

75 Maple Street 🌣 Essex Junction, Vermont 🌣 05452 Tel: 802-878-1376 🌣 Fax: 802-872-3371

Rec Kids After School Program

FAMILY HANDBOOK 2021-2022

A STARS ACCREDITED, STATE LICENSED CHILD CARE PROGRAM

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, August 25th, 2021

Village of Essex Junction Programs:

Fleming School: 4th-5th Grade Hiawatha School: 1st-3rd Grade Summit Street School: 1st-3rd Grade Maple Street Park: Hiawatha and Summit Kindergarten

Town of Essex Programs:

Essex Elementary School: K-2nd Grade Founders Memorial School: 3rd-5th Grade Maple Street Park: EES K-2nd Grade

Westford Program:

Westford Elementary School: K-5th Grade

Location	Program Phone	School Phone	Email
EJRP – Main Office	802-878-1376		reckids@ejrp.org
Fleming	802-881-2213	802-878-1381	flemingreckids@ejrp.org
Hiawatha	802-881-8885	802-878-1384	hiawathareckids@ejrp.org
Summit Street	802-238-4190	802-878-1377	summitreckids@ejrp.org
Maple Street Park	802-922-2178	802-878-1376	maplestreetreckids@ejrp.org
Essex Elementary	802-404-6606	802-878-2584	eesreckids@ejrp.org
Founders	802-404-6605	802-879-6326	fmsreckids@ejrp.org
Westford	802-404-6607	802-878-5932	westfordreckids@ejrp.org



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Rec Kids Mission Statement:

The Rec Kids Afterschool Program is committed to providing children with a safe environment where they are given an opportunity to express themselves and develop socially, physically, artistically, and creatively through a program that nurtures and respects the uniqueness of each and every child.

Rec Kids Philosophy:

At Rec Kids we believe that all children need a safe place where they can interact with their friends after school. We offer a variety of activities which include recreation and games, arts and crafts, reading, enrichment, time to work on homework, and free time for the children to pursue their own interests in a respectful, friendly environment. We allow children many opportunities to learn experientially and focus on subjects that engage and interest them, therefore allowing for meaningful learning. We also encourage as much parental involvement as possible because we realize that the link between the school setting and home is vitally important in fostering a sense of community.

Rec Kids Goals:

- The children will be provided a safe environment from the time school dismisses until the time parents are able to pick them up.
- The children will have a program that will include activities to stimulate their curiosity and imagination.
- The children will be encouraged to have ownership of the expectations of them and understand consequences of their behaviors or actions if the expectations are not followed.
- The children will be given the opportunity to provide suggestions for activities and program ideas.
- The children will learn appropriate social behavior through positive role modeling and constructive group games and activities.
- The children will be encouraged to spend at least a portion of their program time every day on an outdoor activity (weather permitting).
- The children will have fun!



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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Enrollment in the *Rec Kids* program constitutes an understanding that you will abide by the policies listed as follows:

1. Parent Expectations of the Program

Parents may expect that:

- 1. Their children are cared for in a safe and supportive environment.
- 2. They may visit the program anytime and will be welcomed. <u>Exception</u>: Major health concerning situations may require policies that prohibit visitation of the program, but we are happy to set up phone calls or virtual meetings as needed.
- 3. They will be advised of any misbehavior that requires a behavior plan or significant intervention.
- 4. They may be required to meet with the Site Coordinator and their child.
- 5. They will be informed promptly if their child does not arrive at the program.
- 6. They will be regularly informed by the Site Coordinator about program activities.

2. Program Expectations of Parents

The Program expects that parents will:

- 1. Pay fees on time as explained in Section 7. Fees and Payment Policy.
- 2. Keep the child's records up-to-date.
- 3. Pick up children on time as explained in Section 11. Hours of Operation.
- 4. Follow health policy as explained in Section 16. Health Policies and Safety.
- 5. Contact the Site Coordinator if their child will not be attending on a scheduled day.
- 6. Support their child's success in the program through collaboration with the Site Coordinator.

