KidSpace cooperative membership is open to the general public -- Belmont residents as well as residents of neighboring towns.

Can I drop off my child/children with a nanny or babysitter?

Yes. However children must be accompanied and supervised at all times by a parent or adult caregiver.

Can I arrange to have my child's birthday party at KidSpace, or can I rent KidSpace for my parent's group?

At this point, KidSpace is not organizing birthday parties or renting to outside groups. However, the Payson Park Church rents the gymnasium and the dining room independently for large gatherings. Individuals are permitted to use the climbing structures, tables and chairs, but not other KidSpace toys and equipment. For information about rental, please contact the Payson Park Church directly at 617-484-1542.

Can I bring my older children with me to KidSpace?

KidSpace was designed with pre-schoolers in mind, and there are not a lot of activities or equipment for older children. If your child does accompany you to KidSpace, please make sure they are not being too physical in an area where there are younger children, or using equipment which is not designed for their age group. In many cases older children have been a big help setting up blocks with younger kids or helping them with puzzles.

Can we bring food into KidSpace?

Yes. Parents are allowed to bring in food or drinks for themselves and their children. KidSpace is a PEANUT FREE environment, to address the concerns of many parents of children with peanut allergies. Parents are asked to clean up after their lunch and wipe down the tables.

Is food for sale at KidSpace?

There are light snacks (goldfish, crackers) and drinks (juice boxes, water) available for 75 cents each to cover our costs.

How much does it cost to visit KidSpace?

As a cooperative, every KidSpace family will be required to be a member (\$45 for the season). This membership will allow unlimited entrance for the season and each family will be required to help out as active shift volunteers or as a committee leader.

Why are these prices so low?

It is the goal of the Belmont Parent’s Network (which operates KidSpace) to keep prices low to be affordable to welcome every member of the community.

How can I donate toys to KidSpace?

If you have toys that might be useful to KidSpace, please contact Donna Ruvolo at 617-489-5446. Toys that are especially useful are Cozy Coupes, “ride-on” vehicles for older children, tricycles, dress-up clothes, and Thomas/Brio type wooden trains. KidSpace could also use pre-school size play tables with chairs. All equipment should be in good, safe condition.

Is KidSpace affiliated with the Payson Park Church or with the Payson Park Nursery School?

No. The Belmont Parent’s Network rents the gymnasium and the dining hall from the church for KidSpace, and the Payson Park Nursery School is an independent operation of KidSpace. However, the Nursery School is currently sharing climbing structures and equipment with KidSpace, and the church has been instrumental to the growth and success of KidSpace.

Why aren’t there any morning hours?

The Payson Park Nursery School is located on the same level as KidSpace, and uses the space in the mornings for program activities.

Key Contacts

General Questions	Ellen Schreiber	ellensch@verizon.net	617.489.2191
Facilities	Bob & Jenn O’Connell	bobandjenn@yahoo.com	617.489.6012
Supplies	Jenny Brinkley	jmbrink2000@yahoo.com	617.926.9615
Finance	Fiona McCubbin	fionamccubbin@yahoo.com	617.484.2191
Payson Park Church	(for emergencies or info about rental)		617.484.1542

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS: How to Open

To get the key to the church...

- Only on Friday, Saturday and Sunday!!! On other days the door is already open, or ring the doorbell and the church secretary will open it.
- The first opener listed on the Web site must **PICK UP AND RETURN CHURCH KEY** from 348 Belmont Street (across the street from the church). Further instructions will be emailed to you before your shift.

To open the doors & turn on the lights...

- Unlock the front door of church with key
- Use the allen wrench hanging inside the door and turn the lock to the permanently “unlocked” position (see picture)
- Set up KidSpace sandwich board near the railing outside to publicize KidSpace is open (sign is kept by elevator near front door)
- Turn on all lights (to right of front door, to left of basement doors, by doors between gym and hallway, inside the gym to the left of the door)
- In gym, lift the gate between the gym and dining room and slide it to the left. Use the bungee cords to attach it securely to the other gate. Swing open the doors behind the gate and prop them open.
- Unlock the KidSpace supply closet – go through the door at the back of the dining room (under the exit sign); closet is on right; key is hanging on the right of the door frame. After opening, **RETURN THE CLOSET KEY TO ITS HOOK!!!**



To set up the room...

