



# FAQ

## What is Kids U? Is it a fairly new organization?

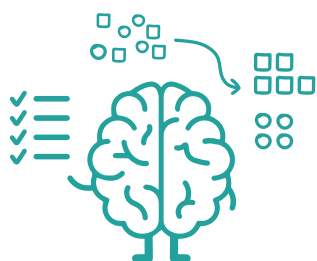
Kids U Canada is an industry leader when it comes to Early Childhood Development & Education. It was founded almost a decade ago within a small church in Calgary and since then we have expanded across 10 locations in Alberta & Saskatchewan. Our unique proprietary learning system has been implemented at various child care centres & pre-schools across North America and benefits over 10,000 children in their whole brain development. Kids U Calgary is an award winning organization and has also been voted Calgary's best preschool 4 years in a row.

## We have heard of deficit based learning but what exactly is asset based learning?

Kids U's asset-based approach focuses on strengths. It views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets. Teachers and students alike are valued for their strengths rather than being characterized by what they may need to work on or lack. Asset-based teaching (also known as strengths-based teaching) seeks to unlock childrens' potential by focusing on their talents. On the other hand the deficit-based teaching highlights childrens' inadequacies.

## What are considered to be the core brain Executive Functions?

The three main areas under Executive Function skills are Cognitive Flexibility, Working Memory and Inhibition. Cognitive Flexibility: Adjusting to changing demands; shifting between projects; and task switching Working Memory: Using information to plan, organize and solve problems Inhibition: Impulse control, emotional control and self-monitoring.



Working Memory

- ✔ Focus for long periods
- ✔ Control Emotions
- ✔ Make Decisions
- ✔ Remember Instructions



Cognitive Flexibility

- ✔ Shift between projects
- ✔ Hold multiple thoughts & ideas
- ✔ Plan and organize



Inhibitory Control

- ✔ Abstain from inappropriate behavior
- ✔ Control impulses
- ✔ Refrain from bad habits

## Why is building Executive Function considered so important at Kids U?

These skills are a set of mental processes that work like an air traffic control system in the child's brain, enabling them to plan, focus attention, remember instructions and more. This "air traffic control system" is foundational to learning and is built in our classrooms through daily activities. Science has shown that individuals with stronger executive functions are more successful later in life, including better overall health and wellness.

Executive Function Skills and abilities help children so that they can grow up to be fearless, make conscious decisions, manage their impulses, regulate their emotions, and many more!



### **What is Reggio Inspired Learning Philosophy?**

Our Reggio-Emilia inspired learning philosophy (Right Brain) focuses on the child as a competent and creative person. With that in mind, our Right Brain rooms are designed with the intention to spark children's imagination and make learning fun. Through interest-based projects, learning centers that stimulate the senses, and lots of exploration, our children in the Right Brain room take ownership of their learning and have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves and their individuality.

### **What is Montessori Learning Philosophy?**

Montessori education is based on the educational philosophy and practices of Maria Montessori. In this classroom (Left Brain) the teachers follow the lead of the child. In the prepared environment, children are given the freedom and the independence to make their own decisions and learn at their own pace. The materials and the orderly nature of the classroom act as a third teacher. Through hands-on experiences with the materials the children absorb concepts from simple to complex, concrete to abstract and develop their concentration and independence.

### **What is Movement Learning?**

Our internally-developed, award-winning Movement program is designed to enhance physical literacy and to form mind and body connections. Children are exposed to a variety of movement experiences that will develop their knowledge, confidence and competence of fundamental movement skills, along with fostering positive social interactions. We do this through the three domains of Cognitive development, Motor Development and Social Emotional Development.

### **What are the benefits of having different environments?**

Our whole focus at Kids U is to teach children how to learn rather than what to learn through the development of executive functions. Science tells us that executive functions are best developed in the early years through a child's experiences. By having three different learning environments, the children's experiences are exponentially increased, and the simple act of transitioning from one environment to another, further amplifies the effect.

### **What makes your program so different from other child care and preschool programs?**

Kids U is the only brain development research-based preschool and child care in Alberta. Our unique curriculum blends Montessori education with the Reggio Emilia-inspired learning philosophy, as well as an award-winning physical literacy program that promotes the connection between the body and mind.



### What is included in your fees?

Kids U provides exceptional value for money! We provide all daily toileting consumables for children including diapers, wipes, and diaper cream. Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks are included in our extended care programs, while our Preschool only programs include lunch. Bedding is provided in all Infant programs. In addition, your tuition goes towards all required materials for day to activities, individualized reports and assessments for every child, special guests, projects, and specialized instruction, participation in special events as well as Parent Education Nights and other adult-oriented educational programs.

### Are meals extra?

What if we want to opt out of meals? Fresh, mostly organic, hand-made meals are an included part of our service, and there are no additional charges for dietary substitutions and accommodations for allergies. While parents are always welcome to prepare and send lunch or breakfast for their child, opting out of meals does not impact our tuition rates.

