

Parts and Crafts

**Center for Semiconducted Learning - Parent
Handbook**

2018-2019

Welcome to Parts and Crafts!

We are excited for another year of homeschooling at Parts and Crafts! The Center for Semi-Conducted Learning (CSCL) is open to homeschoolers, unschoolers, and other people interested in sharing a fun, creative, and exploratory space.

CSCL runs five days a week and is open to kids ages 7-13. The program starts on September 4, 2017 and runs through June 7, 2018 with membership options available for one to five days a week. For details or to register, visit www.partsandcrafts.org.



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How it works

Center for Semiconducted Learning (CSCL) is a multi-part space – equal parts resource center, workshop, and social space for homeschoolers looking to learn in a fun and creative environment. We offer workshops in math, science, language arts, and creative technology, as well as space for kids to structure their work and play on their own and with others.

Classes and workshops

“What we offer” is based on what people ask for — our classes are designed around what people are excited to learn and do. Past topics have included: Intro to algebra, French, Spanish, espionage, a class on constitutional law, and others. If it’s something we can’t teach, we’ll typically find someone who is competent to teach the subject. Classes and workshops at CSCL are optional — kids are not required to take them, and they aren’t issued grades at the end based on successful completion.

One-on-one attention

In addition to organized classes and workshops, we also offer optional one-on-one tutorials for kids who want to do specific work in a topic or skill. These could include the basics — math, reading, and writing – or specific tutorials tailored around individual interests. Kids are not required to take tutorials, but they are offered as an option for anyone who wants them. A low adult:kid ratio (1:6) allows plenty of space to work one-on-one at your child's own pace.

Decompression

Many of the kids we work with are coming directly out of school, and need some time to adjust to the pace of homeschooling. CSCL provides a friendly place where they can work at their own pace, or alternatively, where they can take a break for a little while, decompress, and get their feet under them. We have comic books, board games, air hockey, and a full staff of avid gamers to help facilitate this process! To read more about deschooling and decompression, check out <https://partsandcrafts.org/alternative-school/reading/>

Self-directed learning

Above all, we try to create a space where kids can follow their own interests – where they have plenty of space to play, explore, run around, and investigate the world around them. Whether it's running a giant game of capture the flag or running a science experiment, we're excited to help your kids pursue their interests and passions, wherever they might lead!

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to have an in-person meeting? We require in-person follow-ups for new families; in some cases, returning families students may do follow-ups email or phone, since there is typically already a plan in place, but by default parents should expect to have these meetings in person. Parent meetings help us get more or less “on the same page” and suss out potential issues while it is still early enough to make progress, which is why we prioritize them early!

Can parents visit the space? Parents are always welcome to visit the space, to run a class or a workshop, or just to check it out and see how things are working. Likewise, new members are enthusiastically invited to visit and see if it's the kind of place that might work for them.

How can I get in touch with you all? If you need to reach any of the core staff for any reason the best way to contact us is to send an email to contact@partsandcrafts.org. If you need to contact us in real-time, please call our 577 Somerville Avenue location -- (617) 207-8016.

Core staff

Will Macfarlane As a student at a small tech university in Cambridge Will found that school was most effective when it got out of the way and allowed informal learning communities to form. He has spent the last ten years working in alternative education, starting Parts and Crafts in 2009 and co-founding CSCL in 2013.

Kelly Taylor Librarian by day, rock photographer by night, Kelly joins P&C from the wilds of southwest NH. She's been involved in alternative education since 2002 making a ruckus for kids unsatisfied by the mainstream school system. In 2010 she got her picture taken with 2 of her heroes Mary Leue and John Taylor Gatto.

Bissrat Melakeberhan Bissrat is a bio engineer turned educator who is passionate about increasing accessibility to the maker movement. She grew up in California before moving to Boston for graduate school. In her free time, she enjoys painting, yoga, building/tinkering, and cooking.

Lorraine Gilman Lorraine is a puppeteer, comic performer and educator from Vermont. Lorraine ran away from the circus to become a puppeteer. She has a Master's degree in Puppetry from the University of Connecticut, a BFA from Ringling Brother's Clown College and studied Education at Rivier University. She has been teaching children for ten years.

Dina Gjertson Before joining Parts and Crafts Dina built props & scenery and designed lights as a professional theater technician, supervised the maintenance of hands-on exhibits at a science museum and designed Flash games. She runs the afterschool program and coordinates weekend and outreach events. She runs the Somerville Tool Library, loves making anything miniature (especially mini food!), fixing things and hanging out with her 8 year old son.

