

# The Family Guide 2011-12

Helpful hints for a successful year in after school.



Welcome to Kids Orbit after school. These pages are a labor of love on our part; they contain more than a decade's worth of frequently and infrequently asked questions and answers about our program, as well as practical advice to help make the most of your family's time with us.

## Registration Options

Every family has its own reasons for enrolling in after school. For some it's coverage. For others it's the activities and the social aspect. And for others, it's emergency backup. Rest assured that Kids Orbit aims to meet your family's needs, whatever they may be.

### ENTIRE YEAR

This is our most economical option.

Whether you need coverage every-day, or just 1 day a week, Entire Year registration is designed to fit your schedule. Entire Year fees are based on the 38 weeks that Kids Orbit is in session, and are prorated for families who join after the first week.

Extra low rates are our way of thanking you for making an "Entire Year" commitment to Kids Orbit. The number of days a week your child attends may be increased if necessary, but may not be decreased, per the terms of the Entire Year contract. June's fee is due with your initial payment; it is non-refundable, and will be forfeited should you decide to cancel before the end of the school year.

### 10 WEEK PACKS

This option allows you to purchase 10 weeks of coverage, for 3, 4 or 5 days a week, and use the weeks on an as-needed basis. These weeks do not have to be used consecutively.

### PARTIAL AFTERNOONS

Great for occasional use and emergency backup. Each Partial Afternoon is an hour and a half of coverage: from 3 to 4:30 ("early partial"), or 4:30 - 6 ("late partial"), or "a double," from 3 to 6. Parents of children in school-based extracurricular clubs especially appreciate the convenience of the "late partial." Partial Afternoons are purchased in packs of 10 or 20, can be used on an as-needed basis, and do not need to be used consecutively.

### SPECIALTY ACTIVITIES

Kids Orbit offers a different specialty activity each day of the week. Regardless of how your child is registered...entire, partial, or 10 week pack...there is never an additional charge to participate in the specialty activities that we offer. For a list of activities at your child's school, follow this [link](#).

### HALF DAYS (Auto Register)

A very popular and very practical option to make sure we pick your child up any time there is a "half day" at school (public schools) without any further action on your part. Half Day fees (\$35/day... Auto Registers save \$5) cover the period from noon (or dismissal time) until 3pm when Kids Orbit begins. Half days are billed the month in which they occur. You may "opt-in" now and cancel on a case-by-case basis any time prior to the half day. On the typical half day, Kids Orbit will go to Prospect Park or the Zoo, go see a movie, or visit a local attraction. We always email in advance to confirm our plans. To sign up now, [send us a message](#).

### FRENCH ED-VENTURES



A supplemental French language immersion club. [Click here](#) for more information.

### This year's half-days fall on:

**Tuesday, November 15**

**Tuesday, March 13**

**Tuesday, June 5**

**Monday, June 11**

## Half Days & Holidays

Kids Orbit or the affiliated [Park Slope Day Camp](#) offers optional supplemental programs on many days when the public schools are closed including vacation periods, half days and staff development days. Registration forms will be available at site and by email a few weeks before each program. For information on which days will be offered see the [List of School Closings](#) available on our website.

# The Basics

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**Our Hours** Kids Orbit counselors are ready to care for your child when school dismisses. Our afternoon always begins with the KO workout—an aerobic activity, a light snack, and then on to homework, free play, games and specialty activities. Dismissal begins at 5:45, and we are required to be out of the school buildings by 6:00pm. If you find it difficult to pick up by 6:00pm, feel free to make a private arrangement with one of our counselors. If you plan to have a counselor on your child's dismissal list, you will be asked to [sign a waiver](#).


**When You're Late** We understand that people will occasionally run late, but at the same time ask you to please keep in mind that our staff has commitments of their own when they leave Kids Orbit. Should you run later than 6:00pm, an additional charge of \$10.00 until 6:30pm and \$15.00 until 6:45pm will be due to the counselor who waits with your child. Please do not think of this as an additional service, and unfortunately once the school is closed your child and our counselor will not be permitted to wait inside the building.

