

Frequently Asked Questions About Castle Kids
Child Development Center

Q1. Who qualifies for the DOD subsidized rates?

A1. All Department of the Defense military and civilian employees qualify for DOD rates for their children, stepchildren, or wards. For this purpose, a parent is defined as the biological father or mother of a child; a person, who by order of a court of competent jurisdiction, has been declared the father or mother of a child; or a person in whose household a child resides, provided that such person acts as parent for that child and contributes at least one-half of the child's support.

Q2. Are there any additional costs for before and after care?

A2. The center is open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Before and after care are included in the weekly rate.

Q3. Are meals provided at the center?

A3. The center will provide breakfast, lunch, and two snacks daily. If your child has special needs, such as special foods or formulas, you will need to make special arrangements with the center director.

Q4. How many spaces are available in the center?

A4. There are 90 spaces available for children aged 6 weeks to pre-school. When the center operates at maximum capacity, there will be 8 spaces for infants, 28 spaces for young toddlers, 24 older toddlers, and 30 preschoolers.

Q5. How will the spaces be allocated?

A5. The children of DOD employees will have first priority on open spaces. Any space not allocated will be made available to other federal employees having a priority over parents from the community. However, at least 50% of all spaces must be occupied by children of federal employees.

Q6. Will physically challenged children be able to take advantage of the program?

A6. Children with special needs will be accommodated within available resources for Castle Kids on a case-by-case basis. The needs of these children will have to be explored with family members. There may be a need for a commitment of additional resources by the family to facilitate participation by these children.

Q7. What is the pricing structure for the child care development program?

A8. For DOD employees, the user fee depends on the sponsor's total family income. For practical purposes, it includes the income of both spouses before deductions. It does not include alimony or child support. The weekly fees range from \$42 per week for those earning less than \$23,000 per year to \$112 per week for those earning in excess of \$70,000 per year. For non-DOD sponsors, the fee is \$135 for infants, \$125 for toddlers and \$120 for pre-schoolers.

Q8. What constitutes total family income?

A8. Total family income includes all military and civilian earned income by both spouses: earned income as wages, salaries, tips, long-term disability benefits, voluntary salary deferrals, retirement or other pension income, etc. before deductions for taxes, social security, etc.; quarters, subsistence and other allowances appropriate for the rank and status of military and civilian personnel whether received in cash or in kind; and anything else of value, even if not taxable, that was received. It does not include variable housing allowance (VHA) and cost of living allowance (COLA) received in high cost areas or alimony and child support.

Q9. What about part-time enrollment?

A9. Our ability to accommodate part-time spaces is very limited. If there is an overwhelming demand for full-time spaces to the extent we have Corps employees on waiting lists, our ability to offer part-time spaces will be non-existent. If a DOD parent wishes to pay for a full-time space for part-time care or arranges with another DOD parent to occupy the remaining part-time days for each week, that arrangement will be considered. It would be unfair for there to be employees waiting for full time care, when there are part-time enrollees paying for and occupying a full time space. We do not offer part-time, part-day slots.

Q10. How long do I have to wait for a space to open?

A10. The waiting list is quite extensive for all parent categories. The demand for infant spaces is greatest. A DOD parent usually spends approximately 9 months on the waiting list before a space becomes available. A non-Federal employee can usually expect to be on the waiting list approximately 18 months. A community parent can expect, if a space does become available to them, about 36 months. Therefore, it is essential that a parent visit the center and request to be placed on the waiting list. Phone inquiries are welcome, but a reservation can only be made in person.