Mike Gasper Michael is an educator with over 15 years experience teaching children in urban school districts both public and Charter. He taught Visual Arts for nearly a decade to students aged Kindergarten to Grade 5. He has been part of the Parts & Crafts staff working in the after school program, CSCL and leading the "Freestyle Fridays" group with another parent.

Camp Dog



This is Shiloh! He is our dog. Shiloh is a 6-year-old Belgian Malinois mix who will also be attending CSCL next year. He is very friendly and up to date on all his shots, and can most frequently be found chasing balls in the backyard or sitting on the couch during math tutorial allowing himself to be petted.

Kids who have pet allergies should talk to use beforehand, as there are frequently dogs in and around the space. As with all new animals, please wait to be properly introduced before throwing your arms around him!

Snow Days and Inclement Weather

If two of the three major school systems nearby cancel school (Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville), our policy is to automatically cancel as well. If we feel that weather poses a travel threat we reserve the right to cancel CSCL and will give parents as much notice as possible to make alternate plans.

Computer Use Policy

We use computers every day at Parts and Crafts! During the day we have a "no passive consumption of media" policy – meaning no video games, Youtube videos, and no watching TV. The exception is between 9 and 9:30 (arrival) and at lunch when kids are allowed to use computers freely. Kids may not engage with media that is graphic, violent, gory, or sexual in nature when using computers in our space.

Rules of the Space

There are six of them. They are as follows:

Don't hurt anyone!

If you make a mess, clean it up. if you break something, fix it!

If someone says stop, STOP!

Stay where an adult from P&C can see you

Respect other people's tools, projects, and resources

Ask for help before you get mad.

We run an open and pretty trusting space. We do a LOT of behavior management but we try to do it informally, 1-1, and in a way that defaults to trusting that kids are rational actors. Above all, we expect everyone to approach P&C in a spirit of excellence, kindness, and mutual respect.

When the Rules Don't Work

Above all, we attempt to provide a safe and welcoming environment for our members. Language that is threatening, aggressive, or intentionally demeaning will not be tolerated. Physical violence will not be tolerated. Behaviours that are illegal or make the environment unsafe will not be tolerated.

One-time offense. All conflicts will initially be met with a request to stop. Our immediate goal is to stop the situation and pull kids aside to talk to us individually about what caused the problem. Typically this is followed up by a phone call or email to parents.

Escalating conflict. If staff intervention fails to improve the situation, our next step is an in-person meeting with parents to create an action plan. In order to do this, we need to be able to work directly with parents to establish a longer-term plan for appropriate behaviour. In certain cases, kids may be asked to stay home until this plan can be put in place.

Worst case scenario. If there is no reasonable plan that can be put in place, we reserve the right to ask kids to leave the program. Typically this occurs when there is no longer kid buy-in to work with staff, when parents are unwilling to help us to put a plan into place, or when the severity of the situation directly threatens the health and safety of other kids.

Examples of Past Action Plans

“Cool-down” days: If your child is engaged in a physical altercation with another child, we may ask one or both parties to take a day off CSCL to regroup and reflect

Parent intervention: In the past, this has taken the form of required accompaniment on field trips, a plan for early pick-up, or required follow-up meetings with kids.

Restriction of activities: Kids who regularly refuse to engage with staff may lose walking permission, video game time, and be restricted from non-essential activities

In cases of physical violence, sexual harassment, or abusive language, we reserve the right to temporarily suspend membership while we put a plan in place for next steps.

Staff Roles, Parent Expectations

Our job is to keep people safe, help kids find things that they are excited about, and provide the structure necessary for kids to take the resources available and run with them. What does this mean? What can you expect from us, as staff and instructors?

Parts and Crafts is a use-agnostic space. Not every kid who comes through our space will learn how to program a robot, build a table, or master the Arduino. We don't feel strongly about academic tutorials vs. open play. We believe there is a lot to be curious about and almost any topic is worth going deep on. We prioritize giving kids time and space to do this.

If there's something you want out of the space, tell us!

Knowing parent expectations going in makes it possible for us to evaluate how effectively we can meet them. Likewise, if there's something you really want to be working on, let us know and we can figure out if it makes sense to tackle given the resources we have available at P&C.

