



# Parent Manual 2019-2020

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## Program Philosophy

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The Link Program strives to encourage children in K to 6th grade to laugh, make friends and be active every day. We understand how hectic being a parent these days can be and with that in mind, we are here to offer your child a before/after school experience they won't forget! You can be confident your child is in a nurturing environment and being given the opportunity to explore new adventures. We strive to create and foster positive experiences through play, and exciting activities.

Our counselors are positive role models whose primary goal is to make each day a special one! Counselors spend time getting to know each child and will always encourage and be supportive. You can be rest assured your children are being cared for by fun, interactive counselors. You can expect your child to make more friends, have more fun, and spend more time smiling in the LINK Before and After School Program!

## Program Hours

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**Before School Program:** Mon-Fri 6:30-8am  
*all students must arrive by 7:45am*

**After School Program**  
Monday: 2-6:30pm  
Tue-Fri: 3-6:30pm

## Communication with Staff and Administrative Staff

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For communication purposes the LINK program has a phone number and email address. Phones will be on during program hours and voicemails are checked at the beginning of each day. If you need to contact the staff to inform them of an early/late pick up or family emergency, please call, text or email the staff with the contact information provided. Participants may not use personal cell phones while at the program unless authorized by staff.

The LINK Cell Phone: 630-742-3820

The LINK Email: [thelink@dgparks.org](mailto:thelink@dgparks.org)

Samantha Donovan  
Recreation Supervisor  
630-960-4477  
[sdonovan@dgparks.org](mailto:sdonovan@dgparks.org)

## Drop Off and Pick Up

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### **Drop-off Procedures**

Staff is not permitted to accept participants before the allotted start time. All children must arrive no later than 7:45am. When dropping off your child(ren) you must escort them into the building. Each child must be signed in by a parent or authorized individual.

### **Pick-Up Procedures**

Only parents or authorized individuals will be able to sign your child out. In addition, anyone signing out a child must be at least 16 years of age or older. Please be prepared to show an ID whenever picking up a child. Counselors will no longer ask for an ID as the program progresses and they become more familiar with child(ren)'s guardians.

### **Late Pick Up**

If you are unable to pick up your child(ren) by 6:30pm, a late pick-up fee of \$20 will immediately apply. An additional \$1 will be charged per minute. If running late, please be courteous of our staff's schedules and call the site immediately to notify them.

## Custody Orders

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To honor specific custody orders and/or orders of protection, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide a copy of the custody order and/or order of protection. The document must be signed by the court with the legal seal present, date effective and ending date if applicable.

## Payment and Registration Policy

It is our goal to safely accommodate as many families as possible. The Downers Grove Park District reserves the right to adjust locations based on availability of space, staff and enrollment in order to maintain the safety, structure and integrity of the program as a whole.

All registrations must be accompanied by \$50 deposit and proper registration forms.

All registrations are subject to acceptance based on program availability, proper completion of registration material, payment status/history and Park District's ability to meet any special needs the participant may have.

In order to register, each participant must:

- Complete and sign proper registration and emergency forms for each child.
- Pay all outstanding fees due to any Park District programs and remain in good financial standing with the Downers Grove Park District.
- Registration for part-time enrollment must maintain consistent days. Any changes in enrollment must be approved pending availability.

### Payment Options

**Option 1:** Payment in full.

**Option 2:** \$50 registration fee. Remaining payments are charged on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month (Aug-May). A credit/debit card is required for monthly payments.

By registering your child for The Link program, you agree that you are responsible for the payment of all program fees and costs set forth in the program payment schedule. The Park District offers two payment options for The Link. If at any time the Park District is closed on a billing date, payment will be processed the following business day.

