

# Positive Guidance Techniques:

## Guidance Techniques

Guidance techniques are designed and conducted in such a way they help the individual child develop self-control and assume responsibility for his or her actions. The rules are simple stated, consistent, understandable, and come with explanation. Redirection is a common technique practiced, with in the Early Learning Center. A child having difficulty in one area will be redirected to another area to play. Natural and logical consequences will happen and are used to help children learn to make good decisions.

### **Positive guidance strategies used in the classroom:**

*Redirection* -This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following directions or being uncooperative, quickly get their attention and introduce a different option or activity. Ex. "John, please let Mary have a turn riding bike now, you rode it for a long time, and I need your help shooting baskets with me."

*Logical Consequences*- These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and consequences are directly related. Ex. A child is standing on their chair at lunch and the teacher reminds him if you stand on a chair, you may fall and you may get hurt. This should make the child rethink his choice, for fear of getting hurt. It is a logical consequence.

*Breathe & Break Time*- In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a situation in which she/he has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should still be given at least two choices, but they are restricted to: "Please take a breath and come sit with me so we can talk, or take a break and sit in the quiet area and we will talk when you are ready". This strategy gives the child and the teacher a chance to breath, step back, calm down and gather their thoughts. Then, the teacher and child can talk about what happened, making sure the child's feelings are acknowledged, and then hold the child accountable for their actions by reviewing the rules of the classroom, or how they should be treating people.

### *Additional Classroom Strategies:*

- Assess the classroom environment, the appropriateness of the activities, and supervision.
- Apply consequences for rules.
- Use positive methods and language when having to discipline children
- Children will be given verbal warnings.
- Involve children with problem solving and provide problem solving skills and techniques.
- Providing choices of activities when a choice can be given.
- Recognize positive behavior; encourage problem solving between children and conflict, show interest in children interests and participate with children's play.

## Discipline and Behavioral Policy:

### Regulations Regarding Discipline

No child will be punished by corporal punishment or verbal abuse. Please keep in mind, this policy also applies to parents. Children may not be spanked or threatened to be spanked at the child care center.

### The following behaviors are prohibited (by ALL persons) in all childcare settings:

- Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear.
- Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or use of the bathroom.
- Abusive or profane language.
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment; and
- Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child.

**ALL** discipline situations which may arise with the children enrolled in our program. If a parent has concerns regarding another child's behavior, we ask that you discuss your concern with the Early Learning administration i.e. director or assistant director.

Under **NO** circumstances are parents allowed to approach the child to deal with the situation themselves. We consider this method to be completely inappropriate and is not tolerated.

**Preventive discipline** improves children's self-esteem and problem-solving skills and encourages pro-social behavior. This helps the program maintain an atmosphere of warmth and understanding and helps children to develop as individuals, as well as part of a group.

Examples are:

- Providing interesting choices of activities.
- Redirecting children away from problems and into positive interactions.
- Providing consistent positive communication of positive behavior with minimal attention given to misbehavior.
- Simple rules that are consistently enforced and clearly communicated to the children.
- Allowing children to solve problems among themselves without teacher interference.
- Arranging the environment to promote positive behavior and self-control.

Providing children with the opportunity and motivation to make choices helps them to:

- Function independently
- Develop social skills through gentle, encouraged guidance.
- Respect the needs and rights of others.
- Adapt to routines and simple rules.
- Become a responsible group member.
- Build positive self-esteem.

*See above positive guidance techniques*

### **Separation**

In some situations, separation from the group is required for the benefit of the child and others in the group.

If separation is necessary:

- Remove the child from the group calmly, with as little disruption as possible.
- State why they are leaving the group/ classroom
- Place the child away from the group where staff can safely maintain visual supervision.
- Children shall not be placed or set in “corners” or “hallways” or other humiliating situations.

If removing a child from the group or an activity to regain control, it will be for a brief period with a responsible caregiver/teacher/administration in areas that *are certified* by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and is observable by other adults *within certified areas*.

### **Persistent, chronic and uncontrollable behaviors**

We understand that children will make “mistakes” this is how they learn. Young children need the experience of interacting with other children on a consistent basis. Learning how to share and cooperate with others is an ongoing process for young children, and consequently, aggressive behavior will occur (i.e. - hitting, yelling, name-calling, biting, pinching, kicking, etc.). Although we do not allow this behavior to persist, it does take time for a child to learn a more acceptable way of dealing with his/her anger and frustration (i.e. - using appropriate words to express feelings).