We do not believe in zero-tolerance policies. That said, there are behaviours that we do not tolerate in our space. Physical, verbal, or sexual harassment or violent behavior in our space will result in significant limitations, and if we cannot reach a resolution, a request to leave the program.

We do our job most effectively when we have friendly and proactive relationships with kids and parents. We go into this assuming to have a positive working relationship with parents, and assuming that kids have an investment in being part of the community at Parts and Crafts.

Part of our mission is to keep our programs affordable to any family who wants to take part. Parts and Crafts is lucky to be able to serve kids at every income level, and we do so with virtually no grant funding. We do this, in large part, by keeping our salaries low, being willing to work many hours and wear many hats to make every dollar stretch.

We expect families to report their incomes honestly and use our sliding scale fairly (knowing that your choices will directly enable or limit other people's ability to make use of our programs). Sliding scale exists to make homeschooling an option for families who would not otherwise be able to afford it. Please do not use sliding scale to subsidize more expensive programs elsewhere. If you can afford to pay full price elsewhere, that's the price you should pay here.

We expect kids to take an active role in guiding their own education. This doesn't mean kids are responsible for every choice or that grown-ups are hands-off in our role as instructors. It does mean that we expect kids to be active participants, to take the project seriously, to follow through and engage with the space and the people in it with an open heart, with good intentions, and in a spirit of curiosity.

Be excellent to each other! Parts and Crafts is not always smooth sailing. This type of project works only if people trust each other, come into it with good intentions, and are willing to put the time in to build a community of learning together. We bring our best selves to this project, and we expect everyone – kids, parents, and staff – to do the same.

Tool Use Policy

Most of our tools — with the exception of certain power tools — are available for kid use. This includes hot glue guns, soldering irons, hand saws, hammers, screwdrivers, and various small hand tools. Kids are expected to be aware and responsible for their surroundings, and to use basic common sense when they are using these tools. If you're not sure whether you can use it, ask before you start!

Anyone using tools must wear safety goggles at all times. Goggles are additionally required in any scenario where an object is pressurized, launched, or pried open, where there are chemicals involved, and while soldering. If there is any question as to whether you might need goggles, get a pair and put them on before you start working on your project.

Close-toed shoes are required at all times in the tool area. Long hair must be tied back. If you are doing anything that involves producing sawdust, you must additionally wear a dust mask to protect your face while in the shop area.

If you have never used a tool before, you must have an adult from Parts and Crafts show you how to use it before starting your project. Lots of our tools (for instance, soldering irons and saws) require a few extra steps (for instance, clamping) that are important and not immediately evident at first glance.

Glue guns and soldering irons get hot! Minor burns are the number one injury that we see in the space. Please keep them in their holsters when not in use and be sure that your project is DRY and COOL before you pick it up and show it to your friends.

Kids are prohibited from being in the shop area without a

counselor present. No one is permitted in the shop without a supervising adult and safety goggles. Under certain circumstances, members may be allowed to use the tools with direct supervision by the shop manager or other supervising adult. If you need something cut, drilled, or sanded, mark it and ask a counselor for assistance.

No running, biking, rollerskating, kidlaunching, gokarting, or otherwise being chaotic and noisy in the tool area. It's distracting and dangerous, and makes it hard to concentrate. If it's got wheels and moves quickly, take it to the other side of the building (or better yet, outside).

Tools are not weapons. Anything in the space that is used as a weapon — even in play — will be immediately taken away

3-Tiered Tool Classification

Many of our introductory projects are designed to build familiarity with basic hand tools and materials, with the goal of building competency in craftwork of various kinds.

| |
|---|
| <p>GREEN TOOLS are available for anyone to use. They do not require specialized training and are "open access" tools that circulate freely in the space. Included in this category are common hand tools such as screwdrivers, wirestrippers, scissors, low-temp hot glue guns, pliers, unpowered hand drills, and so on.</p> |
| <p>YELLOW TOOLS are available only by permission and typically require direct supervision for use. Kids may be authorized to use these tools independently under certain circumstances, but only with explicit permission and regular oversight by a supervising adult. These tools do not circulate freely and must be returned to the shop (with the exception of soldering irons). Yellow tools include soldering irons, high-temp glue guns, hammers, hacksaws, utility knives and battery-powered drills.</p> |
| <p>RED TOOLS include all power tools (with the exception of battery powered drills). With few exceptions, red tools live in the shop and must</p> |

be used under direct supervision by the shop manager or other supervising adult. These tools include: Miter saw, bandsaw, benchtop drill press, belt sander, rotary tools, and paper cutter.