Program Options	AM ONLY	PM ONLY	AM & PM
3 Day	\$103/month	\$197/month	\$276/month
4 Day	\$125/month	\$244/month	\$347/month
5 Day	\$135/month	\$302/month *Includes \$15 for Mondays*	\$415/month *Includes \$15 for Mondays*

**FOR 3 & 4 DAY OPTIONS PLEASE ADD \$15 PER MONTH IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE ATTENDING AFTER SCHOOL ON MONDAYS**

**Late Fees:** A \$5.00 per day late fee will be assessed if the payment is received after the draft date. Payments not received within two weeks of the draft will result in removal from the program.

### Divorced or Separated Parents

One guardian will be responsible for all LINK payments. The guardian who is labeled as the Household's Primary Person in the Park District's recreation software will be accountable for all charges. In the event of a payment decline by either party a \$5.00 per day late fee will be assessed if the payment is received after the draft date. Payments not received within two weeks of the draft will result in removal from the program.

## Absences& Illness

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### **Absences**

If your child(ren) will be absent from the LINK Before or After School program, please call or text the designated site cell phone. There are no credits or refunds issued for absences or vacations.

### **Failure to Report Absence Fee**

One of the most potentially frightening and frustrating situations for LINK staff is tracking down a child who is expected after school and doesn't arrive to the program. Being responsible for the safety and welfare of each child, we have to make several phone calls, check with the school staff and emergency contacts. As a last resort we will contact the police and report the child missing. This takes the staff away from regular duties and supervision of the group. If a parent fails to notify the LINK site of an absence before the start of the afternoon program, a "Failure to Report Absence Fee" will be assessed for each occurrence.

These fees are as follows:

First time: Free pass

Second time: \$5

Third time: \$10

Fourth time: \$15

Fifth time and on: \$20

If the "Failure to Report an Absence" becomes a habit, you run the risk of your child being dismissed from the program. There will be no credit for any suspensions given due to a failure to report an absence.

### **Illness**

If your child has contracted a contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep, lice or pink eye, you will need to report this as soon as possible to the Recreation Supervisor.

For the safety of all, ill children should be kept home for 24 hours before returning to the program. If a child becomes ill at the program, the parent or guardian will be notified to pick up the child immediately.

Children should be kept home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- temperature
- diarrhea / vomiting
- rash
- discharge from nose, ears or eyes

### **Personal Items and Electronics**

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Bringing personal belongings and toys from home is strongly discouraged. Any personal items brought from home are the responsibility of the child. The Downers Grove Park District and its staff are not responsible for any lost, damaged or stolen items, including but not limited to backpacks, glasses, toys, & phones. Electronics such as cell phones, handheld games, Ipads, tablets etc. are not permitted, if a child brings an electronic device to the program they will be asked to turn it off and put it into their backpack until the end of the day. Staff may restrict or withhold inappropriate items.

*Electronics provided by District 58 for school work will be permitted as long as they are being used for school work appropriately during the allotted homework time.*

## **Quiet Time and Homework Time**

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In our LINK After School Program, there will be an allotted time where homework is the number one priority. Our staff are in place to monitor the children at this time and help out with homework when needed. Staff will help with homework to the best of their ability, however it is encouraged that parents/ guardians check their child's homework. If your child does not have homework on any given day, they will be participating in quiet activities during this time, such as coloring, reading, and puzzles. If your child has not completed their homework after the allotted quiet time, they will be responsible for completing their homework after our program.

## **Snack**

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**Before School:** No snack provided. Children are welcome to bring a snack from home.

**After School:** We will offer one serving of a type of snack cracker or toasted out cereal (no milk). Children may bring additional snacks from home.

The LINK Before and After School is now cup conscious. Please send your child with a water bottle (first and last name labeled) that they can use and refill at the before and after school program every day.

## **Bus Safety**

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Children enrolled in the program will be transported to and from their individual schools. Expectations regarding bus safety will be established to keep children safe during the transportation process and must be followed. In accordance with The Illinois Vehicle Code, Child Passenger Protection Act usage of some District vehicles may require the use of a booster seat for children ages 4-8. For these vehicles, the Park District will provide a booster seat to those individuals required by law.

