

SKY KIDS Parent/Instructor Handbook

sky kids motto "Snow Fun with Family and Friends"





INTRODUCTION:

This Sky Kids Handbook is written to ensure a clear and concise understanding for the students and parents of the rules. This program will only succeed with actively involved parents instructing each others children. This is where you will find the programs rules and expectations of trainers, parents and children in the Sky Kids program. We want the communication between parents, trainers, directors, and any other instructors to be seamless to eliminate confusion on Sky Kids policies and objectives. Our goal is to teach kids a love of outdoor snow sports and how to ski safely. Creating a positive friendly ski community where our kids can feel comfortable and have a desire to learn how to ski is our main objective. We look forward to a positive and fun season on the Mountain!

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE:

SkyKids IS NOT a babysitting service.

All lessons have no more than three children per class and are in the morning

from 9:00-11:00 each class will be one level and the children will wear color-coded vests to let parents, instructors, and trainers know any kid's ski level by sight.

Parents check in their child (must have pass with them to check in) at 8:30 in the SkyKids room and must be available to pick their child up between 11:00 and 11:30.

All Children enrolled in the SkyKids program must have at least one adult who will work within the SkyKids program for a minimum of 3hours as either

1. Instructor
2. Instructor assistant
3. lodge helper

All children in our program will be instructed with out the use of poles by adults or teens that are not their siblings or parents. This helps to build positive relationships within our SkyKids community.

We believe in positive reinforcement so we always have stickers, hot chocolate, and smiles on hand to continue to encourage kids to have a great day on the mountain!

The goals and rules of the SkyKids Program:

- First and foremost HAVE FUN! We want our kids to love to ski and be excited to come to Sky Tavern to learn. To help facilitate this come to the program on time. We start classes at 9:00am be in the lodge at 8:30 to ensure all our skiers get checked in and placed with an instructor and class at their ski level, and have time to get acquainted with their ski buddies and instructors.
- BE SAFE, All members must wear helmets! Sun screen is a must (Any donations of sunscreen are warmly received, we always need more!). The children need to wear goggles or sunglasses to protect their eyes from the bright sun. It's much easier to ski when you can see! Please have your children prepared for being wet with extra socks, layers of clothing and a couple pairs of gloves. We never know what kind of conditions we will encounter up here. Be sure to label all your personal equipment.
- HAPPY MEMBERS We want all our members to have the best experience possible. If you are not pleased with a situation or have a suggestion please don't hesitate to say something, problems don't get fixed with gossip. We also have sticker charts and prizes for children.
- Final rule is to FOLLOW ALL SKY TAVERN RULES. We are all members of this ski resort and have a responsibility to each other to follow the rules of the resort. That means no snowball fights!

TRAINERS (PSIA certified instructors, and well informed long term sky kids members) (Trainers could at times be instructors.)

The best trainers are those who genuinely like working with kids. From the perspective of area management, trainers are the most visible representatives of the resort and so must always project a positive, helpful, friendly and professional manner. Many people pass by the Sky Kids room and will judge our program by the fleeting glimpse they get at that moment. The successful trainer will focus on the satisfaction of the student as the ultimate goal. However the trainer enhances the whole family's experience by providing structure, expertise, and a positive attitude. Trainers will train parents to be instructors and instructor assistants of the Sky Kids ski lessons.

It is important for a trainer to teach the technical aspects of skiing but also keep in mind that the primary goal of ski instruction to this age group is to have fun. We want all the kids to be safe, have fun and be constantly engaged during the Sky kids Program.

Parent/Teen Instructors

Ok parents we need you!! The instructors **MUST** have teacher training. In these trainings you will learn to tailor the lessons to young children. Sky Tavern has dry land clinics as well as a couple of weekends on the mountain training to get you instructor ready before the season starts. But it doesn't stop there! Every Saturday and Sunday afternoon there are adult ski lessons that you

are required to take. You have to pass the level so you can teach the level. In these classes you will learn both ski skills and teaching skills. There will be a lodge helper available to look after your child(ren) that are in Sky Kids during the lesson time. This service is only for parents who are taking classes not for any other reason. You do not have to take the classes every week but you must improve a couple of levels during the season to keep up with our budding skiers.

