

Norms and Values at Liberated Kids

The following norms and values will be used to ground ourselves, the adults, in collective decision-making as well as in the continual formation and direction of this space.

Norms we commit to:

1. Centering youth in decision making, especially on things that directly impact them
2. Centering and valuing the voices, needs, expertise and labor of Black and Indigenous folx, particularly in decision making
3. Holding an equitable distribution of power with clearly outlined, collective agreements
4. Honoring our emotional, cognitive, and physical labor. This looks like working with what has already been done, avoiding unnecessary repetition of labor, and only soliciting labor that will be used and implemented
5. Using restorative and transformative justice practices, especially for conflict resolution. This includes:
 - a. Holding space to call each other in (and out) when harm has been done and holding ourselves and each other accountable
 - b. Relying on open and healthy communication and rejecting passive aggressive communication
 - c. Recognizing the impact of our words and actions, even though the impact may have been unintended
 - d. Opting for alternatives to police
 - e. Extending grace when possible
6. Holding the learning space for BIPOC children and youth, centering their joy and wellness
7. Keeping this space accessible and open to any BIPOC youth who want to be in this space
8. Participating in the process of decision making only if one's child(ren) are enrolled and active participants of the learning space
9. Disrupting, challenging and rejecting white supremacy, white supremacy culture, and anti-Blackness
10. Taking up space mindfully: stepping up and back in accordance with our values and norms

Values

our space is grounded in the following values and beliefs:

1. Ancestral/ Indigenous values, wisdom and ways of being

- i. Affirming spirit, intuition, and ways of knowledge that have had to remain hidden
- ii. Ubuntu (interdependence): We believe to be alive is to be in relationship. We believe that we are interwoven with ourselves, each other, the larger society, and Mother Earth and all her Beings
- iii. Taking ownership to care for our physical space and to be mindful of our impact upon the physical space we occupy
- iv. Valuing the collective over the individual
- v. Respect for our bodies, the Mother Earth's body, and the Sacred Water
- vi. Community parenting

2. Self-directed education and youth autonomy

- a. We trust children, their desires and their feelings. We trust that even though we MAY not agree with their actions, it is THEIR choice (as long as they're not harming anyone else), and we are humble enough to know that we may be wrong. Children and youth have final say over their options when it affects them and their learning journeys
- b. Support and guidance to help reach important goals they've set and provide support through possible blindspots
- c. Self-direction as a means of community responsibility, transformation and liberation.
- d. We believe children's right to autonomy, to govern themselves, to make choices about their learning, their bodies, their lives
- e. Doesn't stop with the self: self-direction as a means for community responsibility, transformation, and liberation
- f. We believe that kids learn all the time through consciously chosen activities, and through "in-the-flow" activities; and they will learn what they need to learn through this process
- g. Freedom, as sovereignty, as in knowing oneself, as in owning oneself - mind, body, spirit, as in possessing free will and having the right to choose (to the extent that you do not harm someone else), which is choice
- h. Encourages creativity and supports unconventional ways of learning
- i. There is no liberation without freedom
- j. Youth take part in processes and decision making in a developmentally appropriate manner

3. Collective Liberation and anti-oppression

- a. We recognize our individual struggles as well as the ways in which our struggles are connected; we must work together to fight against all forms of injustice to create the world we envision. We hold awareness of the struggles of others in our community, including how white supremacy culture and oppression have affected people in different ways.

- b. Learning and discussing the differences between collective liberation and individual freedoms or preferences
- c. Anti-capitalism with an understanding and support for the community's needs within the realities of living in this system
- d. Intentionally trying to operate in a framework built on the best examples of being in community before and beyond imperialism
- e. Examine and disrupt all forms of oppression
- f. Self-defense and community protection
- g. Celebration of our own and each other's cultures

4. Decolonization

- a. Examining and disrupting the myth of white supremacy at all levels- from within us to the larger context of society
- b. Recognition about how ideas around civility are hella racialized and gendered
- c. Maintaining an intersectional lens in decision making
- d. Normalize understanding and interrupting how whiteness operates
- e. Address social injustice with a critical lens
- f. Womanist, feminist, queer
- g. Anti-institutional, pro-community
- h. Rejection of the school to prison nexus and prison industrial complex, including worldviews and behaviors

5. Lifelong Learning: Continuing to push ourselves and our practice as facilitators, parents, community members. Learning from each other, sharing resources, discussing, etc

6. Safety and accessibility for BIPOC children and youth

- a. Building awareness and responsiveness to neurodivergence and its intersections with race, gender, class, etc...
- b. Trans-affirming
- c. Inclusive of multiple different kinds of diets and eating practices
- d. Celebrate and honor all family configurations
- e. A non-punitive space and practice
- f. Creating a safe space for our kids to be SEEN and HEARD
- g. Protecting the emotional and physical wellbeing of our youth

7. Love and Truth

- a. Love, as the understanding that we are all interconnected and that what we do to one we do to all, as in the golden rule - do unto others as you would want done to you
- b. Developing the ability of youth to discern truth for themselves and make decisions aligned with their values and integrity
- c. Stick around for the process and lead with LOVE!!!!

