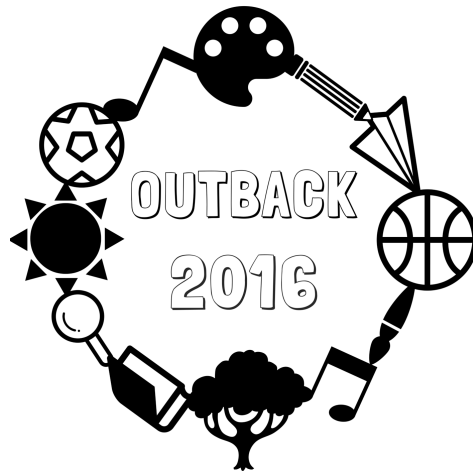




Agassiz Baldwin
Community

Outback Summer Program Family Handbook



ABC CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

PARENT HANDBOOK

(abbreviated for the Outback Summer Program)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Our goal in Agassiz Baldwin Community's Children's Programs is to develop a community, build social and emotional skills, and provide opportunities for children to learn, explore, and try new endeavors. We work diligently to help children develop the abilities necessary to accomplish this. We recognize that it is of critical importance that each child feels safe physically and emotionally. Only when this has been established can other goals be achieved.

Our teachers are trained to deal sensitively and creatively with children's social challenges. The staff assists the children in developing a social consciousness and a care for others as well as for themselves.

The ABC Children's Program is proud of its diverse population and holds firm in its goal to provide a space that is welcoming and inclusive for children of all backgrounds and beliefs. The ABC Children's Program does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

Administrative Organization

The Outback Summer Program is a program of the Agassiz Baldwin Community (ABC), a not-for-profit organization. The agency is a neighborhood-based organization headed by an Executive Director. A Director of Children's Programs, a Registration Coordinator, and Site Directors (Kindergarten Outback, 1st-6th Grade Outback, and Outback Extended Day) administer the Outback Summer Program. The programs run with the help of a strong staff of Teachers, Mayor's Youth, Counselors-in-Training (CITs) and sometimes summer interns and/or volunteers.

Staff

The Director of Children's Programs oversees the afterschool, summer, preschool programs, and teen employment programs. The Director of Children's Programs also works closely with other local groups to foster community development as well as with education programs to augment the current programs. The Early Education Site Director oversees program planning and operation of the Kindergarten Afterschool Program and the preschool program (Sacramento Street Preschool). The School Age Site Director is in charge of program planning and operation of the 1-5th Grade Afterschool. The Kindergarten Coordinator oversees curriculum and behavior management for the Kindergarten Afterschool and Kindergarten Outback programs. The Registration Coordinator handles all registration and waitlists, student permissions and files, and scholarship applications. The Site Directors are in charge of program planning and operation of the afterschool and summer programs. Each site consists of a Site Director and teachers who report to the Director of Children's Programs daily and who meet together once a week to exchange information and to discuss issues related to the children. The team works together to plan and oversee the Outback Summer Program.

Our average adult to child ratio is 1:10 with a strict maximum of 1:13. Teachers' credentials vary, but there is always a mix of teacher certification, experience with school-age children, and activity specialization to help maintain a fun yet safe environment.

The Outback Summer Program is licensed by the State of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). Many of our guidelines and policies reflect the EEC regulations.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND SERVICES

Program Concept

The adjustment of Kindergartners to a summer program often requires special consideration. When Kindergartners first come to Outback, they need to adapt to another schedule, more children, more adults, different rules, and a new place. It can be difficult for some children to engage in structured activities for a full day. Frequently, younger children will choose free time or outdoor activities even when specialists are available to them. We take special care to help with this adjustment and we ask that parents stay in close touch with the staff about how their children are doing.

Each week there are new children enrolled in Outback. Our staff is aware that some children will be more hesitant to “jump in” and make friends. We take steps each morning during check in to greet all students, make them feel welcome and either buddy them up with another student or help them find an activity that they will be interested in.

Similarly, older children often require special attention, but, often, for very different reasons. Fifth and sixth graders who have been at Outback for several years often demonstrate an increasing need to express independence. Our program recognizes this and tries to give this age group the freedom they need within reason, and to provide programming that attracts and sustains their interest.

SCHEDULE AND HOURS

Outback Summer Program runs on a weekly basis from July 5th–August 26th, 2016.