Our goal is keep the kids in our program energized and excited about skiing. We as instructors need to stay positive and happy. If you are excited about the day the kids will be too. Please don't force any Sky Kids to ski. If they don't want to hit the slopes even after positive coaxing, let them horse around in the snow first. This is part of learning how to ski, and enjoying being outside. Marching around in the snow helps build leg strength, making a snow angel encourages gross motor skills, "Simon Says" teaches them to follow directions and safety. If children are reluctant to ski have them go through an obstacle course in boots and then try it on skis. Have stickers in your pockets for the kids to put on their helmets or skis. Positive verbal affirmations are your most powerful tool to encourage kids. There is an attached sheet of ideas for you!

We will have different obstacle courses and "gates" set up for the different level skiers. The majority of our skiers for the first few weeks will be level one and two. These skiers will require, more then likely, more lodge breaks and reminders of hot coco and snacks inside after a job well done. A level one skier is just learning how to put on their equipment and getting comfortable with the snow,

standing on skis and learning what pizza and french fries looks like. They may even need an “edgy wedgy” to help their skies from going too far apart and start giving some muscle memory. Level two skiers are skiing with a pizza and learning how to stop, to pass level two they must be able to do a pizza stop. A level 3 and above must be tested by a PSIA Trainer. If you have a child you think is ready for that please try and find a trainer on your own after the lessons, if that doesn't work out come into the lodge and we will find one for you.

Sky Kids' weather policy is ski when the weather's nice. For young kids, ski lessons should be done when the weather is decent. You don't want to subject kids to extremely cold and/or wet conditions. The first few Sky Kids experiences outside should be fun. If they're cold or wet they'll associate skiing with being miserable and they won't want to go again. We always want to encourage kids to get outside and ski, and of course this is a winter sport in the snow, so it is going to be cold. However short lessons and plenty of indoor breaks (with cups of hot coco) work well when the weather is rough.

Remember to keep it fun! For any level, play games while you are skiing. Play follow the leader, make airplane noises, Simon Says, hi fives at the bottom of the hill. Have your kids try to spray you with snow when they stop (depending on their level!). If you make skiing about having fun and not about learning to ski they'll progress much more quickly. If you do it they'll follow!

At the end of the lesson, the instructors will take the children back into the lodge and fill out the lesson card stating the things the child did well, what to focus on

during the next lesson, and what level the child is in. If the child moves up a level they get two stickers for the chart. If they just had a great day they get one sticker.

Instructor Assistant:

This job is for our parents who are not as comfortable being the instructor, and will provide an extra hand in the lesson. We do encourage all our Instructor Assistants to attend to the adult afternoon classes to learn to ski and improve. We will have the lodge helper looking after Sky Kids during this time. We can't have a great program without great instructors. The Assistants will also be the ones encouraging the stragglers, passing out the stickers, getting the kids motivated to hit the slopes! You will be the one to take the criers into the lodge helper, or walk the kids to the bathroom when need be.

Lodge Helper:

The morning lodge helper needs to be available at 8:30 to assist with Sky kids check in. After that this job holder stays inside the Sky Kids room to administer comfort, snacks, hot chocolate, or companionship for any kids taking a break from skiing. You will have crayons and coloring books, play dough, toys, and books. Lodge helpers will also assist in locating the parents of any child needing aid. You will have a walkie talkie available to use to talk to the director. At the end of lesson you will be taking the vests and other borrowed equipment and assisting the parents and instructors signing the students in and out.

The afternoon lodge helper will do the same as above only during the adult lesson from 1:25-3:35.

Training will be provided for all three of our Sky Kid parent jobs.

Snacks/prizes/stickers

We are a non profit, and we recognize that you all paid to be a part of this program; however that only just covers the day to day running of the mountain. We ask that every family bring in a box of crackers at the beginning of season. We will also need fruit, candies, stickers, marshmallows and prizes. So if you can help out in anyway for these items it would be great!

Check in/out procedures

Each morning of the program check in and class assignment begins at 8:30; each level has a check in station. The parent will check their child in by finding the check in station that corresponds to their skier's level. Each Sky Kid will have a folder with his/her lesson card (all these will have the child's name on them). The lesson card will have a date on it and be given to the instructor that is teaching that child, it will be returned at the end of the day with the instructor's observation teaching notes on it. Your child may or may not move up to a different level each week, it is important for you to talk with their instructor to see how things went on a day to day basis.