We will encourage social and emotional development through the following objectives:

1. Create positive climates and focus on prevention;
2. Develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive behaviors;
3. Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement.

We will make every attempt to work with a child. However, if there are continual discipline problems that are violent or potentially harmful to other children and/or adults, the parent(s) will be called in for an immediate conference with the child's teacher and the center director so we can work together to help the child. The child *will* be sent home from the center for the remainder of that day. A plan will be established prior to the child's return to care, whether it would be for the next day of care or when care can be properly provided. This will be decided by the center director.

Chronic, persistent behaviors that are unsafe, hurtful, and violent simply will not be tolerated. The health, safety, and welfare of all children and adults are important to the overall health and well-being of the childcare program. Everyone has the right to feel safe, secure, and loved.

In the instance of persistent or extremely challenging behavior, the Director will facilitate a more intensive intervention process involving regular meetings and creating a behavior support plan with the child's family, teachers, and any other person with significant involvement in the child's life.

*If a child is consistently hurting other children, teachers will make every effort to protect the other children while still giving that child opportunities to gain experience and practice more appropriate interactions with peers. The administrators and caregivers at St James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center are advocates for ALL children.*

### **Extreme behavior issues**

*Aggressive behavior, i.e. physical, verbal or threatening tendencies towards staff or children is unacceptable. Aggressive behavior, (physical, verbal or threatening tendencies behavior) toward staff or other children will be grounds for immediate termination of care. This will be determined by the center director. Failure of parents /guardians to cooperate in this process will also be grounds for termination of care.*

Parents or legal guardians of the child involved will be notified and asked to pick up the child within the hour. If the parent/guardian fails to pick the child up immediately this will be noted on the documentation of the disruptive behavior, and a 3-day expulsion will occur. The parents will be informed that this behavior is considered to be extreme behavior, and that if the behavior continues, they will need to meet with the teacher and director to develop a behavior management plan (BMP). Please see expulsion and termination steps.

Caregivers will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive, in order to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

### **Physical restraint**

Physical restraint is typically not used as a disciplinary technique, however at times it maybe necessary for the safety of the child or others in the classroom. St James Early Learning Center does not discriminate and provides inclusive care for all children, including those with aggressive social/emotional behavior and disorders, autism, and psychological disorders. Being inclusive, means we outreach to all the community resources that we can. Assistance is welcomed in our classrooms, and is provided by license individuals from various agencies i.e aides, BHC's, OT, speech therapist and behavior. When these support staff are not present, or in an extreme behavioral aggressive situation with a child, a staff member may have to physically calm a child down by holding them in their arms, picking them up to remove them from one area to another or removing the child to a safe location. Staff will remain calm and remove a child if they can physically handle it without causing injury to themselves or the child. If they cannot remove the child, they will call for the administration for assistance. This is for the safety of that child, as well as the other children in the room.

*The only time that a child is held or restrained is when a child is in imminent danger of harming himself or others and there is no other way to prevent harm. The use of physically restraining the free movement of a child is for them to regain control of themselves and to prevent harm to*

*themselves or others. Restraining free movement with just enough force or restraint to keep them safe and ensure the safety of others by:*

1. Firmly holding the child is used in conjunction with specific components of the positive behavior supports and interventions listed above.
2. Holding the child is used in conjunction with the teaching of socially acceptable alternative skills to replace problem behavior.
3. Only those physically capable or comfortable may physically restrain a child.
4. When children are in an out-of-control rage, gently but firmly hold them to prevent them from harming themselves or others.
5. The child is held on their lap with their hands crossed in front of them and ensuring that another adult can clearly see the adults' hands.
6. Speak in a reassuring, calm voice. Continue to offer choices of calming strategies. I.e., "Do you need a hug? Do you need a drink of water?"
7. Throughout the episode, if the adult begins to feel overwhelmed, they will switch out with another adult.
8. Release the child as soon as safety is assured or as soon as the aggressive behavior lessens, and they can remain calm. This does not mean as soon as the child is calm...it means as soon as the situation is safe, even if the child is still agitated.