3. Child Expectations of the Program

Children may expect:

- 1. To have a safe, fun, supportive and consistent environment.
- 2. To use the program equipment, materials, and facilities on an equitable basis.
- 3. To receive respectful treatment.
- 4. To have behavior management strategies that are fair and non-punitive.
- 5. To receive nurturing care from counselors who are actively involved with them.

4. Program Expectations of the Child

The Program expects that the children will:

- 1. Be responsible for their actions.
- 2. Respect the school rules that guide them during the day while at *Rec Kids*.
- 3. Remain with the group and counselors at all times.
- 4. Take care of materials and equipment properly.
- 5. Check-in at *Rec Kids* promptly after school dismissal.
- 6. Have fun!



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5. Family Involvement

Rec Kids believes that children benefit from their families' involvement in the program. The channels of communication between home and the program should be open and clear. As well as joining in on fun and exciting experiences, we ask that parents openly communicate with us and occasionally join us to problem solve when challenges arise.

Daily communication with staff will help build a healthy relationship that best serves your child in this program. Please do not hesitate to wait for these opportunities to request a conversation about your child's development. We are ultimately here for you and your family and welcome the chance to sit down and chat.

Parent involvement will serve to strengthen our program. We invite every parent to find meaningful opportunities to participate, whether it be chaperoning a field trip, coming in to share a family tradition, or simply joining us for an activity with approved advanced permission from the site coordinator.

6. Typical Daily Schedule*

2:45pm- School Dismissal and Program Check-In
3:00pm-4:00pm- Outside Play
4:00pm-4:30pm- Snack and Meeting
4:30pm-5:30pm- Choice Activities Including: Homework Support Arts and Crafts Physical Activity Enrichment Opportunities
5:30pm-6:00pm- Quiet Activities and Program Wrap-Up

*may vary by program location



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7. Fees and Payment Policy

Rec Kids salaries, supplies and administrative expenses are supported entirely by fees. The Essex Westford School District provides the space, utilities and custodial services as an in-kind donation to the Program. Fees are as follows:

Rec Kids 2020-2021 Fees					
Days Per Week	Daily Rate	Weekly Rate			
1	\$20.00	\$20.00			
2	\$19.00	\$38.00			
3	\$18.00	\$54.00			
4	\$17.00	\$68.00			
5	\$16.00	\$80.00			
Wednesday Early Dismissal Additional Fee: \$3.50/child					
Sibling Discount: Each additional child will receive a \$2.00/day discount.					

****WEDNESDAY EARLY RELEASE-** For the 2020-2021 school year, all schools will be dismissed one hour earlier on Wednesdays. Rec Kids will provide programming for that additional hour for everyone that is regularly scheduled to attend on Wednesdays for an additional \$3.50 fee.

- 1. Registration fees are **non-refundable**.
- **2.** Please be advised that if a household member is enrolled in another recreation program and that program is canceled, the credit will be applied to your childcare balance.
- **3.** We will send bills via e-mail to the primary email address on your family's account. Please contact us if you would rather have a hard copy sent to you. To pay your childcare bill, you can drop it off in person at the Essex Junction Recreation Office, located at 75 Maple Street, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8 AM and 4 PM. If it is after hours, you may put the payment in our secure drop box located to the right of the front door of the Recreation Office. You may also send a payment by mail to Essex Junction Recreation and Parks Department, 75 Maple Street Essex Junction, VT 05452. Payment by credit card over the phone or paying online through your WebTrac account are also accepted methods of payment. Please reference the chart below for the billing cycle.
- 4. During school vacations tuition does not apply. During these weeks, if vacation programs are offered, fees and enrollment are separate from the *Rec Kids* after school program. They require separate payment, up front, and are not a part of the normal billing cycle. Please note: You will be charged for your child's sick days. We do not give refunds for school snow days or emergency school closings.



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5. Auto-debit: We now have the option to auto-debit your credit or debit card each month for payments. If you are interested in utilizing this option, please provide your card information (number, expiration date and CVC code) and check off the option under the AUTO DEBIT APPROVAL portion of your bill. You can set this up at the start of the year or initiate it at any other time of the year that you would like to begin using this feature. Enrollment in auto debit does not carry over from year to year.

If you would like to pay a bill with your credit or debit card, but NOT enroll in the auto debit feature, simply do not check the box on your bill.

