

FAMILY HANDBOOK



ADVENTURE CLUB
ENRICHING INSPIRING EDUCATING

*Providing an **E**nriching, **I**nspiring, **E**ducational, and **E**xciting
place for kids to learn and grow!*

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Dear Families,

We would like to extend the warmest welcome to you and your family. **The Adventure Club's** most important responsibility is to provide a before and after school program that is fun and safe, while **Enriching, Inspiring, Exciting, and Educating** your school aged child.

This handbook is your guide to our program, people, and operational procedures. Please take a moment to read its contents. From time to time, we may need to make policy changes, which we will post at the sign-in table. We want you to be happy and comfortable with your decision to choose **TAC**. If you have any questions about the policies in this handbook, or if there is anything we could be doing better, please contact us...

Office	219-865-6283
Fax	219-225-0069
Email	info@TheAdventureClub.net
Website	www.TheAdventureClub.com

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your child's life.

Dr. Sandra Duncan, Executive Director
Sandy Langbehn, Chief Operating Officer

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Mission Statement

The mission of **The Adventure Club** is to provide an **Enriching, Inspiring, Educating,** and **Exciting** (E.I.E.E.) place for children to learn and grow.

Who We Serve

The Adventure Club (TAC) provides care for elementary school age children who are in kindergarten through 5th grade, in the school town of Munster. Kindergarten through 4th grade, in the school town of Merrillville. Kindergarten through middle school in the elementary schools in the Lake Central, Tri-Creek, Rensselaer School, K-8th grade, in St. Paul in Valparaiso, St. John Evangelist in St. John and Aquinas Catholic School in Merrillville.

Partnership with Parents

We genuinely care about your school ager's happiness, safety, and education while at **TAC**. A child's healthy development depends on a creative environment, age-appropriate activities, and enthusiastic staff. It is our firm belief, however, that providing the best program for your child begins with a partnership with you.

We urge you to become actively engaged with our program's activities, staff, and site coordinators by offering suggestions, ideas, or ways to improve. We are delighted when parents volunteer to help with special events, activities, or even demonstrate a skill or hobby. So, let us hear from you!

PROGRAM HOURS

TAC meets Monday through Friday immediately after school dismissal until 6:00 pm. If your school system offers a before school program, morning care begins at 6:30 am until the start of school. During the summer, **TAC** offers a Summer Camp in three school districts. Summer Camp begins at 6:30 am to 6:00 pm. **TAC** programs are offered at the following locations:

Tri-Creek School Corporation (In operation since 1992)

Oak Hill Elementary School
Lake Prairie Elementary School
Three Creek Elementary School
Morning & Afternoon Program

Munster School Corporation (In operation since 1993)

Eads, Elliott, Frank H. Hammond Elementary School
Morning & Afternoon Programs
Summer Program

Lake Central School Corporation (In operation since 2002)
Bibich, Homan, Kolling, Peifer, Protsman, and Watson Elementary Schools
Morning & Afternoon Programs
Summer Program

St. John Evangelist Catholic School (In operation since 2021)

Merrillville School Corporation (In operation since 2015)
Iddings, Miller, Salk, Fieler, and Wood Elementary Schools
Morning & Afternoon Programs
Summer Program

Merrillville Intermediate School (In operation since 2021)
Afternoon Programs

Aquinas Catholic School (In operation since 2020)
Morning & Afternoon Programs

St. Paul Catholic School (In operation since 2023)

Rensselaer (In operation since 2022)

When school is dismissed, students in the elementary schools' report to the **TAC** location in their building. If the program is not offered at your school, students are bussed from their elementary or middle schools to their respective **TAC** locations where parents pick them up by 6:00 pm.

Scheduled Holidays & Breaks

TAC may provide services during scheduled breaks (i.e., spring and winter break) at designated school locations. Check with your Site Coordinator for details or call our Corporate Office at (219) 865-6283.