All Sky Kids will be picked up by their parent, in the Sky Kid's room, after signing their child out and returning any vests or other equipment used during the lesson time.

SkyKid's Instruction Manuel

Thank you for having your kids in our program and being willing to teach!!! It's a good idea for instructors to carry a small tube of sunscreen, tissue, bandaids, snacks, candy or stickers for rewards. Kids should always make a potty stop before leaving the lodge (hopefully parents will all be on time so this can be done before lessons start!). Kids usually respond best to being shown rather than being told. Use more demonstrations with "Follow me and do what I do" requests. Fewer words and more action keep the kids interested and moving.

Explanation of level requirements to pass:

Level I:

Key skill is balance here by learning a balanced, athletic stance

Walk on skis, side step up

French fries straight run (skis parallel)

Pizza straight run and stop (skis in a wedge)

Moving around, gliding being able to stop on skis without falling is what we are looking for.

Level II: Rope tow

Turning to a stop (j turn) is a key skill: it helps the kids feel that they can stop by just turning and give them a way to control where they are going and at what speed.

Pizza turns, practice and get to a smaller pizza. Skis stay in a pizza throughout the turns. Make big turns where it's not too steep, small turns where it is steeper. Make as many turns as you can. Turn to a stop.

Comfortable linked turns is what we are looking for.

Level III: poma lift (3 hill)

Sideslip is the skill that's key to master at this level. It gives the kids another way to control their speed.

Wedge Christie: turns have a smaller pizza at the beginning and the skis are parallel (french fries) at the end, then a little side slip before the next turn. Extension at the beginning of the turn when opening the skis into a pizza will make it easier.

Linked wedge christie turns (ideally with extension at the beginning of the turn} is what we are looking for.

Level 4 and 5 same as 3 only performed on those hills.

Level 6 is on the 6 hill no wedge, parallel skidded turns with speed control. Some of our SkyKids will reach these levels!!

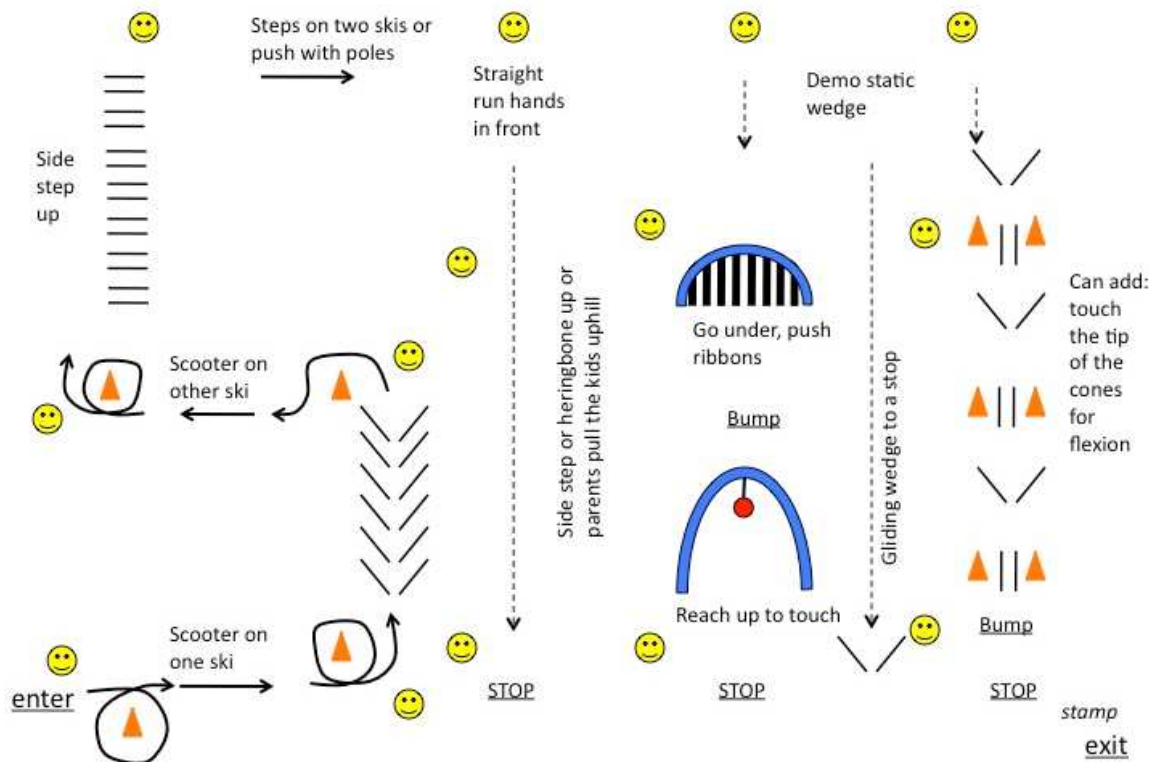
SkyKids Playground:

The central idea is to create an area for the SkyKids that is their own, where they can discover the fun of skiing. While playing, they will be able to develop the skills they

need to enjoy the sport. They will learn to balance on skis, walk up the hill, side step up the hill, side slipping down. They will learn flexion(crouching down), extension (pulling their body up). These are the things you do when you ski, sometimes in a very unconscious way. These help you negotiate your way down safely, sideslip, traverse, skid to control your speed, flex and extend to manage the forces in the turn. With these they will be able to go take the ski lifts and explore more of the mountain.

We will start with a basic layout and basic skills that will allow them to get to their first turns, control their speed and where they want to go. Here is an example of what it could look like:

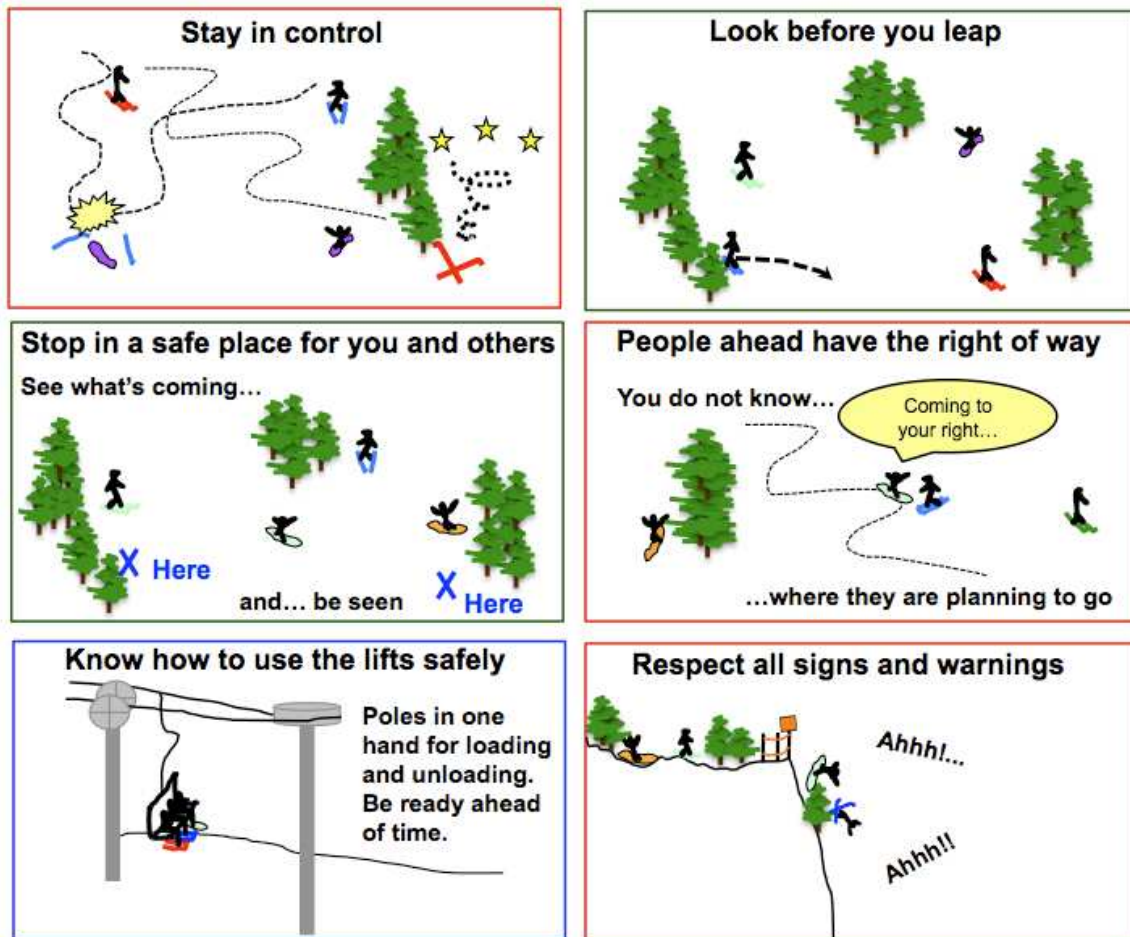
- The little smiley faces are you the instructor helpers –