PLEASE NOTE:

If you select to have your credit or debit card auto-debited each month, the card will be charged on the BILLING DATE, which is the 5th of each month (or the first business day after the 5th). We bill one month in advance. The due date is exactly two weeks from the billing date.

2020-2021 Billing Schedule:

Billing Date	Due Date	Billing Period
August 5, 2021	August 19, 2021	August & September
September 7, 2021	September 21, 2021	October
October 5, 201	October 19, 2021	November
November 5, 2021	November 19, 2021	December
December 6, 2021	December 20, 2021	January
January 5, 2022	January 19, 2022	February
February 7, 2022	February 21, 2022	March
March 7, 2022	March 21, 2022	April
April 5, 2022	April 19, 2022	May
May 5, 2022	May 19, 2022	June

- 6. Failure to keep tuition payments current may result in program termination until the fees are paid in full. Reinstatement may occur on a space-available basis when all fees have been paid. If an account is one month behind in payments, a letter will be sent home requesting a meeting and/or phone call take place to set up a payment plan. If no response is heard, a second letter will be sent explaining payment must be made in full by a certain date or you will no longer be eligible for the after-school program.
- 7. Non-sufficient fund checks are held until cash or a money order is received by the program to cover the amount of the check. Parents will pay a \$25.00 charge for the processing procedure.
- 8. Discounts: Two or more children in Rec Kids will receive a discounted rate. Please reference the chart above for details. The child who attends the most frequently will be charged the 1st child rate. All others will be charged the 2nd child rate.



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- **9. One Household Billing**: We realize that some families have unique arrangements between parents, guardians and/or other family members for payment of Rec Kids. We are only able to bill the primary household. This individual will be responsible for all Rec Kids payments and coordinating with others to make payments in a timely manner.
- 10. Change Fees: One schedule change is permitted per school year at no charge. Henceforth an additional charge of <u>\$5</u> dollars per change will be added after that. All changes must be made in writing with <u>a three week notice</u> to Kristin Cobleigh (kcobleigh@ejrp.org).
- **11. Financial Aid Payments:** Parents are responsible for the remaining difference after any financial aid. For more information on the financial aid program, see <u>Section 26</u>.

8. Registration and Enrollment

Registration: Parents must complete an online request for registration form and submit it with the non-refundable registration fee. Children who cannot be immediately enrolled will be placed on a waiting list at no cost to the family.

Enrollment Policy: *Rec Kids* is offered to children currently enrolled in one of the elementary schools in the Essex Westford School District. Children must attend the Rec Kids program at the school that they attend during the day. Enrollment for each site is subject to staffing and space availability. The staff to child ratio will stay at or below 1:13. *Rec Kids* will assure meaningful access to its benefits and services by modification of the program to accommodate the needs of qualified differently abled persons, but only where such modifications are reasonable and necessary, do not fundamentally or substantially alter the nature of the program and do not result in an undue burden on the program. Requests for modifications should be made as far in advance of commencement of the program as possible. *Rec Kids* strives to provide safety, well-being, development and success of each child enrolled. Children enrolled in *Rec Kids* must be able to participate safely and successfully when a 1:13 staff to child ratio is maintained.

Notice of Non-Discrimination: In accordance with the applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, *Rec Kids* does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, place of birth, or a qualified individual with a disability in admission or access to, or treatment of employment in its programs or activities.

The individual cited below has been designated to coordinate the program's efforts to implement these State and Federal laws. You may contact this person for further information about these laws and regulations and our grievance procedure for the resolution of discrimination complaints.

Maureen Gillard mgillard@ejrp.org *802-878-1376* 75 Maple Street Essex Junction, Vermont 05452



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Openings: Full- and part-time openings are determined on the basis of FTE's (full time equivalents) and the number of FTE's permitted by the program's license. When full or part-time childcare openings occur, parents or registered children are contacted for enrollment on the basis of: 1) the schedule indicated on the registration form, and 2) on a first-come basis for the available time according to their spot on the waiting list.