Culture of the Space

In the adult space, we would like to:

Build a caring culture	Learn and grow together	Build a support system	Organize and work through issues	Share time and build community
-Normalize greetings -Love and consideration -Laughter and Humor -It's okay to be vulnerable with each other and with community -Sharing with each other what our own care looks like, and what care for our young one looks like, and opening space for them to share that with each other and with us -Share traditions, food, customs, and celebrate our culture -Practice healthy communication models including workshops, etc on nonviolent communication/ non-authoritarian communication (and/or other models of communication)	-Share our expertise/interests with the kids through workshops, classes, offerings, etc. -Join/ organize book clubs, workshops etc around SDE and other topics -Regularly building a knowledge base and best practices around SDE. Reflect and grow together in parenting and self-directed education -What does it look like to center youth autonomy while still guiding them and holding healthy boundaries?	-Share our time, resources, and heart space -Mutual aid: the community helps each other and feels like we can ask each other for help -Take care of each other and our community -Modeling self love and healthy boundary setting -Leverage agile tools	-Hold intentional space to discuss topics around the education and learning of our youth as well as for decision making and collective learning -Hold racial affinity spaces - for working through the nitty gritty of racial issues that will come up -prioritizing discussions about the various philosophies and approaches that we bring to this space -Practice grace as we hold ourselves and each other accountable	-having time to connect with each other -Regularly connect, as families, outside of M-Th LK to build community and really get to know one another. If we are raising our kids together, we have to be intentional about deepening the connection -Meet in person once a week

Programs and Learning Opportunities for Youth

Physical Wellbeing Education

- Education around traditional medicine/ healing modalities
- Self-defense and community protection
- Safe spaces to discuss experiences with puberty, sexuality and body changes
- Ample opportunities for physical movement

Arts Education and Creativity Stimulation

- Visual and performing arts
- Have regular performances/ presentations/ discussions so kids and parents can see fruits/growth of mental/intellectual/spiritual labor (dance performances, art displays, debates, etc...)
- Costume Celebration on full moons

Connections with Nature and Spirituality

- Regular visits to nature to learn more about our planet and ourselves
- Teaching our children to receive love and nourishment through food, good words and the Voice of Nature
- Spaces to practice gratitude
- Ceremony for grounding to connect with our planet and the universe

Building Leadership

- Develop a communication forum for youth
- Monthly community intention setting and release practices (i.e. monthly visioning, full moon release, vision boarding, etc.)
- Student led lessons
- Want children involved in exercises about the future of their education. They always have great ideas.

Knowledge of Self and Others

- knowledge of self, including their and others' histories/herstories
- Opportunities to learn new languages

Social- Emotional Tools

- Self love and self-affirmation
- How do we help develop critical digital media consumption/ interaction/ creation skills!

Political Education:

- Engage in critical awareness with each other and our kids with issues around safety, organized violence, policing, abolition, prisons...
- How do we teach our young ones about oppressive histories that extend into the present - while also insisting that BIPOC kids are allowed JOY and can just be KIDS

Career and Life Skills:

- To give kids safe, real world context to skills
- Financial literacy and how finance has kept out BIPOC. Think about alternative models of economics that benefits all instead of exploits.

STEM

- Intentionally expose our youth to STEM opportunities and experiences
- Connect youth to their math and science ancestry

Conversations and Discussions Needed in the Space

- Create a decision making process and process for when we can't come to a consensus
- How do we interact with the intersections between collective wellbeing and individual freedoms? How do we handle it when different ways of being "free" in the space bump up against how others understand "safety"? What are the intersections between collective and individual liberation?
- Who is in the collective, who can vote, who has access to information and what communication processes do we hold?
- How do we collectively understand self-directed education? How free is free for children? What are we not comfortable with? Why are we not comfortable with it?
- What do we mean when we say BIPOC in a space with only folx of Color? Who do we center? How do we define marginality? Discuss the nuances of our racialized experiences without erasure. Unpack the term BIPOC.
- What other intersections are we trying to center in this space: LGBTQ+, Foster experience, single parent experience, neurodiverse, etc...
- Respect: learning to be respectful is still in alignment with liberation or freedom; the myth of white supremacy teaches entitlement and sometimes in our quest for equality we want to teach our kids that., that ain't it tho. Respect and permission are foundations for indigenous peoples worldwide, so I value teaching our kids to be respectful (even if this means quiet in a shared space), as a part of encouraging their liberation.
- Various topics of self-directed education
- What is the best kid to adult ratio?
- How do we teach our kids how to protect themselves from predators, etc., without scaring them?
- How do we give kids skills to avoid the narcissistic tools used against them? How do we leave space for each other's traumas and fears regarding our kids?