Daily Routine

- The morning begins with free time and relaxed activities, then a group meeting.
- Children will meet daily from 9:00-9:20am in “Morning Groups” differentiated by age group and led by a designated teacher. Each teacher will be the “go to” person for a specific age group so that the children have a teacher to go to with questions/concerns and parents can check in with them for specific information on how their child is doing. Groups will do community-building activities and games that make everyone feel welcome.
- Choices often include activities such as cooking, drama, visual arts, games, science, crafts, creative writing, sports, and drawing. While many of these choices are free standing, our Morning Clubs involve a commitment for a longer period of time (usually one week), which may lead to weekly performances or a final project.
- We hold a community meeting before each choice. The regular Outback schedule offers two clubs and an afternoon choice, and extended day offers two more choices. On occasion, choices involving specialists may encompass time usually used for two separate activities. Children, not surprisingly, most often make their choices according to their interests and abilities or a connection with a teacher.
- At times, children are encouraged to try a new activity, but for the most part, their choices are theirs to make. Groups tend to include about ten children, but this number may vary for different activities such as clay, sports, or drama.

Outback Pick-Up Policy/Late Fees

Please pick up your child promptly and no later than:

3:00 pm for regular days.

At 3:01 pm the late fee policy is in effect as stated below.

5:30 pm for extended days.

At 5:46 pm the late fee policy is in effect as stated below.

Late fees:

- We will charge a late fee of \$10.00 for the first five minutes of a late pickup, and \$5.00 for each additional five minutes thereafter (e.g. if you pick up your child by 5:46 pm, you will have a \$10.00 late fee on your account. If you have not arrived by 5:51 pm, it will increase to \$15.00, etc.)
- If we have not heard from you by 15 minutes after pick-up time, your emergency contacts will be called. In any case, a late fee will be assessed — no exceptions — and you will be billed on your next invoice. After an excess of five late pick-ups, your fee will increase to double the original amount. Ten late pick-ups may result in dismissal of your child from the program.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information contained in a child or staff record is confidential. Children will not participate in any activities unrelated to the direct care of the program (i.e. fundraisers, research) without written parent or guardian permission.

OTHER PROGRAMS

1) Agassiz Baldwin Afterschool offers engaging and creative afternoon programming for students from Cambridge Public Schools and all area neighborhoods during the academic year. Students choose from a variety of activities, including visual and performing arts, games, sports, homework assistance and outside time. Our program is licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). The Kindergarten Afterschool is located at 20 Sacramento Street. The 1st-5th grade Afterschool is located on the lower level of the Maria Baldwin School. The afternoon begins with a healthy snack and a meeting where the afternoon activities are discussed. Children are offered two activity choices per day. The teaching staff offers choices informed by the children's interests as well as activities based on project-based curriculum themes.

2) Counselor-in-Training (CIT) Program is a 2-week session (30 hours total) offered during Outback. This program is for youth entering 7th-9th grades. The goal of the CIT program is to build concrete job readiness skills while helping adolescents develop self-confidence and initiative. CITs assist with setup and clean up of activities and help staff engage with the children. At the end of a successful session, CITs receive a modest stipend for their community service work.

3) Sacramento Street Preschool is a program for children ages 2 years 9 months to 5 years old and runs Monday through Friday from September through June every year. Sacramento Street Preschool is a play-based program. Through a curriculum of sensory exploration, dramatic play, music and visual arts, our primary emphasis is on the social enrichment of the children, especially in preparation for future school experiences. Children can attend two, three or five days a weeks from 8:30am to 12:00pm or from 8:30am to 1:00pm or 2:30pm.

4) The Agassiz Neighborhood Council is a forum for community discussion and action. Through monthly neighborhood meetings, residents explore ways to enhance the quality of life in our channels, including conversations with city representatives. The ANC's newsletter, The Whistler, tracks the pulse of the neighborhood.

5) The Living Well Network (LWN), based on a grassroots community development model, links seniors with people of all ages in a neighborhood-based social network. Members participate in programs and volunteer activities that celebrate their community as an exciting urban environment in which to age.

6) Maud Morgan Arts Center (MMA) is a dynamic community arts center where beginning and professional artists create, teach, exhibit, and collaborate. The center offers classes and workshops for all ages. Here you can engage with some of Cambridge and Boston's finest artists in studios designed for printmaking, ceramics, drawing and painting, and sculpture.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION

To register, parents must complete the online registration at www.agassiz.org with the \$100 non-refundable deposit per week.

