

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

It is the policy of Rolling Plains Management Corporation that no child enrolled in any of its programs, regardless of age of the child, shall be spanked while they are in our care at the center or away from the center.

Preschoolers are capable of engaging in truly cooperative play with their peers and forming real friendships. However, development of those important social skills is not automatic for children. They need coaching and adult supervision to learn and maintain appropriate behaviors with others. With a little assistance, they can conduct themselves in positive ways and learn to play well with others. The ability of 3- to 5-year-olds to regulate their own emotions and behavior improves greatly over that of toddlers, but verbal and physical aggression increases. Young children do not learn to control aggression by being harshly punished or shamed; rather, they need teachers to help them learn alternatives to aggression for resolving conflicts, communicate their needs and feelings verbally, and maintain productive relationships with other children.

Teachers will facilitate the development of social skills, self-control, and self-regulation in children by using positive guidance techniques, such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to more acceptable activities, setting clear limits, and intervening to enforce consequences for unacceptable behavior. Teachers' expectations should respect children's developing capabilities. Teachers are patient, realizing that not every minor infraction warrants a response.

Teachers will provide many opportunities for children to learn to work collaboratively with others and to socially construct knowledge as well as develop social skills, such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking with other people to solve problems. Teachers foster the development of social skills and group problem solving at all times through modeling, coaching, grouping, and other strategies.

The following guidelines are utilized in establishing a classroom environment in which children develop self-discipline.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE GUIDELINES

Effective discipline is a teaching and learning process. As we guide children toward self-discipline, we use consistent guidance methods: **firm but kind.**

How do you know it is a behavioral problem?

- It interferes with a child's learning.
- It poses a threat to a child's health and safety.
- It interferes with the child's social interactions.
- It may result in an injury to another person.
- It may cause damage to property.
- It may cause a child to be viewed negatively by other people.

Three basic rules for children due to behavioral problems:

- We cannot allow a child to hurt himself/herself.
- We cannot allow a child to hurt others.
- We cannot allow a child to destroy property.

There are issues that are non-negotiable and further intervention may be implemented with the approval of the Education Specialist. No child will be sent home without prior approval of the Education Specialist or Head Start Director.

Basic structure recommended for behavioral management:

Create the limit: Young children need a few, clear, simple rules for behavior. The rules should be stated using positive language such as: We use our walking feet inside; we use our quiet voice inside the building. Children should be reminded of the rules often. Rules should also be posted at children's eye-level.

Set the consequences if the limit is exceeded: These consequences can be logical/natural consequences. The use of logical/natural consequences gives choices to the child. Telling a child if they continue to throw sand then they cannot play in the sandbox anymore today, is an example of this. Removing a child from a group where he/she is being disruptive to a quiet area of the classroom to calm down can be effective. A quiet time is a form of logical consequence. Use it as a last resort, when other methods haven't worked.

Follow through with the consequence: Remain calm and firm.

Introduce the idea of choice: The preschool child has some degree of self-control. They can understand the consequences of their behavior and have some ability to avoid the consequences.

Positive reinforcement methods will be utilized to manage classroom behaviors, as well as *We Can! Two Choice Discipline*. Using Two Choice Discipline encourages decision-making and develops problem-solving skills. Children who participate in the classroom community and make choices learn personal responsibility and accountability. Two Choice Discipline creates positive communication in classrooms. It allows you to

control the environment, and children learn to control themselves within that environment.

Guidelines for logical consequences:

- When a child makes a decision, let the decision stand.
- When a child is given a choice, phrase the choice respectfully.
- Respect the child's choice.
- Say as little as possible.
- Make it clear when there is **no** choice.
- Keep hostility out of consequence. (Don't take a child's misbehavior personally.)
- Pick your battles – in the overall scheme of things, is the behavior causing enough disruption to make an issue of **OR** is it a behavior that can be more effectively ignored?

Methods to reward children:

- Positive verbal environment – positive language; giving choices whenever possible; focus on what a child can do rather than what they can't do; use open-ended questions to get children talking to you.
- Classroom environment – catch children being good; give children special jobs; spend focused time with child; use child's name; rewards for the **entire class** are acceptable at random times.

Tips of quiet time:

- Select a location away from people but where child can be observed.
- Explain the rules.
- Set the timer.
- Appropriate time is usually 1 minute for each year of child's age.
- Review with the child why he/she is in quiet time. State your expectations for the child clearly. (Example: "When you go back to the block center, keep your feet to yourself.")
- When quiet time is over, **IT'S OVER!**

Ways to stop the tantrums:

- Don't respond to it.
- Don't yell at the child.
- Don't try to talk him/her out of it.
- Don't make eye contact.
- Don't let him/her see that his/her behavior is getting to you.
- Don't take anything the child says personally. He/she is looking for buttons to push.

As classroom staff, we are trained to deal with behavior problems. Therefore **parents are not to be called to report inappropriate behaviors.** (If the parent requests you call, explain our procedure and let them know they can call you, if it is necessary.) If you

have tried several behavior management methods with no results, ask the parent for a conference to discuss the changes in the child's behavior **in a non-threatening way**. Always begin your conversation with parents with a positive(s) statement(s). **All children during the course of the day demonstrate positive behavior which deserves to be recognized by teachers as well as parents.**

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