9. Enrollment Forms

Parents will be asked to complete the following either on paper or electronically:

Rec Kids Registration Form Parental Agreement Rec Kids Behavior Management & Supervision Parent Contract Handbook Acknowledgement Form Medication Release (as needed) Food Allergy Action Plan (as needed)

All forms and documentation, as well as the child's <u>CampDoc</u> profile must be kept current. The parent must provide new information to the Site Coordinator regarding information on forms such as: emergency contact persons, names, health changes or needs, addresses, and phone numbers, and immunization records.

Additionally, if your child has an IEP or 504 Plan, information in the plan could be helpful to our ability to meet the needs of your child. Please provide the most up to date copy of your child's IEP or 504 Plan if they have one. This will not exclude your child from participation, but may require a meeting to determine next steps to ensure success.

10. Withdrawal from the Program

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from *Rec Kids* must notify **EJRP and the Childcare Team in writing** <u>three weeks in advance</u>. Payment is required for days that your child does not attend, but is scheduled for, without three weeks notice.

11. Hours of Operation

Rec Kids runs from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m. The Site Coordinators and counselors are only paid until 6:00 p.m. every evening. Parents whose children remain past 6:00 p.m. must pay overtime fees as follows:

1-5 minutes overtime - \$5.00 per child Each additional minute after 5 - \$1.00 per child per minute

Late fees are paid directly to the Site Coordinator and/or counselors who stay with your children. If payment is not made at time of pick-up, your account will be billed. Multiple late pick-ups will result in your child's enrollment in the program being re-evaluated.



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12. Absences

If your child will not be attending *Rec Kids* because of a scheduled appointment, vacation or other planned absences, please notify the *Rec Kids* Site Coordinator and also the EJRP Childcare Team three weeks in advance. If your child is ill, when you call the school to report the illness or pick up your child from school, please call or text the Site Coordinator as well to make them aware of your child's absence. On your scheduled days, you are still responsible for payment if your child is ill/or does not attend the program without three weeks notice.

In recognition that some families take vacations, EJRP will provide the opportunity for a one week, unpaid break, *provided three weeks notice is given*. A one week break is when a child does not attend and a family does not have to pay. The number of days that a one week break represents is equivalent to the number of days a family attends per week. The break must be used during the current school year, and will not carry over to future years. The week can only be used as a break, meaning there is no charge AND the child does not attend the program. It cannot be used as a credit or refund.

An absence from the program without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child. Notification will prevent unnecessary concern and time spent searching for your child. If a child does not arrive at the program as intended, the Site Coordinator will contact the child's teacher and parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the Site Coordinator will contact the child's emergency persons. If the Site Coordinator is not able to contact any of the above listed individuals they will call the Essex Junction Police Department for assistance. Rec Kids has implemented a finder's fee of \$5.00 every time a child is absent from the program without oral or written notification from the parent.

13. Release of Children

Children will be allowed to leave with persons other than the parent or persons listed on the registration form only if permission has been given to the Site Coordinator verbally or by written note by the parent. If the child is hesitant going with the person that has come to pick them up, a phone call will be made to the parent of the child. Once the parent and child have had a chance to communicate, the Site Coordinator and parent will discuss what will be done. No child will be forced to leave the program if they feel uncomfortable. It is our duty to make sure that your child's safety and well-being are our priority, and this includes when they are leaving. If we are uncomfortable with a situation may involve law enforcement to ensure the child's safe passage.

14. Calendar

Rec Kids will follow the Essex Westford School District PreK-5 School Calendar.

Rec Kids will not be held during:

School Cancellations Emergency Dismissals School Vacations (a separate program may be available during most vacations)



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15. Distribution of Medications

If a child needs to be given prescription or over-the-counter medicine while at Rec Kids, the parent **must** provide the program Site Coordinator a completed, signed medication authorization form. The medication **must** be provided in the original or duplicate container, or a container accompanied by the doctor's directions. The Site Coordinator will oversee distribution of medication.

If medication is to be kept at *Rec Kids* for treatment of a chronic condition, no more than a one-month supply should remain at the program at any time.

16. Health and Safety Policies

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.) please be sure the Site Coordinator knows what to do if a problem should occur during program hours. Please make sure that any medication is available and that the appropriate forms for its use have been completed.

All children in the program must have an updated immunization form or a signed statement attesting why they have not been immunized on file, or signed permission slip via their CampDoc profile for EJRP staff to access these records electronically.