## Our Sign-out Procedures

Safety doesn't have to equal complicated if we're all on the same page. There are three things parents should know about our procedures. Please remind the people on your list of the first 2, especially those who come only occasionally:

 The first thing a person who comes to pick up must do is sign your child out with our staff.

 Counselors will request ID until they recognize you, your neighbors, your sitters, and all others authorized to pick up your child.

 Many of our counselors are happy to make a private arrangement with you to sign out your child and escort him or her home. If you plan to have a counselor on your child's dismissal list, you will be asked to [sign a waiver](#). Waivers are linked on the [Parents' Page](#) of our website.

# The Parents' Page

**Consider the Parents' Page your Kids Orbit "toolbox." It's not only the place where we link [medical forms](#) and the [Family Guide](#), but also a place where you can send important messages to the office staff about absences, dismissal name changes, and scheduling. Smartphone users—why not [bookmark the page](#)?**

## Scheduling Partial Afternoon

Sending a message on the Parents' Page is the best way to let us know your child will be coming on a particular afternoon, UNLESS IT'S A LAST MINUTE PLAN (AFTER 2PM) in which case please call 718.768.4426.

## Absences

When you notify us of your child's absence in advance, you allow us a larger window of time to call parents whose children ARE supposed to be with us but are NOT. 99.99% of the time, we find that an absent child is exactly where they are supposed to be, but for safety's sake, we will never assume it is so. Hopefully, if you think of it this way, it will help you to remember to notify the Kids Orbit office when your child is NOT going to attend Kids Orbit.

## Dismissal Name Changes

When someone comes for your child who isn't on your list, we will not release your child until we reach you and confirm that this is the plan. At times, it is hard or impossible to reach a parent, and often, the individual who has come for your child is annoyed that we are holding them up. Thank you in advance for keeping us posted!

## Forms

**Medical Form** The NYC Department of Health requires a medical form based on an exam conducted within a year of your child's first day in Kids Orbit. *No child will be permitted to attend without a medical form on file.*

The medical form has 2 sides:

**1** A parent or guardian completes and signs the "**Medical History.**" Don't leave anything blank, even if that means writing "none" as the answer.

**2** Your pediatrician completes the "**Physical Examination.**"

Double check that you've left nothing blank and that you've signed the Medical History. Please remember to keep a copy for yourself. Medical forms do occasionally get lost in the mail or misfiled.

*You will be charged a \$50 administrative fee if your child's medical form is not on file in our office prior to your child's first day of attendance.*

Medical forms can be printed from the Parents' Page of our website.

**Homework Agreement** Because families differ in terms of what and how much homework they want their children to complete at Kids Orbit, asked for homework instructions when you registered for Kids Orbit. Please go over your expectations with your child.

## Health & Boo-Boos

**Allergies, Asthma, Special Diets & Other Medical Conditions** There is a section of the medical form that asks about allergies, asthma, special dietary needs, and other medical conditions, and we hope that you provided as much information as we need to care for your child. Most often, families of children with SEVERE allergies or special dietary needs provide an alternate snack from home. We encourage parents of children whose needs require special attention or understanding call our office (718.768.4426) and also talk with the site supervisor before your child's first day. *We cannot stress enough how important it is that this information is shared with both administration and field staff who need to know.*

**Boo Boos & Minor Illness** Kids will be kids, and although we take care of your children as if they were our own, knees will get scraped and elbows may get bumped. Our counselors provide routine treatment (cleaning, bandaging, and ice-packs when necessary). Injuries other than minor scrapes and bruises get reported to our office staff who will let you know by phone during the afternoon; if the office is unable to reach a parent, your site's supervisor will let you know in person at dismissal time. We will call right away if your child has a fever, informs a counselor that they are not feeling well, or is otherwise not him or herself.

## Payment Procedures

Entire Year fees are due on the 1st of each month; all other fees are due as they occur. We accept American Express, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, personal checks, and money orders. We do not make a practice of accepting cash.

