



## **Talking Stick Learning Center's Policies and Guidelines**

### Tuition

Payment of your child's tuition is due the 1st day of the current month, unless you have made other arrangements with Talking Stick's Directors. Checks or money orders should be made out to Talking Stick Learning Center and mailed to PO Box 4632, Philadelphia, PA 19127.

Payments can also be made online through our website. If checks do not clear you will be charged a returned check fee of \$25.00 (bank charges us \$35).

### Drop off and Pick up

Drop off is no earlier than 9:00am and pick up is no later than 3:00pm. Your child must not be left on the Learning Center grounds without supervision. Please walk your child into the Learning Center each morning and release your child to a facilitator before you leave. Before you leave with your child, please notify a staff person.

Your child may be not be released to anyone except parents/guardians without permission. Please give Talking Stick advance notice if other persons will pick up your child.

### Items from Home

In general, items from home stay at home. The exception is emotional security items, such as blankets and stuffed animals or dolls. Please speak with the staff at Talking Stick if your child requires those items to curb the anxiety about being separated from you.

### Food

Please pack your child a snack and a lunch, and a water bottle with a lid that shuts. Water bottles are carried outside to ensure the health of your child. Sharing food at Talking Stick is prohibited due to parental diet preferences and possible allergies. Do not bring in treats to share for birthdays or other occasions. When siblings each bring their own lunch, it reduces conflicts and increases individual autonomy.

### Health

You will be notified if your child becomes ill. Please be prepared to pick-up your child or make arrangements to have your child picked up within one hour of notification.

Please feel free to contact the Directors, Katie O'Connor and Angie Hoppel with any questions.  
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Your child cannot attend Talking Stick if he/she has any illness that threatens the health of other children. Please ensure that your child is fever and symptom free for 24 hours before returning to Talking Stick after an illness.

Please inform Talking Stick within 24 hours or the next business day if your child or any member of your immediate household has developed any reportable communicable disease, as defined by the State Board of Health, except for life threatening diseases which must be reported immediately.

Medication will be administered with permission from parents and advance notice.

## Clothing

Please encourage your youth to dress appropriately for painting and other potentially messy endeavors. In addition, please make sure that their attire matches the weather—boots for mud, coats for cold, hats and scarves, etc. Going outside is an important part of Talking Stick.

## Snow Days

Snow days are determined by a number of factors, including the Philadelphia School District, the weather forecast, and whether the Arboretum and local streets have been plowed. Due to set expenses, regardless of snow days, Talking Stick does not offer refunds or make up days for snow days.

## Disciplinary Process

Most commonplace disciplinary issues are managed by the facilitator in the classroom.

If a behavioral event or a pattern of behaviors requiring disciplinary action becomes a concern to a facilitator, the facilitator will:

- 1 Communicate with co-facilitators, meeting to discuss the behavioral issue.
- 2 Meet with the young person to discuss what is happening. Listen to the young person. Be very clear about boundaries. Be very specific.
- 3 Informally communicate with parents about the issue.

If another behavior event occurs or the pattern of behaviors requiring disciplinary action continues, the facilitator will:

- 1 Communicate with the facilitating team, to discuss the issue.

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- 2 A Co-Director +1 (facilitator or board member) will work together to plan a formal communication with the parents, for the purpose of getting help from the parents and to notify the parent of the problem.
- 3 At this time Talking Stick, the parents, and the young person may work together to create a Disciplinary Plan: Individual Behavior Process, to address behavioral issues.

If a behavioral event or pattern of behaviors requiring disciplinary action becomes to disruptive or dangerous for facilitators or participants, the young person may be suspended or expelled from Talking Stick Learning Center. The process for suspension or expulsion is:

- 1 Communicate with facilitators to gather information about the event or incidents.
- 2 Conference between facilitator responsible for making or approving of the disciplinary action, co-directors, and board members.
- 3 Communication with witnesses, if applicable.
- 4 Communication with young person and family, with invitation to formal conference. This is an opportunity for the young person to be heard.
- 5 After all pertinent information is gathered and considered, staff and board members will recommend a disciplinary action.
- 6 If recommended disciplinary action is suspension or expulsion, a notice of such, by phone call, and written notice will be sent to the family within 24 hours. It must include description of conduct on which the disciplinary action is based.

## Collections policy

We know that sometimes it's hard to stay on top of your bill payments. Your agreement with us, much like an electricity or gas account, is binding, and we trust that you will pay for your service as stipulated. If, however, you fail to do so without informing us of a change in situation and without responding to our attempts to contact you, we may have to proceed with collections activity.

Internal collections will commence on an account which remains overdue for 60 days, and when the family has not contacted us to inform of a change in their situation that may warrant special consideration. Such special arrangements are decided and dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

If an account remains unpaid for a period which we deem to be significant, Talking Stick will continue to make attempts to contact the family. Should the family not respond or fail to adequately explain the reason for the overdue amount, Talking Stick may conclude that restriction or suspension of services is appropriate.

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If a Bill remains unpaid for over a year, the account may be listed with an external Collections Agency, we may attempt mediation, or seek other debt resolution solutions available to small businesses. We will send notification before seeking external resolution. Default Listings can have an impact on your credit rating and therefore your ability to secure credit from any source. As such we highly recommend that should you experience any trouble in paying your bill you contact us immediately.

If an amount owed is the subject of an unresolved complaint, no Credit Management or collections activity will be undertaken on that amount until the dispute is resolved. If that amount makes up only part of a total debt, the rest may still be subject to Credit Management action and the family will be notified as such.

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