



# Parent Handbook 2026-2027

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**Jess Miller:** Club J Assistant Director

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## A Note to Parents

Welcome to Club J! We are excited to have your family as part of our community this year. If you have any questions or concerns, please know we are always here to help.

Please read this handbook carefully and thoroughly, as it contains important policies and guidelines. We encourage open communication with the Club J Director and ask that you stay informed by reading all emails and notices sent home. Below is our key contact information:

- **Kara Wilbourne, Club J Director**  
*Phone:* 678.812.4094  
*Email:* [kara.wilbourne@atlantajcc.org](mailto:kara.wilbourne@atlantajcc.org)
- **Jess Miller, Club J Assistant Director**  
*Phone:* 678.812.4054  
*Email:* [Jessica.miller@atlantajcc.org](mailto:Jessica.miller@atlantajcc.org)
- **Front Desk of MJCCA (for emergencies)**  
*Phone:* 678.812.4000
- **Club J General Email:** [clubj@atlantajcc.org](mailto:clubj@atlantajcc.org)

## Club J Mission

The mission of Club J is to serve the Jewish community and the community at large by promoting caring relationships among children and adults, enabling children to develop their interests and expand their abilities, and offering children a sense of belonging to a greater community for which we are all responsible.

### Our Goals:

- Create a safe and fun environment where children develop friendships and explore new ideas.
- Support children in completing their homework daily.
- Promote empathy, inclusivity, and respect for differences.
- Build self-confidence by helping children recognize their abilities.
- Offer diverse social, recreational, cultural, and service opportunities.
- Teach Jewish values and traditions, fostering responsibility and connection to the community.

## Judaic Programming at the MJCCA

At Club J, children participate in a **weekly Shabbat celebration** and engage in various Jewish values and holiday activities throughout the year. Our Judaic programming is designed to be inclusive and enriching for all backgrounds.

Each month, we focus on one of our **Youth Program Values**:

- **Kehillah (Community)**: Creating a welcoming and inclusive space for all.
- **Ruach (Spirit)**: Bringing enthusiasm and connection into all we do.
- **Tikkun Middot (Character Development)**: Encouraging personal growth and responsibility.
- **Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World)**: Promoting social action and kindness.

Parents are welcome to reach out with any questions about our Judaic programming.

## Club J Staff

All the Club J counselors undergo regular trainings and workshops on school-aged children which are overseen by Bright from the Start, our licensing agency. Club J staff members are also certified in **CPR, First Aid, and AED use**. They are dedicated to ensuring that every child has a safe, engaging, and fun experience

## Times of Operation and Billing

- **Location**: MJCCA's Zaban Park Campus
- **Grades**: Pre-K through 5th Grade
- **Hours**: Monday – Friday, 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- **Closures**: Please refer to our calendar for holiday closures.

### Billing Information:

- Club J is a **10-month program (August–May)**. Fees are divided into **10 equal payments**, billed monthly regardless of the number of days Club J is operating each month.
- **Payment is due on the 3rd of each month** (via credit card or bank account).
- **Enrollment Changes**: A 30-day written notice must be provided for withdrawals or schedule changes. Any schedule changes must be approved in advance and are subject to a \$25 change fee.
- **Refund Policy**: No refunds for missed days or absences.

### Registration Fees:

- **\$50 non-refundable registration fee**

- **\$100 deposit per child** (applied to the final Club J payment in May)
- Registration fees and deposits are **non-refundable and non-transferable after June 26, 2026**.

## Absences

If your child will be absent, please **submit** a [Club J Formstack](#) or **email** clubj@atlantajcc.org **by 11:00 AM** on the day of absence. Please be sure to include the name of your **child's school**.

## Activity Changes

Any additions or changes to your child's activity schedule must be done **24 hours in advance** and communicated to a Club J Director by phone or email, as well as the director of that specific program. Otherwise, we cannot guarantee the change.

## Transportation from School

Transportation is available from the following schools: Austin Elementary, Chesnut Elementary, The Davis Academy (both campuses), Dunwoody Elementary, Dunwoody Springs, Kingsley Elementary, Kittredge Magnet School (via Peachtree Middle), Montgomery Elementary, and Vanderlyn Elementary. Bus spaces will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. If your child is getting dropped off at Club J by car or a bus not on our list, a parent must arrange for their child to be brought to the Club J desk for check in.

Counselors will accompany the children on a Club J bus. Counselors will check the students onto the bus and ensure that everyone exits the bus upon arrival at the MJCCA. They will also maintain a safe and secure bus ride. The bus counselors will be in constant communication with a Club J Director via cell phone.