**Credit/debit card payments can be made by either of the following methods:**

**AutoCharge** *Kids Orbit initiates the charge.* Registrations made on line will be AutoCharged throughout the year. In this case, we charge your card on the first of the month (entire year participants,) when a 10 pack renews, or when you incur a charge for half days. To change to this payment method, please send us an email authorizing Kids Orbit to run charges on your behalf.

**Click to Pay** *You initiate the charge.* In the event you receive a Kids Orbit invoice by email, there will be "Click to Pay" link in upper left-hand corner. Clicking on the link takes you to a secure form where you can make your payment.

## Program Structure

Parents understandably want to know, "What exactly will my child be doing in after school?" You can find a breakdown of activities for each day of the week by visiting the Kids Orbit website, and choosing your school's [Daily Schedule](#).

What follows is a brief description of our daily activities.

**KO Workout** The KO Workout is our "out of this world" way of getting your kids moving. It's a routine activity that everyone loves. The music is turned up, feet start moving, and the bodies get working! Aerobic exercise keeps our minds and bodies fit and healthy. Be our guest and join the fun. Ask your child to lead the workout at home on the weekend!

**Homework** Our staff members are happy to get your child started on their homework, and, per the instructions you provide on the Homework Agreement, supervise its completion. If there are any specific instructions staff members should follow while doing homework with your child, please inform the office or site supervisor, and make sure this is reflected on your child's Homework Agreement.

**Specialty Activities** Kids Orbit offers children a variety of activities, such as tumbling & circus arts, soccer, drama, yoga and martial arts, just to mention a few. At the beginning of the school year children are encouraged to participate in these activities; later, children are allowed to choose specialty activities in which they want to continue with. The children have the chance to perform in front of their friends and family in the Kids Orbit showcase at the end of each semester

**"Where do I go to get a gi?"** (Try saying that 5 times quickly!) Our instructors feel that once your child has made a commitment to martial arts, a uniform (*gi*) is important. *Gis* are available directly from Sensei John and Sensei Liz for \$30.

**Game of the Day** An afternoon at Kids Orbit always ends with the "game of the day," an organized activity that involves all children from Pre-K through 5th grade. GOTD is the perfect way to gather everyone together for dismissal.

## THE CAPSULE



**Kids Orbit sends out an electronic newsletter called "The Capsule" as a means to get information to all of our parents in an efficient way. We plan to send them out monthly, but only when we have something to say. We promise not to clog your inbox with clutter. Please be sure to open "The Capsule" as it will contain show dates, links to half day forms, changes in daily activities and many other things that you will want to be aware of.**



**Theme Activities** Each month we have themed activities based on major holidays and/or events within our communities.

**Kids Orbit Money & Our Store** We spend a lot of time reinforcing the children's good behavior and random acts of kindness in a playful way with **Kids Orbit Money**. We believe it builds self-esteem and inspires confidence in children. Twice a year, December & June, the KO Store opens and the money is joyfully spent!

**Showcases** In December and again in June, you are invited to the Kids Orbit Showcase. From Pre-K'ers yelling "Aaaa!" in the martial arts demonstration to 4th graders amazing you with fancy footwork during dance, our showcase will put a smile on your face and provide plenty of photo opportunities. These shows are on a regular Kids Orbit day; the dates and times are announced in The Capsule.

## Program Policies

**Change of Clothes** While frequent bathroom trips are part of our daily routine, sometimes our youngest kids just have accidents. We ask families who have younger children to keep an extra set of clothes on site, whether in your child's classroom (let us know where they're kept) or in Kids Orbit storage.

**Lost & Found** Please label ALL of your child's belongings; there are no cubbies in after school. Check the lost and found at your site for any missing belongings.

**Behavior Policy** Please take the time to remind your child that after school is a place for all to have fun and that those children who treat others, whether staff or another child, in a way that the Site Supervisor deems disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate will be suspended, or even withdrawn. Drugs, alcohol, and weapons are absolutely prohibited. Personal property should be left at home. Kids Orbit will not be responsible for loss of/damage to personal property brought to after school.