Transportation Plan

Please also let us know what kind of offsite permissions your kids have while they are here. The chart below is provided in your registration packet, and will help us keep your kids safe when getting to and from our space.

| My child will arrive at the program by: | My child will depart the program by: |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent drop-off | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent drop-of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public / Private Van | <input type="checkbox"/> Public / Private Van |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private transport | <input type="checkbox"/> Private transport |

If your child is over the age of 9 and has permission to leave the space unattended (for instance, to walk home, to cross to and from the park, or to walk across the street to get their lunch) please fill out the "Consent to Leave" form and include it with your child's records. Copies are available upon request.

Health and Safety Plan

Program Information

Name: Parts and Crafts Center for Semiconducted Learning

Address: 577 Somerville Ave, Somerville MA 02143

Telephone Number: 617-207-8016

Health Care Consultant

Name: Joel Sawady

Address: 2067 Massachusetts Ave #20, Cambridge, MA 02140

Telephone Number: 617-417-2373

Health Supervisors

Katie Gradowski - 617-501-2269

Staff Certified in First Aid / CPR

Kelly Taylor – 603-313-9071

Katie Gradowski - 617-501-2269

Will Macfarlane - 617-501-5793

Hospital(s) Utilized for Emergencies

Name: Somerville Hospital

Address: 230 Highland Avenue

Telephone: (617) 591-4500

To obtain a complete overview of our health policies email contact@partsandcrafts.org.

In Case of Emergency

First response

In the case of an emergency or illness such as a seizure, a serious fall or serious cut, staff will begin to administer emergency first aid. The next available staff will be alerted to call 911 and notify parents to come pick up the child.

Transportation to the Hospital

If response time is a factor, we will call 911 directly and accompany the child in an ambulance for emergency care. Parents will be notified to meet the child at the emergency room of the hospital utilized in emergencies. The health supervisor or other designated staff will go with the child in the ambulance.

If the injury is not life-threatening, parents are always our first point of contact. The health supervisor or program director(s) may offer to drive to the hospital if the parent needs assistance getting to the hospital if there is no other option available.

If parents cannot be reached

When parents cannot be reached, those listed, as emergency contacts will be called as a further attempt to reach parents. If necessary, the child will be transported to the hospital by a designated staff member (or by ambulance) and the child's whole file will be taken, including health files.

Prescription Medication

If your child is arriving with prescription medication, you must fill out the Individual Health Care

Non-Prescription Medication

Non-prescription medication will be given only with written consent of the child's parent or guardian, as stipulated in the initial health form. Parts and Crafts is authorized to administer the following medications with parental consent.

Tylenol (acetaminophen) - for the treatment of minor aches, swelling, and fever

Advil (ibuprofen) - for the treatment of aches, swelling, and fever reduction.

Benedryl (diphenhydramine) – to relieve runny noses, itchy eyes and sneezing due to allergies (but not colds). May also be administered to relieve itching from chickenpox or insect bites and to control hives or other allergic reactions.

Pepto Bismol (bismuth subsalicylate) - may be administered in case of nausea, heartburn, indigestion, upset stomach, or diarrhea.

Non-prescription medications must be in the original manufacturer's container labeled with instructions for dosage and expiration date and shall be administered according to the instructions on the container.

Plan for Managing Infectious Disease

Children who exhibit symptoms of the following types of infectious diseases may be excluded from the Center if it is determined that any of the following exist:

the illness prevents the child from participating in the program activities or from resting;

the illness results in greater care need that the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;

the child has any of the following conditions: fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or other signs of serious illness

vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours at home or once at the center;

mouth sores, unless the physician states that the child is non-infectious;

rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease;

purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment;

tuberculosis, until the child is non-infectious;

impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered;

head lice, free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites;

strep infection, until 24 hours after treatment and the child

has been without fever for 24
chicken pox, until last blister has healed over.

A child who has been excluded from child care may return after being evaluated by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, and it has been determined that he/she is considered to pose no serious health risk to him or her or to the other children. Nevertheless, CSCL staff may make the final decision concerning the inclusion or exclusion of the child.