Deposits, Tuition, and Fee Information

Non-Refundable Tuition Deposit and Tuition Due Date

- A non-refundable deposit of \$100 per week, per child, is due at time of registration.
- No registration will be processed without the full non-refundable deposit.
- All tuition fees (the remaining balance) must be paid in full by April 30th, 2016 to secure your registration
- Agassiz Baldwin Community and the Outback team will make every effort to contact you if we have not received full tuition by April 30th.
- After May 15th, 2016, you will forfeit your child's space in the program if there is an unpaid balance on your registration fees.
- All applications received after April 30th must be accompanied by full tuition.

Refund Policy

- Weekly non-refundable deposit of \$100.00 (per week, per child) is non-refundable.
- If you withdraw your child from the Outback Summer Program prior to April 30th, you will forfeit your non-refundable deposit of \$100 per week, per child.
- After April 30th, no refunds or credits will be issued.

Payment

Families may pay for the Outback tuition online with a credit card, over the phone with a credit card, or by check.

Online: You may pay online with a Visa or MasterCard by logging into your account at aggasiz.org and hitting the "Register Online" button. The log in link is at the top of the next page. Use your username and password created when enrolling your child. While credit card information may stay on file on your account, this is not something we have access to and we do not charge your credit card automatically.

Phone: You may pay over the phone using a Visa or MasterCard. Please call 617-349-6287 x28.

Check: A check made out to Agassiz Baldwin Community may be mailed to our main office at 20 Sacramento St. Cambridge, MA 02138. For your convenience, you may also drop off a check in our parent/caregiver mailbox, located on the first floor of 20 Sacramento St. This is locked at all times and checked daily. The mailbox may be accessed any time we are open, usually between 8:00am-6:00pm Mon-Fri.

Withdrawal and Waitlists

If you wish to withdraw your child from the Outback program, please contact Registration at registration@agassiz.org at your earliest convenience so that we are able to notify families on waitlists. Please note that tuition is non-refundable.

If your child is currently on the waitlist for a week of Outback, you will be contacted by Registration immediately if and when a spot opens up and you are next on the waitlist.

Receipts

Our Tax Identification Number may be found at the top of any invoice that was emailed to you. When requesting a receipt for childcare expenses, please contact registration@agassiz.org and allow at least one week for us to process your request. Receipts are manually generated and can be mailed, emailed or faxed, so please specify your preference.

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your individual account please contact registration@agassiz.org.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- Pick up time provides parents and teachers with an important opportunity to exchange information about the children. We ask parents to keep the Outback Site Directors informed of any changes in a child's behavior or situation at home that may have a bearing on the child's day. Also, if there are parts of the Outback program that you suspect might be challenging for your child, we encourage you to let us know as soon as possible. While no set schedule is in place for parent/teacher conferences, a conference may be requested. Parents should feel free to discuss any issues they have with any teacher in their child's program, but are particularly encouraged to talk to the Site Director or Director of Children's Programs for more serious concerns. Site Directors will check in with parents at pick-up or drop-off if there are small concerns or updates about your child's day at Outback. If more serious concerns arise, a Site Director will call or email.
- Parents are welcome to visit the program at any time. During Outback, we have lunchtime family events each Friday. Families are welcome to join us as students present dance and drama performances. This is the time staff presents weekly Outback Awards. There are also special events and performances held throughout the summer at Outback. Families are invited to join these. Please refer to the Outback Calendar or the weekly email communication for more information.
- We promote parent involvement and interaction. We have Parent Representatives who sit on the Executive Board of the Agassiz Baldwin Community. Parents are welcome to attend the meetings.
- From time to time, parents are asked to take part in hiring committees, planning committees and volunteer workdays (scheduled in October and May). There are various social events to which all are welcome, including Thanksgiving Pot Luck Dinner and a spring Backyard Block Party.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Accidents and Emergency Procedures

- Teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR. In the event of minor accidents, a teacher will administer first aid and notify the child's parent at pick up. Any injury that requires first aid requires an injury report to be filled out and signed by a parent/guardian.
- If your name is highlighted at pick-up, please see a Site Director to sign an injury form or check-in.
- If an illness or injury requires medical attention, parents will be contacted immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the designated emergency contact person will be called. In an emergency situation requiring immediate medical attention, a teacher will call 911 and the Site Director will go with the child by ambulance to the nearest hospital. Parents will be contacted to meet them at the hospital. An accident report will be filled out on any incident and one copy of the report will be given to the parent and a second copy will be kept in the child's file.