Emergency Dismissal

If school is dismissed early because of hazardous weather conditions or other emergencies, **TAC** will not be open. It is very important that you have a Family Emergency Plan in case school is dismissed early for an emergency because we cannot notify you in the event of an emergency closing.

Delayed Start

In the event of a delayed start to the school day, generally due to inclement weather, additional delayed start rates will begin at the time school normally starts. Delayed start fees are not included in the before school flat rate fee.

Rensselaer: In the event of a delayed start to the school day, generally due to inclement weather, **TAC** will be closed in the morning.

Drop Off Before School or Summer Camp/Sign IN

Each day that your child(ren) attends **TAC**, you or other authorized persons must come into the school and sign your child(ren) in on the Exception Sheet. Authorized persons must be 18 years of age or have your written permission with both signatures on file. Failure to use the allocated billing system to sign in can result in children being removed from the program.

Calling Off Child/Changes in Schedules

If your child is scheduled/not scheduled to be at **TAC** and there has been a change in plans, it is imperative that you call off/on using the following procedure:

1. Call the **TAC** site and leave a message that your child will/will not be in attendance.
2. Call the school and leave a message that your child will/will not be in attendance.

If you do not make the two phone calls and TAC needs to make a phone call to find out if your child is safe at home, there will be a \$5 change fee applied to your account.

The following are **TAC's** phone number:

Bibich	322-0653	Eads	836-3228
Homan	322-0942	Elliott	989-7079
Kolling	365-1391	Frank Hammond	972-1209
Peifer	322-1849		
Protsman	322-3302	Oak Hill	696-9285 ext. 7336
Watson	322-3580	Lake Prairie	472-7340
SJE	351-5647	Three Creeks	750-1872
Fielser	756-5926	Rensselaer	333-0964
Iddings	756-5927	St Paul	531-6827
Miller	756-5929		
Salk	756-5925		
Wood	756-5928		
M.I.S.	756-5753		
Aquinas	769-2049		

Late Pick Up

Our program ends promptly at 6:00 pm. If your child is not picked up by closing, a \$15.00 late fee per every 15 minutes or part thereof, for each family is charged. If your child is not picked up by closing and we have not received parent notification within 5 minutes of closing, we will:

- 1) Call all emergency numbers.

From time-to-time circumstances beyond your control may occur; however, **TAC** is unable to accommodate families who are habitually late and require service beyond closing.

Please be advised that our staff members are not allowed to transport any child to another location or to his/her home.

Toys From Home

TAC DOES NOT ALLOW ANY ELECTRONICS, VIDEO GAMES, TOYS, POKEMON CARDS, GAMES, or CELL PHONES TO BE BROUGHT FROM HOME.

To provide a safe and fun environment for all, TAC provides age-appropriate toys, games and activities, and will not be responsible for unauthorized lost, stolen, or damaged property brought from home, including cell phones, coats, jackets and backpacks.

TAC'S PROGRAM

Days are filled with excitement and activities planned especially for school-agers. Each day has scheduled events intentionally designed to enrich, inspire, and educate school-agers while having fun!

Program Standards

The Adventure Club is modeled on standards established by the National After-school Association (NAA), the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS), and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The Adventure Club provides an **Enriching, Inspiring, Educating, and Exciting (EIEE)** program enhancing core competencies:

1. Literacy & Language
2. Wellness & Safety
3. Creative Arts
4. Character Building
5. Community Outreach & Social Learning
6. Engineering & Problem Solving

These six core competencies align with the school's academic goals. Our activities and events are intentionally planned to enhance TAC's six core competencies through our Kids' Choice proprietary program.

Kids' Choice

TAC believes in offering children choices. When children are given choices, new worlds emerge. Each **TAC** site has a KIDS' CHOICE BOARD that displays each staff members' name and photo as well as intentionally planned activities for the day. After children check in for attendance, they will find their name located on a magnetic strip on the board, and place their name under the station/activity of their choice. Children can change their activity at any time and as many times as they choose as long as there is available space in their desired activity on the KIDS' CHOICE BOARD. A magnetic stop sign will be used to indicate when students can no longer choose a particular station/activity because it is full and/or closed. Children will also enjoy structured games and competitions inside, outside, and in the gym. The following explains some of the daily kid's choices.