Eventually we want you to understand the concepts and modify it so:

1. You improve what doesn't work for the kids, make it work better.
2. You change the layout from time to time so the kids get to discover a new playground and want to go check it out.

We will also address safety before they go out in the resort. We will use cool pictogram cards that they can wear around their necks along with their badges. The logic here is most of us are visual learners, and not all kids in SkyKids can read, in fact most probably can't!



The SkyKids get a card each time they successfully complete the playground run, that makes 6. By then they should be ready for the rope tow, or we can have them go to the rope tow and then swing by the playground again to get one more. Then they get promoted to the chairlift

Ideas for the instructors to teach the kids.

Walking on skis:

Make the kids draw shapes in the snow.



The instructor can ask the helper to draw dotted line with colored water, to represent a straight line, a circle, the figure 8 (so they learn to go right and left). Make them draw flowers by walking with the skis pointed outside. Don't forget the stalk! Use food coloring then to spray on the flower and make it pretty (have the instructor helper do that).

Sliding:

Have the kids slide straight towards a instructor helper and give them a high five. Ask them...How far can you slide on two skis? On one ski? That's the fun of it, let them experience it.

Turns:

Tell the kids to look for squirrels, leprechauns, fairies, bunnies etc...in the trees on the side...they will turn the direction they are looking. If it's a foggy day, you can turn on your headlights on your boots and search right and left..."flashlights on knees monsters in trees". The kids will follow you, have them play follow the leader you can make airplane arms, or pretend to be a bus driver, these things prepare their arms for poles. Children this age tend to keep their arms close to their bodies so we need to encourage them to put their arms out. You can have them pretend to catch a ball. (some of the kids might not know their right and left but you can tell them!)

There will be a punching ball in the slalom, they can punch the ball at the beginning of each turn. (Activates the hand, give them another point of contact to, for a second stabilize their balance, give a feel for when you use poles)

Ask the kids what their favorite movie is...play on the character theme. For example: At the beginning of the turn Spiderman can get tall and shoot spider webs from their hands in the direction of the turn. Or the Fairy Godmother can use her magic wand to do the same. You can tell the kids that they have head lights or laser beams on their knees that they need to shoot at the tree or you or whatever is in the direction you want them to turn.

Ask the kids if they feel how you slow down by turning.
"Hey we are not moving anymore...we stopped!"

Side slipping: spread the icing. Have the instructor stand slightly below and behind the skier. Have him or her pick

up the snow and throw it on the path of the skier so it doesn't look so smooth...the kids then need to smooth it out.

You want them to learn two key points: control their speed and direction = turns and stay safe. Turns to a stop (a j turn) will allow them to control their speed, so will side slipping. They can sideslip their way out of a steeper section, gain control and confidence.

We want to create success by starting with actions the kids can already do. Working from the known to the unknown creates instant winners. Walk in ski boots - When ready: add one ski, the other, both skis. March in ski boots - When ready: add one ski, the other, both skis. Thump the snow with ski boots - When ready: add one ski, the other, both skis.

There should be no pressure, just encouragement, to move on. Always keep the kids excited and engaged in the lesson and take breaks when needed. By learning to link one success to the next on you should be able to gently push them to the next necessary step in the progression.

Above all, SkyKids is about FUN!