## **Documentation:**

*Documentation is important when seeking professional help and guidance for chronic, persistent behaviors. After a situation such as described above occurs, using the American Academy of Pediatrics Behavior Data Collection Tool, [Behavioral Data CollectionSheet 12-16.pdf](#), staff will document all occurrence. If administration was not called to assist, they and the parent will be notified upon completion of the Behavioral Data Collection Report.*

## **Interventions**

*When is an intervention needed for behavior? The types of interventions chosen for the behavior shall be the least intrusive and necessary to address the behavior. Interventions and strategies include but are not limited to:*

- *Deep breathing*
- *Provide pressure first by hugging and asking the child if they need held*
- *Fidget toys*
- *Move other people and children away from the child who is in danger of hurting someone*
- *Remove items that might be thrown or toppled*
- *Provide soft items to replace items that might cause damage or pain if thrown*
- *Station adults near exits to avoid children being able to escape*
- *Ignore verbal outbursts*
- *Use a barricade between you and the child*
- *Techniques that align with the child's behavior plan, IFSP, or IEP*

**Referral(s)** to an outside agency(ices) are recommended at the initial conference and will be documented as the first-time offense. If a parent is not cooperative with our efforts to seek assistance for a child (i.e. - a child's disruptive or aggressive behavior) or the unsafe, hurtful, or

violent behavior persists for more than a six-week period, we maintain the right to discontinue childcare. Each situation is evaluated on an individual basis and the final determination regarding a child's enrollment status will be made by the center director.

### **Expulsion and Termination**

The Director does reserve the right to dismiss a child from care if the child and/or family is unable to adapt to the center and its policies. Before considering expulsion or suspension, the following steps will be followed:

1. Center teachers will document behavioral issues including date, time and specific circumstances surrounding incidents.
2. Center teachers will document interventions provided when behavioral issues arise.
3. The director will observe the child then meet with teachers to discuss strategies and work together to develop a behavior management plan (BMP).
4. Center teachers and administration will meet with families to discuss documented issues. A behavioral plan will be created, regarding child's behavior, and include specific responsibilities for families, child and staff to complete within a specified period, determined by the childcare director. *Parents must attend this planning meeting, in order for the child to receive continued childcare services, failure to do so is grounds for expulsion.*
5. If the action within the behavior plan is not successful with the first few days (3) of implementation, the Director will contact the **Rapid Response through the Community Connections for Children**. If the child is currently receiving intervention services, staff will refer to current IFSP /IEP for additional support to help the child. However, the director may contact the LIU or early intervention to discuss observed behaviors. The IFSP/IEP with previously unidentified behavior, may need to be reviewed and revised.
  - a If the child has not previously been evaluated for intervention services, intervention services will work with the child's family to schedule an evaluation. The child will either receive services or the evaluator will assist the family in accessing other support. If the child has previously been evaluated for intervention services and does not qualify, intervention services will be contacted with concerns and ask about re-evaluation. In the interim, working with Rapid Response to receive appropriate program support.
  - b If behavior continues without additional support, the child will be immediately expelled from the program or terminated from care.
  - c If parents do not wish to get an evaluation, the center may extend BMP for 10 additional days, in order for the parents to make other childcare arrangements, or termination may occur at this time; depending on the severity of the child's behavior.
6. After a specified period (recommended one month), teachers, administration and family will meet to discuss progress. If at that time, sufficient improvement has not occurred with recommended responsibilities, then termination will be discussed, and a timeline will be given. Please see the Director if you would like more details or have questions or concerns.



# St. James Early Learning Center

## Discipline Policy Acknowledgement

Parents & Guardians:

I hereby affirm that I have read and acknowledge St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Centers Behavior policy which includes:

- Positive guidance techniques
- Discipline & behavior
- Prevention discipline
- Persistent, chronic, and uncontrollable behaviors
- Extreme behaviors
- Documentation
- Interventions
- Referrals
- Expulsion & Termination

I understand the policies and steps described by the Early Learning Center. Profanity, obscenity in words or actions, disrespect and noncompliance with the programs policies and procedure will not be tolerated.

Threats, or intentions to harm another child or staff member will be an automatic termination of care.

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Parent Signature

Date