

8. Information for parents

Dear parents!

Soon your child is going to attend one of Styria's childcare and education institutions. Going to a nursery school (*Kinderkrippe*), to kindergarten, to a children's house (*Kinderhaus*) or to an after-school care centre (*Hort*) is a benefit for your child.

The childcare and education institutions give **your child/children** the opportunities to

- make friends with other children
- gain insights into a new world
- learn the German language while playing and in everyday life
- develop in a well-assisted way with the help of teachers and caretakers
- become familiar with a wide range of new materials

The child care and education institutions give **you as parents** the opportunities to

- talk about your child with teachers and caretakers
- be informed about questions regarding your child's development
- get to know other parents
- have more time for your visits to authorities and other administrative tasks

Please contact the directors of the childcare and education institutions of your municipality for registry and further information.

How can you contribute to your child's wellbeing in the childcare and education institution?

- Inform yourself about the institution's schedule and rules (meals, celebrations, opening hours, clothing, daily routine...)
- Stay with your child during its first days in the institution. This makes your child's transition from family to institutional life easier. The kindergarten teachers will assist you and provide you with detailed information. Ask your child about its experiences so that you can be part of its daily routine
- The director will inform you about when to bring and when to pick up your child. Bring your child at the agreed times and pick it up punctually
- Please make sure that you can be reached by telephone in the case of an emergency
- When your child is ill please keep it at home and inform the institution about it. It is also important that you tell them if your child has any allergies or chronic illnesses
- Make use of the events and talks for parents offered by the institution. The teachers are looking forward to getting to know you better and are happy to answer questions or listen to your wishes and suggestions
- Please make sure that your child attends the childcare and education institutions on a regular basis so that it can get used to its new surroundings easily and make many new friends!

What childcare and education institutions are there in Styria?

Kinderkrippen (nursery schools)

are institutions for children up to their third birthday. If your child's third birthday is during the current childcare year it can attend nursery school until the end of the childcare year.

Nursery schools are open on five days a week half a day or all day. Girls and boys are supervised and educated together. The directors, teachers and caretakers have completed professional training.

Kindergärten (kindergartens) and ***Heilpädagogische Kindergärten*** (kindergartens for children with special needs)

are institutions for children after their third birthday and up to the age of compulsory schooling (*Schulpflicht*).

During the last year before entering school it is compulsory and **free of cost** that children go to kindergarten all over Austria. Here you can find information for parents in different languages:

<http://www.verwaltung.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/11810085/74836266/>

Kinderhäuser (children's houses)

are institutions for children who have completed 18 months of age until the end of compulsory school education.

Alterserweiterte Gruppen (extended groups for children of different ages)

are institutions for children from 18 months of age until completion of primary school (Volksschule).

Tagesmütter/Tagesväter (male and female childminders)

are people who regularly and against payment supervise and educate children in their home until the end of compulsory education at the most.

Schüler_innenhorte (after-school care centres)

are institutions for school-age children outside school hours and are not organizationally related to the school.

What are the tasks of childcare and education institutions?

- They monitor which tasks your child is already able to do well. Your child is perceived with its own strengths, capabilities and interests and is supported in a way to guarantee positive overall development
- They make sure that your child feels safe and secure and that it may play and learn free of fear and pressure
- They create a stimulating and activating environment for playing and learning so that your child can discover and investigate new things and play

- They offer a daily routine combining time to play freely with planned activities and incorporating meals and possibilities to relax
- They form education partnerships with families, other institutions and schools and are looking forward to getting to know your child and your family and to accompany you on your way!

We wish you a good start!