

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:

- Sky Kids IS NOT a babysitting service.
- All lessons have no more than three children to one adult per class and are in the morning from 9:15-11:15 each class will be one level and the Parents check in their child (must have pass with them to check in) at 8:30 at the Sky Kids check in table outside the Sky Kids room. Parents must be available to pick their child up between 11:15 and 11:45 (some levels stay out a little bit longer).
- All Children enrolled in the Sky Kids program must have at least one adult who will work within the Sky Kids program for a minimum of 2-hours as either
 1. Instructor
 2. Instructor assistant
 3. Morning lodge helper
 4. Check in/set up
 5. Check out
- All children under level 4P in our program will be instructed with out the use of poles by adults or teens that are NOT their parents or family member. This helps to build positive relationships within our Sky Kids community.
- We believe in positive reinforcement so we always have stickers, snacks, and smiles on hand to continue to encourage kids to have a great day on the mountain!

The goals and rules of the Sky Kids 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.
- 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 cold with extra 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 and clothing.**

- **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.
- 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!

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 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 ski lessons that you can take to improve your teaching and personal skiing. You have to pass the level so you can teach the level. In these classes you will learn both ski skills and teaching skills. 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. Positive verbal affirmations are your most powerful tool to encourage kids.

We will have different obstacle courses 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 breaks and reminders (it is OK to keep snacks in your pockets for encouragement). 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 skis from going too far apart and start giving some muscle memory. Level two skiers are skiing with a pizza wedge and learning how to stop, to pass level two they must be able to stop and turn. A level 2 and above must be tested by a PSIA CI (Certified Instructors). If you have a child you think is ready for leveling up, please mark it on the child's card and we will make arrangements to have the child reviewed.

Sky Kids' weather policy is ski when the weather is 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 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. 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 Sky Kids Room and turn in the lesson report cards stating the things the child did well, what to focus on during the next lesson, and what level the child is in. **PLEASE do not take your child off the snow without telling checking out in the Sky Kids Room.**

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 the afternoon classes to learn to ski and improve. 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 that takes the kids to the lodge for breaks or walk the kids to the bathroom when need be.

Lodge Helper:

The lodge helper needs to be available at 8:30 to assist with Sky Kids check in. After that this helper stays inside the Sky Kids room to administer comfort, snacks, juice/water, or companionship for any kids taking a break from skiing. Lodge helpers will also assist in locating the parents of any child needing aid. At the end of lessons you will be taking the vests and other borrowed equipment and assisting the parents and instructors signing the students out.

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 one of the following in the beginning of season; fruit snacks/snack, stickers, water bottles, juice boxes, Clorox wipes, cups (small cups for drinking and holding snacks) and Kleenex. So if you can help out in any way, it would be great!

Check in/out procedures

Each SkyKid parent needs to make sure we have the correct contact information, including cell phone numbers and email. These are a must so we can have every resource available if need be. Each morning of the program check in starts at 8:30 and class assignment begins at 9:00 so we can begin lessons at 9:15; each level has a "corral" that the child will go in after checking in and are "ski ready" (this means that the child has gone to the restroom, sunscreen is applied, have their gloves, helmets, goggles or sunglasses boots, and vest on). The lesson report card will be filled out by the check in helper and placed in the correct bin ready to be passed out to the instructor that will be teaching that child, it will be returned at the end of the day with the instructor's checks and comments. **All Sky Kids will be picked up by their adult member, in the Sky Kid's room, after returning the vest and signing their child out and returning any other equipment used during the lesson time. Sorry, siblings are not allowed to check out Sky Kids. Again, PLEASE do not take your child off the snow without telling checking out in the Sky Kids Room.**

Sky Kid's Instruction Manual

Thank you for having your kids in our program and being willing to teach!!! It's a good idea for instructors to carry some tissues, snacks, or stickers for rewards. Kids should always make a potty stop before leaving the lodge (hopefully parents will have this taken care of this 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)

Turn left and right

Moving around, gliding being able to stop on skis without falling and starting turns 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.

Skis stay in a pizza throughout the turns. Make small turns where it's not too steep, big turns where it is steeper. Make as many turns as you can. Turn to a stop. (2P are the kids that are almost ready for the poma lift (Rocco) and just need a little more time using turn shape for speed control – A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level).

Comfortable linked turns is what we are looking for.

Level III: poma lift - Rocco (3 hill)

Sideslip is the skill that should be introduced 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, with a little skid before the next turn. Extension at the beginning of the turn when opening the skis into a pizza will make it easier. (3P can go on chair lift so we want to make sure that they are making turns correctly at this point to pass level - A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level)

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

Level III P: Chair Lift (Chicken Shoot and back trail)

This is basically the same as a Level 3 **BUT** you need to be able to ski the "Chicken Shoot" and know chair lift safety. A Certified Instructor has to pass you to this level.

Level IV: Chair Lift (4 Hill)

Level 4 is the same as 3 only performed on the 4 hill. A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

Level IV P: Chair Lift (4 Hill) Introduction of Poles!

Performed on the 4 hill, learning how to use your poles. A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

Level V: Chair Lift (5 Hill) Pole Touch Turns

Level 5 the kids start learning pole touches during turns! A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

Level VI: Chair Lift (6 Hill)

Level 6 is on the 6 hill no wedge, parallel skidded turns with speed control. Some of our SkyKids will reach these levels!! A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

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, and 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.

Ideas for the instructors to teach the kids.

Walking on skis:

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, walk around. Then switch sides and repeat the process. Once confident, put both skis on and “slide” around and work on balancing.

Have the kids draw shapes in the snow.



Have them draw flowers by walking with the skis pointed outside. Don't forget the stalk!

Sliding:

Have the kids slide straight towards an 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 of the hill/trail... 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!).

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.

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. If the child is struggling or frustrated, try a different task or approach to that task. By learning to link one success to the next, you should be able to gently push them to the next necessary step in the progression.