### Do you offer preschool in the summer months?

In the summer our attention shifts to delivering exceptional summer camp experiences based on fun, educational themes that encourage children to get outside, stay active, think creatively, socialize with their friends and much more. By shifting our focus, children, teachers and families are given flexibility to enjoy summer holidays while also staying in the routine of daily learning.

### Do you follow the same school calendar as the school boards?

We are open year-round for child care, and our school-year focus follows the same September - June schedule as many other educational facilities. Our Professional Development days are timed to align with the major school boards, and we close for one week at the end of December for the holiday season.

### Do you offer a sibling discount?

We have a one family, one registration fee policy, which means for families that have at least one child actively enrolled at any of the Kids U campuses, registration fee for any subsequent siblings at Kids U would not be charged.

**TWIN DISCOUNT:** For families of twins or triplets, the cost of child care can be even higher than for a family with multiple siblings. For this reason, we provide a %10 discount for families of twins and triplets enrolled at Kids U.

### Why don't you offer a 3 day half day program?

School hours are significantly shorter in the half day program, so in order to ensure children receive the same quality of education, this schedule is available five days a week only. The Kids U curriculum requires a minimum 15-12 hours per week in the classroom for full educational benefits.

### If I want to change my schedule, how much notice do I need to give you?

We require a minimum of 30 days notice from the 1st of the month for all schedule change requests. In some cases, we are able to accommodate schedule change requests with less notice, though an expedited change fee may apply.

### **Do you offer drop in care?**

Kids U curriculum is unique and takes time for children and families to understand. Drop in care is only available to existing Kids U children who are scheduled part-time, or to children who have graduated from our Preschool program and require additional Kindergarten care during holidays.

### **My child isn't potty trained, can they still attend preschool?**

Yes! Children are not required to already be potty-trained to attend our preschool program. In fact, we do our best and offer support to you and your child during the potty training process.

### **Do you accept children with special needs and developmental delays?**

At Kids U, we believe that all children are capable, competent, creative and able to learn. We also recognize that the learning needs of every child are unique and require special care and attention. If you are the parent of a child with special needs or developmental delays, please connect with a member of our team so that we can understand the best way to support you.

### **Do you accept Subsidy?**

Yes, we accept subsidy at all of our Kids U locations. Simply click on the Apply for Subsidy button on our website to be directed to the government application site.

### **What happens if I want to keep my child at Kids U for Kindergarten instead of another school?**

Kindergarten is not a required program for children in Alberta schools and many students enter school directly into Grade 1. At Kids U, kindergarten students hold a special place at the campus. They are celebrated for all that they have achieved so far and are regularly featured as leaders in our learning community.

### **What qualifications do the staff have?**

All staff members are required to have a valid child care certification from the Alberta government - Level 2, 1, or 3, a valid first aid certificate, and a valid criminal record check with vulnerable sector search.

### **What is the material fee for and what does it cover?**

The annual material fee goes towards providing quality, specialized materials in our classroom environments and ensuring that all of our classrooms are equipped with a full suite of learning materials that range according to the learning philosophy.

### **Are the fees monthly or weekly?**

With the exception of our annual material fee (which is charged once per year, per child), our fees are charged monthly, and are prorated according to your child's start date during their first month of attendance.

### **Can parents come in and sit with their child during their first little bit to get them used to the room?**

For infants, we understand that making the transition into the classroom is a new experience for the parent and the child. This means that we support parents as they make this transition in a variety of ways. However, for Junior Preschool and Preschool students, we don't make the same recommendations. At Kids U, we strongly encourage the child's independence and focus on their learning in the classrooms. Having parents come into the classroom can disrupt children's learning and extend any discomfort felt at separation.

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However, most of our classrooms have viewing windows where you can observe your child as they work. We also use Brightwheel, a communication app, where teachers send you updates on your child’s day directly to your mobile device or you can connect with your campus Program Supervisor to devise a plan that suits you, your child, the other children in the classroom and the campus as a whole.

**Can I meet the teachers before my first day?**

Our teachers are often busy in the classroom supporting the children, but we realize they are a key part of you and your child’s daily life. If you want to meet the teacher before your child’s start date, we will arrange for that to happen at our Parent Orientation appointment or at another scheduled time.

**What are the benefits of large class sizes?**

Larger class sizes gives our students more spontaneous learning opportunities with their peers, allows students to watch and learn from each other (with guidance), and encourages older students to take on a leadership role with their younger peers as they learn new skills.

**When do the children age up to the next age group?**

Children in Kids U register in programs and move between programs based on their developmental needs, not just their date of birth. We also believe that children (and their families) should be able to make reasonable predictions and preparations about their child’s graduation within the program so the majority of these age-up transitions take place at set times during the school year: January (after the Christmas break), July, August, and September. This allows our campuses to cohort children together, and also prepares children for the typical school calendar that they follow once they enter Grade 1.