Contingency Plans During Summer

- The EEC requires all childcare centers to have contingency plans in place in the event of situations such as fire; loss of water, heat or electricity; natural disaster or other situations necessitating evacuation. The Outback staff, under the instruction of the Site Director, will remove children immediately from the premises at 20 Sacramento Street.
- Children will be allowed to gather their belongings only in situations that are not life-threatening. It will be explained to the children that they need to leave the space temporarily while a problem is fixed, and will be taken to a safe place with their teachers until they are picked up by their parents (or other persons designated by parents).
- Children will be walked to the Community Room (Hawaii Room/Afterschool Room) located in the basement of the Baldwin Elementary School at 85 Oxford Street (corner of Sacramento and Oxford Streets). This room is equipped with water, electricity and telephone.
- Children's emergency contact forms will be brought to the site, and parents will be emailed/phoned by staff and informed of the situation. Depending upon severity of the circumstances, parents may be asked to pick up children as soon as possible.
- In the event that the Baldwin Elementary School site is inaccessible, the same procedures will be followed, but children will be walked by their teachers to the basement level of the Agassiz Community Room ("North Hall") at 1651 Massachusetts Avenue (corner of Mass. Ave. and Wendell St.). This site is also equipped with heat/air conditioning, water, electricity and telephone.
- Parents are informed of these contingency plans only as a precautionary measure. They are designed to put you at ease that our staff will be able to keep children safe and calm in the event of unusual circumstances.
- On trips, children are assigned to a group of 10-13 children with a staff member along with a parent chaperone. All teachers maintain their group attendance. The Outback Director and Site Director do not lead groups but keep a list of all groups and counselors. Attendance is taken before boarding buses to go on trips and after boarding buses to return to the site. We have never lost a child but if this were to occur, it would be reported to the Director of Children's Programs immediately. If the child is not found right away, 911 will be called.

Illness

- Children attending the Outback Summer Program are expected to be well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. If a child is not feeling well enough to participate in all activities, parents need to make other childcare arrangements until the child is feeling better.
- If a child becomes ill during the Outback day or is found to have a contagious condition, the parent or emergency contact will be called and is expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. Each site has a quiet resting area where children can lay down and be separated from the other children in the program.
- Children must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the program. Similarly, children with a condition that requires treatment with antibiotics may not return to the program until they have been treated with the antibiotics for at least 24 hours. Children with a communicable disease may be required by the Director to return with a note from the doctor. Parents will be notified in writing if there is a communicable disease or condition that is of concern.

- If a medical problem persists, Outback staff may recommend referral to the child's doctor or to the Program's health care consultant. A copy of the complete Health Care Policy is available upon request.

Lice

Head lice are nothing to panic or be embarrassed about. There are 6–12 million cases of head lice in our country each year. The presence of head lice is in no way indicative of a lack of cleanliness. In fact, if treatment directions are carefully followed, you can be confident lice will be eliminated. The Outback lice policy is in place to help contain an outbreak, should one occur. If a child is found to have head lice, his or her parent or guardian will be contacted. If families discover lice on their Outbacker, please notify a Site Director or the Director of Children's Programs. All information will be kept confidential. We ask that children be treated for lice before returning to Outback. Dress-up clothes and other soft items will be removed from the program and laundered before being returned to the site. If we are aware of any cases of lice in the Outback community, an email notice will be sent out to all families.

Medication

- Outback requires written parental authorization in order to administer any medication, whether prescription or non-prescription. Medication consent forms can be requested from the Registration Coordinator. A parent or guardian must also complete an Individual Health Care Plan for any student with an ongoing health related condition, which can be requested from the Registration Coordinator (this includes things such as allergies, asthma, diabetes or other conditions that require a plan to be in place).
- A label or other written order by the physician indicating the child's name, the name of the drug, and instructions for administration must accompany prescription medication.
- Outback Site Directors will complete a medication record indicating the date, time and dosage of each administration, and the name of the teacher and the child. All medications will be kept in their original containers and will be stored in a secure location. Unused medications will be returned to the parents.