### **Below are the steps taken when we have not received notification of an absence.**

- The Club J bus will not leave the school until it is confirmed whether the child is riding or not riding (which can delay pickup from additional schools).
- Counselors call the main office of the school to find out if the child is absent or went home early.
  - If school confirms absence, the bus leaves
- If school cannot confirm absence, counselors will call the parent(s) to confirm the child's location status.
  - If the counselors cannot reach the parent(s), they will call a Club J Director to get confirmation on the child's location status.
- A Club J Director will contact parents to confirm location.
- If no contact is reached, the bus will wait 10 additional minutes before returning to the MJCCA.

## Bus Safety

Club J strives to provide a safe, well-supervised, and fun experience to all its participants, including while riding the bus. Children will be counted and marked on the roster as they leave the bus. Bus seats will be checked to ensure that no one is left behind.

At no time will behaviors be permitted that endanger the safety of children or staff. Disrupting the driver, standing up or changing seats while the vehicle is moving; throwing things; putting hands or heads out the window; fighting; yelling; not listening to the bus counselor, driver, or other staff members on the bus; removing clothing; or using foul or adult language, gestures, or actions; are all considered to be inappropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated. **Please assist us with explaining to your child what behaviors are and are not appropriate on the bus and what the consequences are of inappropriate behavior.**

Should these rules and regulations not be adhered to, the following consequences will be instituted:

**First Occurrence:** The first time an incident happens, there will be a verbal warning from staff to the child. If the behavior does not stop immediately, the child will be reported to a Club J Director, at which time a parent may be called or advised of the situation.

**Second Occurrence:** The second time an incident happens, the bus counselor or driver will report the issue to a Club J Director and there will be a phone call home. **In the case where severe behavior occurs on the bus, the child may be given a one- to three-day suspension from the Club J bus. (No refund)**

**Third Occurrence:** The third time an incident occurs, there will be a second phone call home from a Club J Director. A three-day suspension from the Club J bus will be given. **(No refund)**

**Fourth Occurrence:** The fourth incident will result in a one-month suspension of child's transportation privileges. **(No refund)**

Once a fourth incident has taken place, any child returning after a one-month suspension will be on probation with the Club J transportation and will be subject to immediate dismissal from Club J transportation without a refund, should any further problems occur.

## Behavior Guidelines and Discipline Policy During Club J

The MJCCA wants all our children to have a great time when they participate in Club J. We feel it is our responsibility to engage children in fun and meaningful group activities that give them a sense of belonging and freedom to express themselves. We understand that praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management. We also understand that we must act as role models for children by paying attention to their interests and treating them with respect and kindness. We will set clear guidelines for them and will be consistent in our interactions with them.

We will make every effort to help children understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviors; however, it is important that children enrolled in our program are able to follow behavior expectations and to fully participate in program activities.

Parents/Guardians are required to inform the MJCCA in writing of any special circumstances that may affect the child's ability to participate fully and to stay within the guidelines of acceptable behavior– including behavioral problems, psychological, medical, or physical conditions. In these circumstances, one-on-one counselors (facilitators), provided by and paid for by parents/guardians, are welcome in our program to help assist the child to participate and follow our behavior expectations. The MJCCA is not responsible for providing one-on-one care. **Children enrolled in our programs must have the ability to participate in a group care environment with a ratio of 2 or 3 staff to 20 children.**

### Behavior Expectations

We aim to create a positive and respectful environment. **Children are expected to:**

- Follow staff directions and program rules.
- Treat others with kindness and respect.
- Remain with their group at all times.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.

## Discipline Policy During Club J

### Step One:

Children who fail to meet the stated behavior expectations, or who participate in unacceptable behaviors as described above, will be given a verbal warning by their counselor. At that time, staff will point out the unacceptable behavior, discuss how this behavior affects others, and offer suggestions for the child to use an alternative, positive behavior. Children will be guided in an age-appropriate manner. Younger children may

require more coaching than older children, who may only receive one verbal warning. **If the incident warrants, the child may receive an immediate one- to three-day suspension from Club J.**

### **Step Two:**

If a child continues to have difficulty with his or her behavior, the child's parent/guardian will be notified with an incident report and/or a phone call during program hours. The child will be asked to take responsibility for the behavior by describing the behavior to his or her parents/guardians. We ask that parents assist us in helping children to be accountable for their own behaviors. A child that admits to and takes responsibility for his or her mistakes is taking a step toward changing the behavior. At this point, the child will help to decide on a consequence for the behavior that will be designed to help change the behavior while in our program. (For example, a child that throws a ball at someone's head may become a referee for that game in the future, making sure nobody breaks the rules; or the child may be asked not to participate in a favorite activity for a time.)