**What are your hours of operation?**

Hours of operation will vary between campuses, as follows:

Braeside, Bridgeland & McKnight	7:00am to 5:30pm (Monday to Friday)
New Brighton, West 85th, Strathmore	6:30am to 6:00pm (Monday to Friday)
Centennial	7:00am to 6:00pm (Monday to Friday)



## What does the daily schedule look like?

Curricular hours are between 8:30 am - 3:00 pm every day, meaning that the core instructional activities are getting started, taking place, and wrapping up during this time. This can include an opening gathering time, extended center/learning/group activity time, a short break for snack followed by outside time or more activities, lunch and then nap or more activities depending on the age of the child. The actual order or timing varies based on the needs of the children in the group and other factors. Please connect with us directly to find out more!

## Does my child have to nap?

Children are not required to nap in any Kids U program, though our Infant and Junior Preschool classrooms all have a designated nap (quiet) time. If your child is registered in these programs and does not need a nap, a teacher will sit with them and read as well as do other quiet activities while the other children sleep. In our Preschool program, we have two “awake” rooms so that all children who do not require a nap can continue learning while the children who do need to sleep can do so without disruption.

## What are the nap times?

Nap time is typically between the hours of 12 pm and 2:30 pm approximately.

## Can you put the siblings in the same room just to start till they are used to the campus?

Typically family members are not scheduled together, as it is our experience over many years that there is usually a ‘dominant’ and a ‘passive’ participant in these relationships. By separating family members, we eliminate this dynamic and give both children the chance to fully express themselves, engage in their own personalized learning plan and flourish. We also recognize that parents know their children best and we encourage you to connect with us if this is not a practice that you think will support your children.

## What is the ratio of staff to children?

Ratios are determined by our governing body, Alberta Child Care Licensing, and adhered to by Kids U in all our classrooms. Child to adult ratios per age-group are as follows:

Junior Infant (under 12 months)	3:1
Senior Infant (12 months to 18 months)	4:1
Junior Preschool (19 months to 3 years)	6:1
Senior Preschool (3 years to 6 years)	8:1
Summer Camps (7 to 12 years, July & August)	10:1



## What is your illness policy?

Children displaying signs of illness, or requiring care greater than that which can be provided, are required to be picked up from the campus. Children should not return to the campus until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours, though during a pandemic or other outbreaks this time period may be longer. Kids U reserves the right to request documentation from a doctor outlining if a child is safe to return to the campus in different circumstances in order to safeguard and protect the entire community.

### **Do the children have to be immunized?**

In Alberta, it is not a requirement to have your child immunized before attending child care, preschool or school. We do request that parents inform us if their immunizations are up to date.

### **Do children have to wear masks all day long?**

According to the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services, children attending daycares are exempt from wearing masks inside the campuses. However, all visitors to the campuses are required to wear a mask, and as per Kids U's own policy, all staff members are required to wear a mask throughout the day.

### **What are you doing if there is a positive case of COVID is at the campus?**

If a student or staff member has been exposed to COVID at one of our campuses, that student and their entire cohort is required to cease attendance at the campus until: they get tested and receive a negative result; if the result is positive, attendance at the campus cannot be resumed until the 14-day quarantine period is finished. In order to return to the campus after receiving a negative result, proof of the results must be provided.

### **In an unlikely scenario, what happens if a family member or a child gets COVID?**

Parents at Kids U recognize that they play an important role in keeping the entire ecosystem (children, teachers and other families) safe and healthy. This requires open and honest communication at all levels. If you or your child tests positive for Covid-19, we request that you inform us right away so that we can support you, as well as the rest of our community. Your personal information will be kept confidential except where required to share with Alberta Health Services.

### **What is your COVID policy?**

Please read our full [COVID policy here](#).

### **My child has some allergies and can't eat certain foods. Are you able to cook around everything?**

Kids U will make every effort to accommodate basic allergies (specific to simple foods). We will not serve nut or pork based products to our children. If we are unable to accommodate your child's allergy, parents/guardians will be asked to provide replacement meals. Please note, there will not be any financial compensation or discount in lieu of meals not provided. Replacement meals provided by parents must adhere to the nut-free policy, including but not limited to oils, flours, butters and milks.

### **Do you guys work with children who are anaphylaxis to foods/environments/medication?**

Having a child with a severe allergy or medical condition is not easy for parents. We are proud of working directly with families to develop medical plans that support children's needs to learn and socialize while also being safe. Each of these plans are developed individually prior to enrollment in order to reassure parents that they are making the best choice for their child. This may require additional reviews with our team members so that everyone has a shared understanding of your individual requirements.


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**EARLY LEARNING  
PRESCHOOL & DAYCARE**

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