If a child has any one of the following conditions, the parent will be notified to pick up the child immediately: **contagious disease, fever over 100°F, vomiting, or diarrhea.** If the child leaves school for a portion of the day due to an appointment that is not related to an illness, they may return to program. However, if the child is absent from school, or leaves school due to illness, they will not be permitted to attend Rec Kids. Please refer to Section 12 for more information regarding absences.

In case of accident or illness, parents of the child will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle for treatment and the parents will be called as soon as possible.

Outdoor play will not be allowed when temperature (including wind chill) falls below 0°F.

Vermont State law (S.9/Act 60) requires that any childcare worker report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children of Families within 24 hours.



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In the event of an emergency that requires school evacuation, parents/guardians will be contacted and will be directed to a safe meeting location for pick-up of their children.

Rec Kids Site	Relocation Site	Secondary Relocation Site (if needed)
Rec Kids at Summit	Thomas Fleming Elementary	Holy Family
Rec Kids at Fleming	Summit Street Elementary	Holy Family
Rec Kids at Hiawatha	Maple Street Park	Holy Family
Rec Kids at Maple Street Park	Albert D Lawton Middle School	Holy Family
Rec Kids at Founders	Essex Middle School	Memorial Hall
Rec Kids at Essex Elementary	Memorial Hall	Essex Middle School
Rec Kids at Westford	White Church on the Common	Westford Library

Vermont State law (16 V.S.A. § 140 and Act 135) prohibits the use of any tobacco or tobacco substitute product on public school grounds.

Rec Kids shall ensure that no person who has contact with children shall have a history of child abuse or criminal activity that would disqualify them under 33 V.S.A Chapters 49 & 69. All staff who may have contact with children including Activity Specialists, Substitutes, and Volunteers shall submit a completed record check form to the Department for Children and Families prior to working with children.

Pesticide applications shall be used only when other pest prevention and control measures fail. Pesticides shall not be used to control pests for aesthetic reasons alone. Whenever possible Rec Kids shall use pesticides of least risk to children.

17. Fire Drill and Emergency Procedures

Rec Kids will practice a fire drill and emergency evacuation once a month to ensure that children know what to do in the event of a real emergency. In the event of a real emergency, children and staff will evacuate the grounds and meet at a predetermined location (see above) for parent pick-up. Parents will be informed (by phone and/or email) of such occurrences as quickly as possible.

18. Snack

Rec Kids will provide nutritious snacks in the afternoon. We ask that "special treats" for birthdays, holidays and/or other special occasions remain non-food related (i.e. bringing in a special book to share with the program, make a birthday crown, sing a special song, play a special game etc.). In this case, please contact the Site Coordinator to determine a plan.

If your child has an allergy to certain foods please indicate on the registration form, complete the food allergy action plan, and remind the Site Coordinator prior to the start of the program.



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19. Child's Personal Property

Children should <u>not</u> bring money, toys, food, or other items not necessary for afterschool activities to *Rec Kids* without checking with the Site Coordinator. Although *Rec Kids* attempts to help children stay organized, we cannot be responsible for broken or lost personal property. If items are not acceptable for use during the regular school day due to school rules, they also are not acceptable at Rec Kids.

20. Field Trip/Swimming Information

Please prepare your child for field trips and equip them with weather appropriate clothing and recommended equipment. On field trip days all participants will go on the field trip. Date and location will be communicated to parents at least 3 weeks in advance.

When opportunities for swimming and wading occur **Rec Kids** will have a certified lifeguard supervising the activity. All children will be given a swimming ability assessment and designation of swimmer/non-swimmer. Non-swimmers will be restricted from waist deep or deeper unless participating in a swim program.

21. Behavior Management Procedures

Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment. **Rec Kids** will use an approach when dealing with challenging behaviors that is proactive and focuses on keeping the children engaged in interesting and enjoyable activities during their time at the program. If the children are being stimulated with exciting activities, this will help reduce the opportunity to engage in inappropriate behavior.