Homework Center

TAC provides stations for children with homework or those who choose to read or engage in quiet activities. Children can choose to sit in the designated Homework Center or relax in **TAC's** Relaxation Station. **TAC's** staff is available to answer questions or provide help with homework. However, staff members are not tutors and are not responsible for seeing that each child has completed their homework assignments.

Imagination Station

Generally, daily art materials will be available and children can choose to tap into their imagination to create personal masterpieces. At times, projects are linked with holidays or upcoming special events (i.e., making team banners for Winter Olympics).

Game Encounters

Children may choose fun through competitive games of checkers, chess, Connect Four, bowling competitions, coloring contests, jump rope events, basketball, and trivia games. Also, **TAC** is equipped with plenty of age-appropriate toys, games, technology, and audio-visual materials that are available every day.

Fungineering

Participation in Fungineering is on the rise at **TAC**. With the use of Lego blocks and other open-ended building materials, children construct towers, bridges, buildings, and much more. Circuit Jr.'s are used to teach children all about the flow of electricity by attaching circuits and wires to make cool sounds and propellers spin! It is no wonder that engineering through creativity makes the Fungineering station a popular kid's choice at **TAC**.

Snack Attack

TAC in the Lake Central, Munster, Tri-creek, Rensselaer School Corporations, St John Evangelist, St Paul, St Patrick, and Longfellow Elementary provide a Snack Attack station where snacks and beverages are served daily. Children can select the snacks and beverages of their choice and enjoy them with their friends. For the safety of our

children, we only serve snacks provided by our vendors. Donated foods from parents and **TAC** employees are prohibited.

TAC in the Merrillville School Corporation, the schools supply the students with a healthy snack.

Relaxation Station

A soft, welcoming environment is the objective for our Relaxation Station. Children can choose to read, do homework, engage in quiet activities, or simply take some time to unwind at this station.

Drama Club

An enriching club for students to join. Here they will be able to write a skit or play, create parts and decide who will play the part. They will create costumes, backdrops, posters, invites. Drama Club is a great way for children to express themselves and develop social skills, and self-confidence.

Music Club

We encourage our employees to use their talents to teach students the skills that they have. You will find guitar, keyboard, singing, and drumming clubs at **TAC**. Another great way to express yourself and build self-confidence.

Sports Zone

Since the children have been in a classroom all day, it is important for them to *run off steam* and, therefore, they will go outside when weather permits and to the gym on a periodic schedule according to its availability. Some of the activities include dodge and kickball competitions, 4 square, octopus, baseball, basketball and flag football.

Outdoor Adventures

Swings, monkey bars, freeze tag, and more are all part of the fun during Outdoor Adventures. Most days outside are filled with free choice activities while other days are filled with fun structured games and activities. **TAC** follows each school's daily decision to go outside. If children were able to go outside for recess during school hours, they will also go outside during **TAC** program hours. Please be sure children are dressed appropriately for outside activities during all seasons.

SPECIAL EVENTS & PROJECTS

In addition to our exciting daily activities, each quarter **TAC** prepares a gala event to continuously promote values of trust, patience, independence, teamwork, and—of course—to enhance children's level of fun. Examples of special events include Olympics, TAC's Got Talent, ArtVenture, and newly successful "TAC Science Showcase".

Kids Helping Kids Initiatives

Northwest Indiana Cancer Kids (NICK)

The ability to touch the lives of children has always been the mission of **TAC**. For example, TAC partnered with The ArtSpot to create beautiful watercolor greeting cards, which were sold to the community. All proceeds went to Northwest Indiana cancer kids (NICK) to help support children and their families.

Shop with A Cop

TAC recognizes the importance of a safe and secure community and regularly contributes to neighborhood police and safety departments, and actively participates in programs such as *Shop with a Cop*.

