

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

{General}

What ages does Giant Step serve?

We are currently licensed to serve children ages 2-12. If you have an under two year old that you would like to enroll in Giant Step for the near future, we can help you get them registered. Per state licensing rules and regulations, your child's first day with us cannot be before their 2nd birthday.

Do fees vary by age?

No. We charge rates by the day, according to how long a child will attend (Before/After School Care, Half day/Full day, and Prepaid Preschool {Monthly rate} .) Families can choose a combination of schedules to meet their specific needs. More information is available on our Rates and Forms page.

Must my child be potty trained/require a daily nap to attend?

No. We believe in meeting children and families where they are; toilet training and sleep needs are no exception to this.

Our staff changes diapers and assists children with toileting and hygiene as needed.

Our schedule does include a daily nap/rest time. Children requiring sleep are supervised in one space. Children who do not need to nap are able to play separately, also supervised, of course. State regulations do direct us to allow children to get up if they have not fallen asleep within 30 minutes of lying down. Typically, our nappers are asleep within that window without issue. We keep the nap area reasonably dark and play soothing music. Nappers are provided with a covered mat, blankets, pillows and comfort items (stuffed toys) as needed.

What does my child need to bring with them?

We do not require specific supplies (though donations are always appreciated).

We do encourage families to pack at least one change of clothes (possibly more if potty training) as well as outdoor clothes appropriate to the weather (i.e.: coats and snow gear in winter, light jackets/layers in fall, bathing suit/sunscreen in summer)

Children may also bring a blanket and one toy/stuffie if they would like. (Please no electronics.)

We provide each child with a water bottle that remains at Giant Step. They are labeled with the child's name and will be cleaned and sanitized daily.

When am I required to drop off/pick up?

These times can be flexible given your individual needs. We try to keep a schedule for our regular clients and appreciate advance notice when changes are necessary. The earliest drop off can begin is 6:30 am and the latest pickup time is 5:30 pm. We consider our preschool program "in session" from 8 am to 12:30 pm. In order to be counted for breakfast, please be here (or contact us to ensure we know you will make it) by 8 am.

How many children attend?

While more children are registered, only 15 children can be present at any given time. This is according to state regulation so scheduling is imperative. We strive for an adult/child ratio of 1:7 per best practice according to NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children).

Do you have openings?

Usually. Because our attendance fluctuates throughout each day as well as weekly, it is best to speak with us directly about your needs. We do accept drop ins when our numbers allow. We can let you know what is available any given day if you call.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

What does the schedule look like?

We aim for a mix of free play and adult directed activities, age appropriate according to the needs of our present group. You can look at our Daily Schedule for more details.

Will I need to provide food for my child?

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This is a USDA funded program aimed at increasing the access children and their families have to quality nutrition.

As such we provide breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks to all children in attendance at no extra cost to you. Children joining us after the morning session of public preschool are included in lunch and snack; afternoon snacks are provided for those joining us for After School care as well. You can view a sample menu on our Rates and Forms page.

(If you prefer to provide your own food or have specific dietary needs, please discuss this with us directly so we can ensure that your child's needs are met, while we are still in compliance with CACFP recommendations.)

Have a question not addressed here?

Let us know. The answer is likely in our Parent Handbook, but we may add your question to our FAQs. We are always happy to help in person, or via phone, or email as well!

How often does registration occur?

Families utilizing Giant Step must register at two points: 1. Whenever their child first begins attending Giant Step. 2. Every August, we repeat the registration process. This repetition is required by state licensing to ensure our records remain complete and current. (Let's say a child is registered in March of 2023. The family would still register again in August of 2023, even though it has been less than one year.)

Will gaps in attendance change my registration date? Can I lose/hold a spot?

If a child has a gap in attendance, they can resume without registering again, unless the yearly registration period passes during their absence.

Spots are only guaranteed for those utilizing our Prepaid Preschool Tuition option. This is because those families have paid in advance, and their cost is calculated by the number of days preschool is in session. For more information, see our Rates and Forms page.

Let's say that a family schedules care every Monday for the foreseeable future. This will be considered when someone else is asking about availability. Now say, the family knows their child will miss two Mondays in a row and then resume their regular schedule.

As long as we have been notified, this is no issue. However, in periods where we are very busy, we reserve the right to fill empty spots as needed when communication is not given.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

{Preschool}

What age must my child be to participate in Giant Step's Preschool Program?

The children present at Giant Step during our preschool hours are typically between the ages of 2 to 5. In other words, they are not yet eligible by age to attend Kindergarten. As a "small center-based" program, we do not currently have a large enough staff to separate the children into groups all day. This simply means that all children present participate in our preschool activities.

What kind of activities are available?

We work hard to ensure that our activities are developmentally appropriate. This means that the activities we provide are:

- *centered on play. Research shows that play is the way children are meant to learn. (NAEYC provides many articles to help families understand how play IS learning.)
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/dap/principles>
<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/play>*
- *Varied to meet the needs of the whole child, across all developmental domains (social, emotional, physical, cognitive (thought), and language)*
- *Balanced between time for teacher directed activities (story time, group discussion, music/movement, games) and child directed activities (free play which includes various play centers, art materials, gross and fine motor play, outdoor time, etc.)*

Can my preschooler attend Giant Step for child care if they are attending public school via Rangely Preschool or private school such as Rangely Christian Academy?

Yes. We do not require preschool aged children to choose us over other options in order to use Giant Step. In fact, many preschoolers use our program in conjunction with Rangely Preschool's half day program, which provides bussing from us to them and vice versa.

We do want families to know that we are a viable option on our own for preschool education prior to starting kindergarten via Parkview Elementary.

We respect each family's right to decide what works best for them and their children, whether that choice may be Giant Step, or other schools/programs, homeschooling or any combination.

Since all children participate in preschool activities, what are the benefits of choosing the Prepaid Preschool Tuition option?

Our preschool tuition option allows families to choose between a monthly rate for either two, three, or four days a week. The tuition is paid each month to cover the following month.

- This option guarantees we will hold a spot for your child on their scheduled days.*
- Because the rates are averaged over a 9 month period, no refunds are given for absences; however, we will make an effort to offer a "Make up day" when availability allows. For example, say a child attends 2 days/week on Mondays and Wednesdays, but one week they are ill, missing both days. If the family speaks with us in advance, we may be able to accommodate their child all four days the next week at no extra charge.*
- Twice a year, we provide conferences to share information about how children are developing with their families. This information is derived from Teaching Strategies Gold in conjunction with observations we gather about the children. These assessments assist us in planning activities and providing*

opportunities that align with each child's point of development as well as their interests.

- Children attending Giant Step Preschool program exclusively until they transition to Public Kindergarten will be offered an opportunity to meet the current Kindergarten Teacher and check out the School Facility before the start of the School year. • Parents will receive info forwarded from the public school regarding the Kindergarten open house for meet and greet when applicable.*

- Please note that prepaid tuition only covers the hours of 8 am to 12:30 pm (essentially a half day rate). Families also needing care outside these hours can pay separately for that care if they are using prepaid tuition.*

Does Preschool run year round at Giant Step?

No. Each year we align our preschool schedule with RE-4 District's Public school schedule. Currently, preschool is in session from September 25th, 2023 to May 16th, 2024.

During public school breaks, Giant Step may remain open for child care provided there is enough demand. Families are given advance notice to sign up for care at such times and we will post notice when a decision is made prior to the breaks.

These days are not included in the prepaid tuition, so families utilizing Giant Step at these times should expect to be billed at our regular rates for those days.

When we provide child care during Summer, these days are always billed at our regular daily rate.