When a child makes a choice that does not align with program expectations, they will be given a verbal warning and told what the logical consequence will be if the behavior should continue. If the behavior continues to occur, the child will have to adhere to the aforementioned consequence. In the event the child continues to engage in inappropriate behaviors that day, or if the child is causing harm to themselves, other children in the program, or team members, the Site Coordinator will call the parents and have them come and pick up their child.

When guardians come to pick up their child, the Site Coordinator will have a brief meeting with the parent and child (if deemed appropriate) to discuss what happened and what would be a positive way to change the behavior in the future. If the behavior continues to hinder the effectiveness of the program, or poses a threat to the safety and wellbeing of the participant, another child, or team members, a parent/child/ Site Coordinator meeting will be arranged to discuss the situation and determine what actions need to be taken.

<u>Finally, if, after opportunities to correct the behaviors fail and the child continues to show they</u> cannot correct their actions, the child will be removed from the program.



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22.Weapons/Threats:

The possession of weapons of any kinds or threats made to other children, employees, or school property will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate phone call home and suspension for the remainder of the day. If there is a repeated occurrence the child will be suspended until a meeting with the Director of School Age Childcare, Site Coordinator, parent/guardian and the child can be arranged as well as an evaluation by the school guidance counselor. In the event of a third occurrence the child may be removed from the program.

23. Addressing Concerns:

If you have a concern regarding the Rec Kids Afterschool Program please let us know as soon as possible. We strive to make Rec Kids a safe and pleasant place for all children. To best address your concerns please call or email your child's Site Coordinator so a meeting can be scheduled in advance. Many times Site Coordinators/counselors are not able to have discussions with parents and supervise the program/children effectively at the same time. If at any time you feel your concern is not being addressed to your satisfaction please notify the Assistant Director and/or Director of School Age Childcare by phone or email.

It is in the best interest of Rec Kids and its participants that any concerns regarding behaviors between children be addressed through the appropriate parties. Parents should direct any concerns about Rec Kids to the Site Coordinator or Assistant Director and/or Director of School Age Childcare, not other parents. We strive to keep Rec Kids a safe and welcoming environment and confrontations between parents will not be tolerated. If incidents occur, parents may be asked to find an alternative individual to pick up their child to ensure Rec Kids maintains a pleasant atmosphere.

24. Confidentiality

All employees of EJRP shall observe strict confidentiality in regard to child/family records and family information. Confidential conversations regarding children/families or collaborating agencies shall take place in a private setting.

25. Termination:

We reserve the right to terminate services to families for these reasons:

- 1. Non-payment of fees.
- 2. Repeated late pickups that go beyond the time of closing. This practice puts us out of compliance with our licensing regulations and cannot be tolerated. Three late pickups will be grounds for dismissal.
- 3. Disruptive and dangerous behavior indicating a child's inappropriate placement in our program. Evaluation and modifying attempts will be made prior to termination, as deemed appropriate. Parents will be notified early in the process of trying to cope with these behaviors.



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4. EJRP is committed to serving all children, and providing reasonable accommodations to try and meet the needs of each individual child. If we are unable to provide the supports necessary for a child to be successful and safe in our Rec Kids program, within our staff-child ratio of 1:13, and without fundamentally altering the nature of the program or placing undue burden on EJRP and/or its team members, we reserve the right to prohibit further participation or enrollment (and, when deemed appropriate by EJRP, provide a prorated refund/credit of fees).

26. Vermont Child Care Financial Aid Program

Please contact Child Care Resource at (802) 863-3367 to find out if your family is eligible for financial aid.

All paperwork must be completed and on file with Child Care Resource & EJRP, prior to attending **Rec Kids**. Families will not be able to start **Rec Kids** until the childcare financial aid certificate is received.

If you attend vacation camps, you must notify Child Care Resource in advance for full-day verification of financial aid. This requires a separate certificate, which must be provided prior to enrolling in vacation camp. Full payment of vacation camps is due three weeks prior to the start of camp.

27. State of Vermont Afterschool Program Regulations

To access and view the State of Vermont Afterschool Program Regulations that govern many of the Rec Kids policies please <u>click here.</u>

28. Child Care Consumer Line

If you have questions or concerns about a childcare provider in Vermont, call the Child Care Consumer Line: 1-800-649-2642 toll free in Vermont or (802) 241-3110 from other locations.