Honoring Vets

TAC has helped honor our Vets by helping to raise money through walks, setting up booths for kids to play games and have their faces painted by our very talented **TAC** team members.

Diaper Drive

TAC students raised money and brought in many packages of diapers for the Sojourner Truth Home, in Gary IN. We feel that it is important for children to learn the value of helping others in need!

Summer Camp

Fieldtrips

Please be sure to pick up a copy of our fieldtrip schedule. Fees for fieldtrips and transportation are not included in the hourly rate. Due to capacity restrictions on the bus, each fieldtrip will be limited to the first students who sign up and pay.

Children attending fieldtrips must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the listed departure time for each fieldtrip. We are scheduled to return no later than 4:00 pm for most fieldtrips. Spending money is recommended but not required. Children are responsible for holding their own money. Children who will not attend fieldtrips will remain on-site with **TAC** staff.

Mini-Camps

TAC offers mini-camps that are enriching, inspiring and educating. Please visit our website at www.TheAdventureClub.com for a listing of available mini-camps during the summer.

Lunch

Children in Lake Central, Munster and Rensselaer are required to bring their own sack lunch daily during the summer. **TAC** cannot provide lunch. We will notify you on days that lunch is not required. Merrillville **TAC** will provide students lunch and breakfast when attending **TAC** on most days.

Snacks

TAC in Lake Central, Munster, and Rensselaer will provide two (2) small snacks each day during the summer. We will also provide beverages throughout the day. Merrillville students will receive a healthy snack at **TAC** that is supplied from the Merrillville School Corporation.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Enrollment Fee

Enrollment fees are \$65 per child (non-refundable and non-transferrable). In late summer, there is an early bird registration fee that typically gives a \$10 discount if you register prior to an announced deadline. Each year, parents need to enroll their child by completing a registration form, paying the registration fee, and providing a copy of their driver's license. You are not enrolled in TAC unless your annual registration fee is paid.

Summer registration fees are additional each year and are determined prior to summer. Enrollment is required each summer. To complete enrollment, **TAC** must receive the enrollment form, processing fee, and a copy of your driver's license.

If there is a delinquent and outstanding balance at the time of any registration, all monies must be paid in full prior to your child being accepted into the program.

Steps for Registering

1. In order for your child(ren) to be officially registered with **The Adventure Club**, it is imperative that both your registration form and registration fees are completed and submitted at the same time.
2. After you submit both your registration form and registration fees, it is mandatory that you confirm **The Adventure Club's** receipt of both the registration form and registration fees. You can ask for confirmation of receipt by email (info@TheAdventureClub.net) or by calling **The Adventure Club's** corporate office (219-865-6283).

Court Orders

- If there is a court order involved, you must present this court order each year as well as every summer that your child(ren) is registered.
- TAC will not disseminate any information included on this registration form such as child data, financial arrangements, student attendance, or year-end tax statements to anyone other than the primary parent who filled out this registration form.

Fees & Tuition Payments

Fees and Tuition are due in full every Friday by 6:00 pm. Payments received by 6:00 pm each Friday will be reflected on the current invoice. Please note that **TAC** bills for services rendered one week in arrears.

Parents are encouraged to take advantage of our paperless billing option by choosing "Yes" to paperless billing on their Registration Form. Doing so will ensure receipt of a weekly invoice via email. If "No" is selected for paperless billing, the parent is responsible for picking up weekly invoices at their designated site.

All Sites:

If a tuition balance remains outstanding after one week, the following will occur:

- A reminder notice will be issued at the site for pick-up by the parent
- A reminder notice and statement will be mailed or emailed to the primary parent

All Sites:

If a tuition balance remains outstanding for two weeks or more, the following will occur:

- A suspension notice will be issued at the site for pick-up by the parent
- A suspension notice and statement will be mailed or emailed to the primary parent
- Student will be suspended from the program unable to return until account is paid in full, or payment arrangements are made with our corporate office
- If a suspended student arrives and payment has not been made, the primary parent and all emergency contact people will be called until someone on the pick-up list comes to pick up the student. The student will be kept at Adventure Club, unable to participate in the program activities until payment is made and or child is picked up. Do not have student return until payment is made in full.