If a Child Exhibits Symptoms While at CSCL

If a child has already been admitted to the program and shows signs of illness (for example: a fever equal to or greater than 100.5 degrees, a rash, reduced activity level, diarrhea, etc.), they will be offered a comfortable spot in which to lie down. If the child manifests any of the symptoms requiring exclusion (as listed above) or requests a pickup, their parent will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible.

Follow-up and Parent Notification

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the Center, parents will be notified immediately and in writing by the Program Directors. Whenever possible, information regarding the communicable disease shall be made available to parents. Program Directors shall consult the Child Care Health Manual for such information. DPH must be contacted when there is a reportable communicable disease in your program

Plan for Mildly Ill Children

Children who are mildly ill may remain onsite if they are not contagious (refer to Plan For Infectious Disease) and they can participate in the daily program including outside time. If a child's condition worsens or if the child cannot be cared for by the classroom staff, the Program Director will contact the child's parent(s). If that is the case, parent(s) will be asked to pick up the child, who will be cared for in a quiet area by a staff member until the parent(s) arrive to take the child

Plan for Meeting Specific Health Needs

Each family will be asked to fill out a comprehensive health form at the beginning of each year. Based on these guidelines, the health supervisor will work with the parents and the program directors to ensure that the individual needs of every child are being met on a day-to-day basis. Parents may also work with staff individually or as a group to train staff in the particular health needs of their children, whether physical or behavioral, if such training is warranted to adequately address those needs.

The following guidelines apply:

If children are arriving with medication, the health supervisor will review plans to administer medication with each parent to ensure that proper guidelines and storage procedures are followed with regards to prescription medications.

Parents may request a meeting with core staff (including all full-time staff) to review specific health care plans for their child, including behavioral health issues that may come up on a day-to-day basis.

If necessary, an individual staff member (usually the health

care supervisor) will be assigned to check in with the child on a daily basis and ensure that all health needs are being appropriately met.

Staff will regularly review specific health considerations as a group and check in with parents over the course of the year.

Right to Access Children's Records

We are required by law to keep the following information on file for kids enrolled in CSCL and other programs:

Face Sheet

Records and Consent Forms

Medical records

Ongoing records

All of this material is provided in our registration forms, health forms, and membership contracts, and you have a right to request copies of this documentation at any time.

In Case of Emergency Evacuation

In case of severe weather, staff will monitor all local sources including radio, phone, and internet to receive updated information about most recent conditions. In case of an evacuation order, the following guidelines apply:

All staff and members will be familiarized with the four routes of egress (two from the top floor, two from the bottom) as part of orientation, and will carry out regular fire and evacuation drills with CSCL members

If advised to evacuate, two staff members will lead kids out of the space, while two will stay behind to survey all areas and ensure that all children have evacuated safely.

The default meeting place will be across the street in front of Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink (outside) and Keshar (inside), where we will meet, take roll, and await further instructions. In case of fire, 911 will be called immediately.

If advised to shelter in place, the default location will be the main room at 577 Somerville Ave or Keshar as a secondary meeting space. In case of an emergency, the staff will use all means available to reach campers' parents and guardians and coordinate with them to get their child home safely.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

If a Staff Member Suspects Abuse

Under the Massachusetts mandatory reporting law, M.G.L. c. 1999, section 51A, any staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse must report it to the program director and/or the Department of Children and Families (DCF). This includes sexual abuse and cases of neglect.

The program director will immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DCF) Furthermore, the Director will also notify the Department of Early Education and Care if a report is filed with the DCF alleging child abuse or neglect while a child is in the care of the program.

If Abuse or Neglect is Alleged at CSCL

If a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect and is a subject of an oral or written report to DCF, that staff member will not be permitted to work with any campers until DCF has completed its investigation.

All staff members must cooperate fully with any DCF investigations of abuse and neglect alleged to have occurred at camp, including identifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled in the program who may have been in contact with the subject of the investigation.

Contacting the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)

EEC is the agency that oversees the early education and care and after school services for families in Massachusetts. As the agency that licenses child care, EEC has quality standards for all licensed programs to ensure high educational value, as well as health and safety.

To obtain your own copy of EEC School Age Child Care Regulations, you may download them from the EEC web site at:

http://www.mass.gov/Eeoe/docs/EEC/regs_policie/20090122_606_cmr.pdf For information about regulatory compliance history, you may contact the EEC regional office: 1250 Hancock Street, Suite 120-S, Quincy, MA 02169. (617) 472-2881