### **Step Three:**

If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive or threatening, the child will be subject to suspension or dismissal, at which time **refunds will not be given**. Parents/guardians will be called immediately and asked to pick up the child right away. Depending upon the nature of the event, the child may be dismissed for the remainder of the day or suspended for more than one day. Our staff will work closely with parents to help a child succeed in a group setting. However, it is ultimately the parents' responsibility to deal with any major difficulties that a child is having. If, after repeated interventions and attempts to help a child learn positive behaviors, the child continues to be unable to function in a group care environment, that child may be asked to leave our program permanently.

### **Behaviors that may lead to immediate dismissal, suspension, or expulsion from our program without any prior incident, include but are not limited to:**

- Physical violence or threats.
- Inappropriate actions, including, but not limited to, cursing, bullying, conversations of an adult nature, exposing inappropriate body parts, inappropriately touching self or another individual
- Running away from their designated group area
- Possession of a weapon of any kind
- Vandalism or destruction of property

Threatening behaviors that are unacceptable include, but are not limited to:

- Making fun of or insulting someone

- Bullying
- Making obscene gestures or comments or using foul language
- Revealing private parts of the body
- Punching, kicking, slapping, biting, or inappropriate physical contact of any kind
- Taking someone's things or stealing
- Writing nasty things about someone
- Shouting at someone
- Gossiping about someone
- Threatening someone with physical violence

**\*\*For the safety and well-being of all participants, Club J reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program when deemed necessary.**

## **Inclusion Guidelines**

**The MJCCA's Inclusion Program strives to provide the support and flexibility necessary to enable youth with disabilities to participate in our innovative programs alongside their typically developing peers.** Youth with special needs are supported by our Inclusion Team through program accommodations and may also receive individualized support. Our Inclusion Team collaborates with parents, educators, and staff to ensure the best possible program placement for youth of all abilities. The goal of our Inclusion Program is to provide the support necessary so all youth may access the transformative opportunities available at the MJCCA. **For new participants seeking inclusion support, an intake process must be completed prior to confirmed enrollment. This will ensure that your child's experience is as successful as possible.**

**Please complete the intake process on the application which includes the questions below.**

1. What type of support, if any, does your child receive at school?
2. Does your child have a specific diagnosis?
3. What are your child's strengths and weaknesses?
4. What are your child's current areas of need or challenges?
5. Will your child be taking medication during the program?
6. Does your child have a physical condition that would impact their participation?

**Due to the fast-paced environment of Club J (including many transitional periods), we want all parents to acknowledge that it may not be the best fit for every child.**

Participants who are the most successful include:

- Children who participate safely and willingly with a group of peers in a variety of settings and activities
- Children who display non-aggressive behaviors

- Children who can keep their hands to themselves
- Children who are not a threat to themselves or others
- Children who remain with the group and follow directions provided by staff
- Children who understand the difference between right and wrong decisions

Should behavior incidents occur, each participant and incident are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

- What was happening before the incident?
- What are the known challenges for this participant?
- What are the participant's goals (i.e. social skills, self-regulation, etc.)
- What supports are in place? (i.e. facilitator, communication device, etc.)

**Should there be issues that consistently arise, it will be up to the staff discretion whether to put one-to-one facilitation in place or if dismissal is necessary.**

Should facilitation be required, we encourage all families to provide their own support staff. If you need assistance in this process, please contact the Blonder Director, Sarah Koenig, at 678-812-3886. This would be an additional out-of-pocket expense to be covered by the family. **Your child will not be allowed to return to the program until this process is completed.**

## Homework

Our counselors help children with their homework during homework time. Staff are instructed to help children stay focused and assist in the completion of assigned homework; not to correct the assigned homework. They are not responsible for re-teaching material learned in class. Counselors will conduct homework checks, but if a child forgets their homework at school or refuses to complete it, we cannot force them. Please discuss your expectations regarding homework completion at Club J with your child.

## End-of-Day Pick Up

Parents/Guardians may pick up their child from the program at any time; however, they must be officially checked out from their assigned Club J Checkout table. Dismissal numbers are assigned per child. You must know your child's individual dismissal number, and anyone else picking up your child must know this number or present an ID; otherwise, your child will not be released into their care. All children must be picked up by 6:00 PM. In the event you will be late, please call or email Club J in advance to inform them. A late fee of **\$5.00 per minute per child** will be charged to your JCC account for pickups occurring after 6:00 PM.