## **Movies**

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Movies will be shown periodically. The LINK will show G-rated or PG-rated movies. Participants are not required to watch the movie. Other activities will be available in the room where the movie is being viewed to those that do not want to watch.

## **School Closing/Inclement Weather**

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In inclement weather, LINK closes with District 58. If school lets out early in the day due to bad weather, afternoon LINK will be closed. Refunds will not be given for emergency school closings. These days are generally made up at the end of the year.

## **Half Days and Days Off School**

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Half days of school, Full days off school and holiday breaks are not included in the LINK Before and After School Program fees.

The LINK will not operate on half days of school.

The Downers Grove Park District will offer LINK Day Off Adventure Program on select full days off of school and holiday breaks at an additional cost. Registration before the deadline is required for your child to attend. Check out our seasonal guide or visit [dgparks.org](http://dgparks.org) for more information.

## **Emergency Procedures**

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Evacuation procedures for each program have been established in the event of a major emergency that would require removing children from the site. Additionally, plans have been developed for fire and tornado procedures. If an individual child is injured in the program, we will take the necessary emergency steps and contact you as soon as possible. However, should the injury be more severe we will call 911 without hesitation. The parent/guardian also

authorizes the Park District and its employees, to consent to medical treatment. By registering your child for the program you are releasing the Downers Grove Park District from all liability which may arise from the child's participation in the program.

### **Medication**

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Children requiring any type of medication must have a signed medication consent form on file. These forms are available upon request. Medication cannot be administered without the consent form. If your child is taking medication, the medication must be in its original container with the child's full name on the label and the correct dosage enclosed. Medication and instructions must be given to the site director upon the child's arrival at the program. All medication is kept in a safe and secure location.

### **Transfer/Possession of Medication**

Transfer/possession of all medications provided to staff must be signed in on the first day of the program attendance and signed out on the final day of the program attendance. This is to help ensure all medications such as EpiPens, inhalers, etc. are properly returned in a safe and timely manner.

### **Medical Emergencies**

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All staff are CPR and First Aid certified. In the event of a serious injury that requires more than basic first aid, the following steps will be taken:

1. Staff calls EMS
2. Parent or Guardian is contacted (or listed emergency contact)
3. If necessary, paramedics will transport the injured child to the nearest hospital, accompanied by a staff member.

Guardians are responsible for any emergency medical charges. Park District Employees are not allowed to transport injured parties in Park District or personal vehicles.

### **Parent Communication with Children**

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Parents are to refrain from speaking with other children regarding behavioral issues. Please bring all concerns regarding conduct and behavior to the LINK Staff. Only Downers Grove Park District staff is permitted to manage participant conduct and behavior.

### **Code of Conduct**

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Participants, parents and guardians are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. The following standards have been established for the benefit of our programs as a whole. The safety, structure, and integrity of the program will take priority over those of any one individual. Behavior guidelines are not limited to, but are based on, the following overall rules and apply to all participants. The term "participant" will henceforth be used to represent children, parents, and guardians.

1. Participants must show respect to all other participants, staff, property, equipment and facilities.
2. Participants must follow the directive of staff and all program-specific rules.
3. Participants may not harass, bully or intimidate through the use of words, foul language, gestures, body language, phones, texting or other devices, social media or menacing behavior.
4. Participants must refrain from threatening or causing physical harm to other participants and staff.
5. Participants may not place themselves or others in dangerous situations through their actions or behavior.
6. Participants may not possess weapons, devices that may be used as a weapon, or illegal substances.
7. Participants may not demonstrate any sexual suggestiveness or sexual activity.
8. Parents/guardians may not instruct their children to disregard staff's directions or to respond physically with violent or threatening behavior or language.
9. Parents/guardians may not direct, discipline, or instruct children other than their own.
10. Staff reserve the right to dismiss, suspend or ban any individual who represents a risk or danger from program

premises (including buildings, parking lots, playgrounds, and surrounding areas).