**Cell Phones & Electronic Devices** Our cell phone policy considers the needs of concerned families that deserve to know that their children have arrived safely at school, as well as the needs of the after school where cell phones are inappropriate. With this in mind, a cell phone that rings or is taken out during the afternoon will be confiscated, as will iPods, Gameboys, PSPs and the like. The phone or electronic device will be held by the supervisor for a parent or guardian to pick up. Kids Orbit will not be responsible for confiscated electronic devices.

**Inclement Weather** Kids Orbit will be open in the event of inclement weather, as long as there is a full day of school. Occasionally the Board of Education will announce that after school activities have been cancelled because of weather. *This applies only to school or PTA run activities.*

**Dismissal** Dismissal begins at 5:45, and we are required to be out of the school buildings by 6:00pm. If you find it difficult to pick up by 6:00pm, feel free to make a private arrangement with one of our counselors. If you plan to have a counselor on your child's dismissal list, you will be asked to [sign a waiver](#).

We understand that people will occasionally run late, but at the same time ask you to please keep in mind that our staff has commitments of their own when they leave Kids Orbit. Should you run later than 6:00pm, an additional charge of \$10.00 until 6:30pm and \$15.00 until 6:45pm will be due to the counselor who waits with your child. Please do not think of this as an additional service, and unfortunately once the school is closed **your child and our counselor will not be permitted to wait inside the building.**

We hope never to be faced with an emergency that leaves us unable to communicate with you, but in such an event, we assure you that we will care for your children until you can get to us.



Kids Orbit works with [Hyper-Reach](#), a service that broadcasts messages to large numbers of people in a very short time. Assuming we are able to make an ordinary phone call, we will send a recorded message to the

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How does my child get to Kids Orbit at the end of the school day?

*Pre-K students are picked up in their classrooms.*

Participants who attend **PS 58** are met in the auditorium.

Participants who attend **PS 282** are met in the auditorium.

Participants who attend **PS 8** are met in the cafeteria.

Participants who attend **PS 9** are met in the cafeteria.

Participants who attend **PS 39** are met at the security desk.

Participants who attend **PS 133** are met in the cafeteria.

Participants who attend **PS 230 Upper School** are met in the cafeteria.

Participants who attend **PS 230 Lower School** are met in the cafeteria or gymnasium (depending on their grade)

Participants who attend **PS 130** are met in the schoolyard, and escorted to PS 230.\*

Participants who attend **IHM** are met in the gymnasium, and escorted to PS 230\*

\* It is especially important that we are informed in advance when your child will be absent.

### Where do I go to pick my child up from Kids Orbit?

Activities at all Kids Orbit sites end at 5:45pm. In the event that Kids Orbit is assembled for dismissal somewhere other than the location specified below, the security guard on duty will be able to direct you.

**PS 58** Dismisses from the main entrance.

**PS 282** Dismisses from room 124.

**PS 8** Dismisses from room 102.

**PS 9** Dismisses from the cafeteria.

**PS 230** Dismisses from the cafeteria.

**PS 133** Dismisses from Room 104, just before the security desk.

### Can I change which days of the week my child attends ?

Yes, entire year and weekly registrants can change which days their child will attend *in a given week*, as long as our office is notified. If there is a holiday on one of your scheduled days, your child is welcome to attend a different day within the same week. Please email your request to [attendance@kidsorbit.com](mailto:attendance@kidsorbit.com).

### Can my child make up an absence?

Entire year and weekly registrants can make up a missed day, as long as it is within the same week. Partial Afternoon registrants never need to worry about making up a missed day, because we only count afternoons that are actually attended. You can let us know what day you'll be substituting when you report your child's absence on the Parents' Page.

### Can I change the number of days I registered my child for?

Yes and no, entire year registrants can increase the number of days their child will attend in a week, but not decrease the number of days. If this is your circumstance, please call our office.

### How do I contact the office?

Use the links on the [Parents' Page](#) to report an absence, dismissal name change, schedule a partial, or access the Family Guide and Medical Form.

Phone 718.768.4426—we're always happy to help!

Email Send medical forms to [forms@kidsorbit.com](mailto:forms@kidsorbit.com)

Fax 718.369.6053

Mail 241 Prospect Park West, Bklyn, 11215. Enter on Windsor Place, corner of Howard Place.