All Sites excluding Merrillville Site:

If a tuition balance remains outstanding for three weeks or more, the following will occur:

- A dis-enrollment notice will be sent to parent, school's office, and Site Coordinator
- Student will be dis-enrolled immediately from the program and unable to return until account is paid in full including a re-enrollment fee.

Should a child report to **TAC** after a suspension has been issued and the child has been disenrolled, the proper authorities (school office) will be contacted to remove the child from the program. Students who have been disenrolled are eligible to re-enroll once tuition and fees are paid in full. A \$65 re-enrollment fee will apply. If disenrolled three times, on the fourth time the parent will have to pay a deposit, which will be an average amount of the unpaid past three occurrences, along with the re-enrollment and past due balance.

Merrillville Only:

If a tuition balance remains outstanding for two weeks or more, the following will occur:

- A dis-enrollment notice will be sent to parent, school's office, and Site Coordinator
- Student will be dis-enrolled immediately from the program and unable to return until account is paid in full including a re-enrollment fee.

Should a child report to **TAC** after a suspension has been issued and the child has been dis-enrolled, the proper authorities (school office) will be contacted to remove the child from the program. Students who have been dis-enrolled are eligible to re-enroll once tuition and fees are paid in full. A \$65 re-enrollment fee will apply. If disenrolled three times, on the fourth time the parent will have to pay a deposit, which will be an average amount of the unpaid past three occurrences, along with the re-enrollment and past due balance.

The daily minimum charge is one hour, beginning at the onset of school's dismissal. After the first hour, tuition is billed in half-hour increments. Billing continues until an authorized person signs your child out from the program.

TAC provides one weekly invoice and one year-end-statement via email or hard copy to the primary parent (the parent who registers the child). Parents sharing separate financial responsibility are responsible for calculating and submitting one payment as we do not calculate separate bills. Year-end tax statements with the company's tax identification number will be available after January 31. You must have a zero balance in order to receive your yearend statement.

Should it be necessary to place this account for collection, the primary parent agrees to pay all collection costs, finance charges, and attorney fees.

Questions regarding billing should be directed to our billing department Monday through Friday from 9:00 am – 6:00 pm at (219) 865-6283 or emailed to info@TheAdventureClub.net. Be sure to include your child's full name and invoice number with all payments. **TAC** accepts the following forms of payment:

1. MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express via PayPal (No Fees)
2. Pay by phone at 219-865-6283
3. Checks or money orders made payable to **TAC** (The Adventure Club)
4. There is a service charge of \$35 for each returned check. NSF checks must be paid by money order or bank check and given to the Site Coordinator. After two NSF checks, fees must be paid by money order or bank check.
5. NO CASH PAYMENTS ACCEPTED

Tuition Disputes & Resolutions

Parents will have two weeks, from the invoice issue date, to dispute their invoices. It is the parent's responsibility to pick-up their weekly invoices from their designated site if they do not receive invoices via email.

- Parents will have 2 weeks to dispute an invoice with their Site Coordinator, via email, or by calling the Corporate Office
- A Billing Resolution forms must be completed by **TAC** staff and verified by the parent
- All Billing Resolutions completed at a site will be resolved by the next billing cycle
- All billing disputes submitted via email or telephone will be resolved within 72 hours
- Year-end-statements will only be issued for accounts that are up-to-date

Attendance

We must know when to expect your child, so you are responsible for submitting your child (ren)'s schedule one week in advance by using the Variable Attendance Sheet. Daily attendance is taken. If you have committed your child to weekly attendance or have completed a weekly Variable Attendance Sheet and your child will not be attending, you must notify **TAC** by calling your site's answering machine.

Failure to report any unscheduled changes will result in a \$5 service charge per occurrence. See **TAC's** phone numbers are listed on page 5.

CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

Behavior

TAC has a zero-tolerance policy with violent or threatening behavior. If a child threatens physical harm or uses physical violence (i.e., pushing, slapping, throwing,

hitting) in any manner whatsoever to another child or staff member, he/she will be immediately suspended or expelled from the program. Our staff will employ the following guidelines to help children manage their behavior:

- Children's negative behavior shall be redirected.
- All discipline will be fair, consistently applied, and timely.
- Cool down will be used if child needs to be separated from the group or activity.
- If negative behavior is not corrected, an Incident Report will be filed with the Corporate Office and a copy will be sent to the parents, including having a conversation with the parent if necessary.
- Failure to correct any negative behavior could result in the removal of the child from the program for three days. If behavior is severe, the child may be suspended up to five days or the child could be removed from the program.
- If your child becomes unruly and fails to positively react to the above guidelines, you will be asked to immediately pick up your child from the program.
- There will be no emotional or physical discipline allowed.

When a child is expelled for violent or threatening behavior, the following policies are in effect:

- Children are expelled for the school year.
- Child can return to the program if the following requirements are fulfilled:
 - Parents can provide written documentation of evidence (i.e., doctor's statement, counselor's report, school's recommendation) that both parent and child have worked toward improving child's negative behavior (or reason why child was expelled).
 - There are no outstanding tuitions or monies owed TAC.
- If two expulsions should occur, the child is no longer welcome at TAC.
- Registration fees will not be refunded for expelled children. Parents will be charged for services provided up to date of expulsion. If there is a credit on your account, a refund will be made minus the charges for services provided.

We respect our parents and handle every situation with professionalism—we expect the same in return from our parents. **TAC** has a zero-tolerance policy for negative or violent parent behaviors including profane language, intimidation, and physical or abusive contact.

Parents must keep conversations confidential, remembering to talk out of hearing reach of all children. **TAC** will not tolerate abusive conduct, unacceptable language, or physical contact directed toward staff, other parents, or children.

MEDICAL

Accidents

Our staff is trained in basic first aid and CPR. They are equipped to handle injuries that may require a bandage or ice pack. In addition to administering basic first aid, we will notify you via phone when an accident occurs. We encourage you to speak with your child when we call as you may be able to soothe your child's fears and concerns.

Soiling Accidents

If your child accidentally soils their clothing (i.e., vomiting, toileting) while at **TAC**, your child will be asked to sit in a chair and will be made as comfortable as possible. We will call you and you will be expected to pick up your child immediately. We cannot change their clothing nor clean them. Other siblings will not be allowed to clean/change them either. We will make reasonable accommodations for them until you arrive. If your child is prone to toileting accidents, it would be prudent to include a spare change of clothing in his/her backpack.

Emergencies

If an injury appears serious or indeterminate, **TAC** will not hesitate to call 911. The staff will take whatever steps necessary to obtain prompt emergency care for your child including the following:

1. Call for an ambulance.
2. Administer emergency first aid.
3. Contact the parents via all emergency numbers you have given us.

Medication

We do not give medication to children, with the exception of asthma inhalers and/or Epi-Pens. You must give these items to the Site Coordinator in a sealed and clearly labeled container with your child's name and date as well as sign a Medical Release Form.

Policy Changes

From time to time, we may need to make a policy change. Changes may be posted adjacent to the electronic billing system and on our website.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Online Communication

Our website contains information about our current program events and activities. Check us out at www.TheAdventureClub.com, and Facebook.

Incident Reports

In the event that your child(ren) is involved in an incident (i.e., accident, negative situation), you will be given an Incident Report. This report will provide an explanation of the incident. Please review carefully. The report needs to be signed by both the Site Coordinator and yourself. Should you have any questions, ask the Site Coordinator for clarification.

Email

To ensure timely receipt of weekly invoices and a year-end-statement, **TAC** uses email as its primary source of communication. Hard copies will be available at the sign-in table for those that elect not to receive email. Families can email us at info@TheAdventureClub.net for questions or comments about the program.