11. Participants must keep track of their own belongings. Staff are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings including backpacks, glasses, towels, toys, cell phones, etc.

Bullying, verbal and physical abuse, threats, and disrespect will not be tolerated. Participants will be held accountable for their actions in compliance with the DGPD Code of Conduct. All threats or threatening behavior will be taken seriously and will be reported to the authorities. Participants using threats of death, violence, or suicide will be immediately suspended. Participants will be required to undergo a professional psychological evaluation at their own expense. The participant may be eligible to return to the program upon approval of the DGPD and receipt of said evaluation stating that the participant is not at risk to themselves or others.

The Downers Grove Park District reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers his or her own safety or the safety of others.

## **Behavior/Discipline**

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### **Behavior**

It is the goal of the program to provide each child with an environment that is safe, nurturing, and enjoyable. To meet this goal, the staff will help every child exhibit qualities and characteristics that lead to a positive environment. Participants will be expected to treat the other children, staff, facilities, and materials with respect through their words and actions. The children are encouraged to show trustworthiness by being honest and doing the right thing. They must use appropriate language at all times. The children must be responsible for their actions and choices. They are asked to be kind, caring, and fair to themselves, others, and their environment. Participants should show citizenship by helping better the community and environment.

The following behaviors are considered unacceptable:

1. Harming one's self, such as, but not limited to:
  - Leaving the program boundaries without permission
  - Leaving the designated group without permission
  - Misuse of equipment
  - Failing to follow verbal instruction meant to ensure safety
2. Harming others, such as, but not limited to:
  - Fighting
  - Throwing objects at or near others
  - Bringing or using weapons, i.e., knives, glass, sharp objects, etc.
  - Hitting, biting, spitting, or kicking others
  - Verbally abusing others, i.e., name calling, taunting, etc.
  - Using inappropriate language
  - Verbally or non-verbally showing disrespect
3. Damage to property, such as, but not limited to:
  - Vandalism
  - Tantrums resulting in damage to property or materials
    - Theft NOTE: The child's family is responsible for all damages



Additional behaviors considered to be unacceptable in a group setting are evaluated on a case by case scenario.

If a child physically or verbally assaults a staff member, the child's parent(s) will be called and the child will need to be picked up immediately.

The Downers Grove Park District reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program if the staff determines that the program can no longer meet the needs of the child, if the child is a physical threat to him/herself or others, or if the child's behavior consistently impedes the normal daily functions of the group. If a child is suspended or removed from the program no refund or proration is given.

#### Discipline Procedures

We believe that the role of our staff is to help lead children toward self-discipline and self-direction. We will redirect your child from the situation as a means of calming the child, and allowing the child to gain control of him/herself in a dignified and thoughtful manner.

Behaviors which endanger the safety and security of the child or others may result in skipped steps or immediate and/or permanent suspension from the program. If unacceptable behavior continues, we will take the following actions: If suspension is warranted, a parent/guardian may be called to pick up their child immediately.

#### 1st Offense

- Verbal Warning
- Staff will talk with the parent/guardian

#### 2nd Offense

- The staff will complete a behavior log
- The staff will talk with the parent/guardian and have them sign the behavior log
- Immediate pick-up may be requested depending on the severity of the behavior
- As appropriate, privileges related to the behavior may be removed
- One day suspension from the program beginning the day following the offense
  - If a child is suspended or removed from the program no refund or proration is given

#### 3rd Offense

- The staff will complete a behavior log
- The staff will talk with the parent/guardian and have them sign the behavior log
- Immediate pick-up may be requested depending on the severity of the behavior
- A meeting will be requested with the parent/guardian to discuss behaviors
- Depending on the severity of the behavior, a behavior plan may be implemented
- As appropriate, privileges related to the behavior may be removed
- One week suspension from the program beginning the day following the offense
  - If a child is suspended or removed from the program no refund or proration is given

#### 4th Offense

- If the same or similar behavior reoccurs the staff will complete a behavior log
- The staff will talk with the parent/guardian and have them sign the behavior log
- Immediate pick-up may be requested depending on the severity of the behavior
- The child will be removed for the program for the remainder of the program
  - If a child is suspended or removed from the program no refund or proration is given

### **Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse**

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All Downers Grove Park District staff are considered mandated reporters by the State of Illinois and are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Downers Grove Park District will work with DCFS and families, as appropriate to ensure the health and safety of children in the program. When a report is made, Downers Grove Park District will continue to work with and support the child and family. The report will be treated confidentially.