- In KidSpace supply closet, get the computer, cash box & snack cart.
- Restock any cleaning supplies (e.g. wipes) or snacks (extras are in the supply closet)
- Put water in coffee maker and plug in
- Take out more riding toys from the closet near the tables, as needed

Set up registration

- Take out a cash envelope and date it
- Plug in the computer – (1) power cord, (2) Internet cable, (3) security cable, (4) printer cable
- Open computer & push power button (at the back of the keyboard)
- Log in: kidspace Password: kidspace
- Wait for Internet Explorer to automatically start and connect to www.belmontkidspace.org/registration.html

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS: How to Work the Registration Desk

On the computer...

- You will see the KidSpace Control Panel, which includes every form and report you should need to work registration. Please don't navigate away from this page. But if you do, **PRESS THE HOME BUTTON ON THE BROWSER TO RETURN** – this page is **NOT** accessible to the public through the menus.
- The control panel includes the following:
 - Payment Form – to record payment of dues, visitor fees, slipper purchases, donations, etc.
 - Volunteer Form – to sign up for volunteer shifts
 - Registration Form – every visitor & member must register their family information
 - Volunteer Shifts – the schedule of shifts (days & times)
 - Filled Volunteer Shifts – a report of the current filled shifts – use this to help members sign up for shifts that are not yet filled!!!
 - Registered Families – a report of the current list of registered members – use this if help members remember if they have registered yet

When families enter, if they are...

- **ALREADY A MEMBER**
 - ask them to grab their nametag
 - remind them to sign up for volunteer shifts
- **READY TO JOIN & they have ALREADY REGISTERED ONLINE**
 - collect \$45 full dues, or \$35 balance of dues
 - on the computer, fill in the Payment Form and click Add Payment
 - give them a nametag & handbook
- **READY TO JOIN & they have NOT YET REGISTERED ONLINE**
 - collect \$45 dues
 - fill in the Registration Form and click Add Family
 - then fill in the Payment Form and click Add Payment
 - give them a nametag & handbook
- **A FIRST-TIME VISITOR and want to TRY IT OUT BEFORE JOINING**
 - collect \$10 fee (which will be applied to membership when they join)
 - fill in the Registration Form and click Add Family
 - then fill in the Payment Form and click Add Payment
 - give them a nametag & handbook

Help members sign up for Volunteer Shifts!!!

- Show them the FILLED VOLUNTEER SHIFTS report (bottom left of the control panel) so they can find an open shift
- Fill in the Volunteer Form and click Add Shift

Other duties / things to know

- Checks should be made out to Belmont Parents Network
- Sell snacks & drinks – everything is 75 cents each
- Put money in cashbox & record transaction on cash envelope
- Remind visitors that KidSpace is a volunteer-run cooperative, and ask if they would take a volunteer shift

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS: How to Close

To clean up...

- 15 minutes before closing, flash the lights in both rooms and ask parents to begin to clean up
- Unplug coffee pot and dump out excess water
- Empty diaper pail and trash cans into one large trash bag, and place near elevator –
PLEASE CHECK THAT NO DIAPERS ARE IN BATHROOM TRASH CANS
- Push roller coaster, flying turtles, cozy coupes, and Kettler tricycles against the wall in gym; return the other riding toys to the closet next to the eating tables
- Put chairs back around tables
- Hang up dress-up clothes, remove toys from the gym, & return toys to appropriate stations

To close up registration...

- Close Internet Explorer (upper right corner) and shutdown the computer (click the Start menu on the bottom left corner, then the right arrow on the bottom right of the menu, then select Shut Down)
- Unplug the 4 cables (power, Internet, security, printer) and leave them tidy, then put the computer in the carrying case
- Count money; leave \$25 in the cash box; put remaining money in cash envelope, fill out information on envelope, and deposit cash envelope in the lock box in the KidSpace Supply Closet (in the back corner by the dress up clothes)
- Return snack cart, computer & cash box to the KidSpace Supply Closet
- Make sure that the key to the supply closet is hanging on the right-hand side of the door frame, OUTSIDE THE CLOSET – then close the door (it locks automatically)

To close up the building...

- From the gym, lock the double doors & replace the gate between two rooms (the gate is bungeed next to door)
- Turn out lights in both rooms & hallways
- Bring in KidSpace sandwich board from outside & store it near the elevator on street level
- Lock the outside door using allen wrench attached to door (see picture on previous page)