## Security

Children must be signed out at pickup from Club J each day. **You may designate other individuals to pick up your child in the Club J Forms however, they MUST know your child's assigned dismissal number that has been given to you. If a person arrives to pick up your child that does not know your child's dismissal number, regardless of being on your designated pickup list, your child will not be released into their care until a parent is reached via phone.** In that event, they must have picture identification with them to prove their identity. Please be sure to tell your child's dismissal number to all potential individuals who might pick up your child during the year. In this case, please email [clubj@atlantajcc.org](mailto:clubj@atlantajcc.org) to let us know that a specific individual is picking up and we will check their identification instead of requiring the dismissal number. Prior notification must be made.

If your child participates in any other MJCCA programs (i.e. dance, gymnastics, sports etc.) please let us know **prior to the start of the semester if you are picking them up directly from the activity or if you need them to be brought back to Club J.**

All Club J staff will be in constant contact with each other and a Club J Director via walkie-talkie. Club J Directors will also carry a walkie-talkie connected with MJCCA Security and the front desk. Therefore, should an emergency occur, there will not be a delay in alerting the necessary resources.

Fire drills will be conducted monthly. Tornado and other emergency drills will be conducted every six months. This will allow the children and staff to know what to do and where to go in the event of an actual emergency. We will be sure to do these in a way that the children are not frightened or anxious by this process.

## Snacks

In our continuous efforts to put our children's safety first, Club J is a "nut-sensitive" program. Club J provides child-friendly, kosher snacks daily that will also be nut-free. We are doing everything possible to work toward the goal of keeping our children with allergies safe. **If your child has any food restrictions or allergies, please let us know by indicating it on your child's Club J Forms along with filling out the allergy action plan.** If your child is a picky eater, please feel free to send them with their own snack, as long as it does NOT contain tree nuts, peanuts, cashews, peanut butter, almond butter, Nutella, or any other foods containing any kind of nut. If you are unsure if a food is safe to pack your children for Club J, please call or email us. **Children are not permitted to share any food brought from home. This assures children's dietary observances and the prevention of allergic reactions.**

## Health & Medication

To help us prevent the spread of illness amongst our staff and children, please help do your part by keeping your child home if they are sick. We are required to exclude sick children with the following symptoms or signs of illness for 24 hours. We will call you to pick up your child when:

1. There is a fever of **99.5 degrees or over**. If your child develops a fever, he or she must be fever-free, without fever medication, for 24 hours before returning to our program.
2. There is diarrhea or vomiting.
3. Your child has a communicable disease such as strep throat, viral blisters (chicken pox), impetigo, conjunctivitis, or lice. These illnesses must be treated immediately, and the child must be symptom-free for a full 24 hours before the child may return to our care.

### Regarding medications, please be aware that we must:

1. Obtain a signed consent form to administer any over-the-counter, homeopathic, natural, or prescription medications. This form must specify dosage, times, and dates to be administered. You may find these forms on the MJCCA website under Club J.
2. Dispense only medications that are in their original, labeled containers.
3. Confiscate any over-the-counter medications from children carrying such items.

## Personal Property

**Club J is not responsible for lost or missing items.** Children should not bring valuable items, including electronics, trading cards, jewelry, or toys from home.

To help prevent lost items:

- **Label all belongings**, including jackets, water bottles, and backpacks.
- Any unclaimed items will be placed in the lost and found. Items left unclaimed for more than two weeks will be donated.

## Bathroom Policy

All children enrolled in Club J are expected to be toilet trained. Toilet trained means that the child wears underwear, does not wet or soil him or herself except on rare occasions, can express to an adult when he or she must go to the bathroom and can handle himself or herself in the bathroom independently. This includes being able to manage his or her clothing, operate a toilet, and clean his or her own body.

## Outdoor Play

Outdoor activities may consist of field sports, nature walks, or other outdoor activities. Therefore, please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Bring labeled sunscreen, to be applied as needed or has a sweatshirt/jacket on days that it might get colder in the late afternoon.

## Communication

We prioritize clear and timely communication with parents. Information is shared through:

- **Weekly Newsletter** – Sent every Friday with updates, reminders, and upcoming events.
- **Club J Facebook Page** – Provides real-time [updates and photos](#).
- **Email & Phone** – Parents may reach out anytime to the Club J Director with questions or concerns.
- **In-Person Communication** – Parents are welcome to check in with staff during drop-off and pick-up.

\* Please note that during Club J operating hours (2:00-6:00 PM), the Director is actively engaged with the program and may not be immediately available to respond to emails or phone calls. If you need to contact Club J during program hours, please call the Main Building Front Desk at 678-812-4000 and ask to be connected to the Club J team.

**We look forward to an amazing year with your family!**

**B'Shalom,**

Kara Wilbourne & Jess Miller

**Club J Leadership Team**