### **Confidentiality**

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The LINK Program will maintain confidentiality and respect family privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, program personnel and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require parental/guardian consent. However, in cases of abuse or neglect, it is permissible to reveal confidential information to agencies and individuals who may be able to act in the child's interest.

### **Special Needs**

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The Downers Grove Park District believes in the right to an excellent recreational experience for all individuals from all backgrounds and ability levels.

If your child has any special medical, physical, psychological, or emotional needs, or receives any special services, please list them in detail in your participant information forms.

If your child needs an inclusion aide from the South East Association for Special Parks And Recreation, please contact Samantha Donovan so that we can submit a request immediately. SEASPAR requires at least three weeks advanced notice in order to secure assistance. Aides will be secured for you at no cost.

Lack of information will adversely affect the Park District's ability to accommodate the needs of your child. Problems resulting from withheld information may necessitate the participant's suspension from the program until appropriate accommodations can be made for a more successful experience.

All participants must be toilet-trained and are responsible for all of their own toileting needs. All participants will be held to the same code of conduct & behavior policies, unless otherwise discussed.

### **Tax Information**

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The Downers Grove Park District tax identification number is 36-6161023. If you should need a receipt, please contact the Park District at 630-963-1300.

**Review of Policies and Procedures**

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I have read and understand the information in the parent manual/letter regarding policies and procedures, and agree to abide by them.

Name of Minor \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment**

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I do herewith authorize the Downers Grove Park District to take action as necessary in case of an emergency

Name of Minor \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Waiver and release of all claims and assumption of risk**

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Please read this form carefully and be aware that in signing up and participating in the above identified programs/activities, you will be expressly assuming the risk and legal liability and waiving and releasing all claims for injuries, damages or loss which you or your minor child/ward might sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with and associated with said programs/activities (including transportation services/vehicle operation, when provided).

The Downers Grove Park District (herein collectively referred to as "the District") is committed to conducting its recreation programs and activities in a safe manner and holds the safety of participants in high regard. The District continually strives to reduce such risks and insists that all participants follow safety rules and instructions that are designed to protect the participant's safety. However, participants and parents/guardians of minors registering for this program must recognize that there is an inherent risk of injury when choosing to participate in recreational activities/programs.

You are solely responsible for determining if you or your minor child/ward are physically fit and/or adequately skilled for the activities contemplated by this agreement. It is always advisable, especially if the participant is pregnant, suffers from an underlying medical condition, or has recently suffered an illness, injury or impairment, to consult a physician before undertaking any physical activity.

I recognize and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury to participants in these programs/activities, and I voluntarily agree to assume the full risk of any and all injuries, damages or loss, regardless of severity, that my minor child/ward or I may sustain as a result of said participation. I further agree to waive and relinquish all claims I or my minor child/ward may have (or accrue to me or my child/ward) as a result of participating in these programs/activities against the District, including its officials, agents, volunteers and employees.

**Photography/videotaping waiver**

Photographs and videos are taken by park district staff to use for promotional purposes. By registering for a program, attending an event or using a park district facility, you have granted us permission to use your image for promotional purposes.

**Signature Required**

I have read and fully understand the waiver and release of all claims on this page and the refund policy. This waiver form is completed and signed of my own free will.

PLEASE SIGN. All adult participants must sign; one parent or custodial parent or guardian must sign if participant is under the age of 18 years.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_