Self-Medication

In the case of a child who needs to self-medicate (for example asthma or diabetes), the following steps will be required: a parent will meet with the Site Director to discuss the medical need and to fill out a medical consent form and Individual Health Care Plan; a letter from the child's doctor will be obtained indicating a child's medical need; and all information will be reviewed by the Director. Upon approval by the Director of Children's Programs, a child will be allowed to self-medicate as required. The Site Director will record on the medical consent form each time the child self-administers medication. The child's parent is required to indicate any changes in the child's medical situation to the Site Director.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

- In order to provide a safe, nurturing, enjoyable, and smooth-functioning environment for all children, it is necessary that everyone participating in Outback understand and agree to the same set of expectations and rules. Our staff is trained to set very clear, consistent limits. We articulate expectations and identify what types of behaviors are acceptable and what types are unacceptable within the summer program setting. Children understand the environment and play an important role in helping to shape it and to redefine it as necessary. When possible, children may help to establish group rules.
- With clear expectations established, teachers respond to inappropriate behavior according to the situation and their understanding of the child(ren) involved. Children almost always know when they have exceeded boundaries and are often their own best judge of inappropriate behavior. Children may be redirected to another activity or asked to respond to the situation caused by their behavior. On occasion, it becomes necessary for a child to take a brief "break" from an activity.
- A "break" is a short reset and a chance for children to stop an unsafe or disruptive behavior. After a break, children are welcomed back to the activity with a clean slate. Breaks range from 10 seconds to 1 minute—depending on the age of the children. Breaks are not punitive.
- The Outback staff practice "The Nurtured Heart Approach", which is a positive reinforcement approach to behavior guidance. Children are offered many opportunities for positive reinforcement from staff who provide very specific comments when positive behavior is observed.
- The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) requests that we inform you that no child shall be subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment. Children will not be subject to verbal abuse, ridicule, or humiliation. They will not be denied food, rest, or bathroom facilities, punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; nor will they be forced to remain in soiled

clothing or forced to use the toilet. They will not be punished for eating or not eating, nor forced to eat. The Outback Summer Program is a mandated reporter for any instances of suspected child abuse or neglect. A copy of the full behavior management policy is available upon request.

Referral for Services

Should any staff member feel that any aspect of a child's development (social, mental, educational, or medical) require additional services, that teacher will bring the concerns to the attention of the Site Director, who will then confer with the Director of Children's Programs. The child will be further observed and observations documented. Staff will meet with parents who will be advised of the nature of the concerns and referral to the appropriate resource agency will be made. Outback staff will work in a team with parents and resource staff to address the situation, outline goals, and to monitor progress.

The Outback Summer Program will provide to parents a written statement of the reason for recommending a referral, a summary of the program observations, and efforts the program has made to accommodate the child's needs. Outback will help parents in the referral process and will have written parental consent prior to making a referral. The program will maintain written records of all referrals and conference results.

ABC Children's Programs are required by Massachusetts's law to report any incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Director of Children's Programs shall immediately report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF). In addition, the EEC will be notified immediately after filing a 51A or learning that one has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in care of the program or during a program-related activity.

Suspensions and Expulsions

Suspensions will be invoked in those instances when a child's actions pose a threat to the safety and well being of another child, himself or herself, or a teacher. Parents will be informed immediately as to the cause and nature of the suspension. The Director of Children's Programs retain the final authority for suspension decision. There are instances in which the match between a child and the Outback Summer Program is not a constructive one, both for the individual as well as for the group. The child may have needs that cannot be met by Outback, and the extreme effort involved in trying to keep the two linked may have a detrimental effect on each. In the very rare cases of this nature, a child may be asked to leave the Program. In addition, in exceptional circumstances where the continued enrollment of a child is deemed to be a threat to the safety of other children in the group, the Director of Children's Programs has the authority to discontinue a child's participation in the Program.

NUTRITION

- Parents provide a morning snack, lunch and drinks/water for their child each day. Outback Summer Program provides an afternoon snack to children in extended day at 3:00 pm.
- We aim to select snacks that appeal to children and are nutritious. A typical snack includes items such as crackers and cheese, fresh fruit slices, bagels, and vegetables. On occasion, we have special snack days that often include food prepared during cooking classes or seasonal items (including 100% juice popsicles on hot days).
- Parents should inform and discuss with the Site Director, prior to the start of Outback, any food allergies or restrictions. This information also needs to be listed on the child's emergency form.
- Children are very active during their Outback days. We encourage families to pack "growing foods" that can be eaten in any order. In an effort to stay "green" we request that you send your child to Outback each day with his/her labeled and refillable water bottle.

We look forward to another great summer at Outback! As always, please contact us with any questions, concerns or ideas for improving the program.

Sincerely,

The 2016 Outback Staff