

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR POLICY

Objective

The goal of discipline is to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, and sensitivity in their interactions with others. This childcare center's policy is to guide and discipline children using a positive, non-punitive approach to help them develop these behaviors. This policy is signed and agreed to by every staff member and is reviewed annually. There is zero tolerance for a staff member's failure to adhere to this policy.

Child Development Philosophy

- Each child is a unique individual.
- Children's behaviors reflect their level of development.
- Children's experiences within their family and cultures influence their behavior patterns.
- Any disciplinary action taken must be reasonable in the circumstances.

Environment

- Caregivers create an atmosphere that fosters trust, security, and comfort, allowing children to relate positively with each other.
- Rooms are aesthetically pleasing, ordered, and organized to promote good mental health and minimize potential problems.
- Caregivers meet children's needs by providing a balanced schedule of active and restful periods, individual and group activities, and child-initiated/adult-initiated content.
- Toys and materials are kept in good supply, familiar, and age-appropriate to encourage productive learning experiences and sustained focus.

Guidance Strategies: Prevention

To create a positive atmosphere that maximizes opportunities for desirable behavior, the following strategies are used:

1. Clear, consistent, and simple rules.
2. Straightforward explanations of limits.
3. Positive phrasing of limits.
4. Focus on specific behaviors rather than the child.
5. Statements of expectation rather than questions.
6. Time for children to respond to expectations.
7. Reinforcement of appropriate behaviors with words and gestures.
8. Overlooking minor incidents.
9. Encouraging children to use caregivers as resources.
10. Regular scanning of the room by caregivers to stay aware of all activities.



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Guidance Strategies: Intervention

In cases of inappropriate behavior, caregiver intervention will be necessary. These strategies ensure guidance is supportive rather than punitive:

1. Respectfully gaining the child's attention: Approach individually, state their name, establish eye contact, and use a calm, controlled voice.
2. Using proximity and touch: Gently touching the child to help them regain control.
3. Providing simple reminders: Reminding children of limits, especially for younger children with short memories.
4. Acknowledging feelings before setting limits: For example, "I know it's hard to wait your turn, but only three children are allowed at that sand table at a time."
5. Distracting or diverting attention when appropriate.
6. Acknowledging the problem: For example, "It's frustrating when the blocks won't balance."
7. Posing helpful questions: For example, "What would happen if you put the big blocks on the bottom?"
8. Stating a solution or demonstrating if further guidance is needed.
9. Summarizing information: For example, "Next time, remember I am happy to help you rather than kicking the blocks around."
10. Offering appropriate choices: For example, "Do you want to wait here for your turn, or do you want to find something else to do?"
11. Using natural and logical consequences: For example, "When you forget to put your picture in your cubby, we can't find it at going-home time."
12. Focusing on positive child behaviors and interactions.
13. Redirecting when appropriate: For example, "I can see you need to be outside, let's go outside now."
14. Limiting the use of equipment when safety rules are not followed.
15. Occasionally removing the child from the situation:
 - The child is told why they were removed. (i.e., "I can see you need some time alone, let's go over here and have some time away.").
 - If the behavior escalates, the Director may be called to remove the child or the other children from the room. The child may be taken to the office, where the Director can work one-on-one with the child to help them regulate their emotions positively before returning to their group.
16. Providing opportunities for children to make amends: For example, "Let's help pick up the Lego you spilled."



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Caregivers' Responsibilities

In addition to the guidelines above, caregivers are responsible for reporting any incidents where a staff member has not followed these guidelines. Failure to report such incidents may result in termination of employment. Caregivers are expected to:

1. Notify parents and the Director of persistent behavioral problems (e.g., biting, swearing) and work together to help the child overcome these behaviors. The behavioral problem will be documented in an incident report.
2. Never raise their voices in an angry, loud manner. A reminder will be given for the first indication of a problem, and termination will follow if the problem persists.
3. Physical punishment of a child will result in immediate termination.
4. Emotional manipulation of a child may result in immediate termination.
5. Have an updated criminal record check as per policy.
6. Comply with the guidance prevention and intervention strategies detailed in this policy.

Child Care Licensing Regulations

Caregivers (and others who have contact with children) must not:

1. Inflict or cause to be inflicted any form of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation, or emotional deprivation.
2. Deny or threaten to deny any basic necessity.
3. Use or permit the use of any form of physical restraint, confinement, or isolation.
4. Lift or carry a child except during fire drills, in immediate danger, in emergency situations, or with infants who cannot walk. Use proper lifting techniques. In the case of change tables, guide the child and hold their hand as they climb. Comfort a sad child by getting down on their level; younger children can sit on a lap for a cuddle.

This policy ensures a consistent and positive approach to guiding children's behavior, promoting a safe and nurturing environment for all.

