

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

RATIONALE:

One of the scheme's aims is for educators to provide a safe, caring and relaxed learning environment for children. Parents and educators need to negotiate, understand and support each other in the common goal of encouraging self-discipline for the child and responding appropriately to a child's behaviour and needs.

All staff and educators are expected to comply with the positive behaviour guidance standards established by the scheme.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES:

The program guidelines towards self-discipline for children will be:

- * positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour with encouragement/acknowledgement freely given;
- * discipline in a constructive form will be used: ie;
 - suggesting alternative acceptable behaviour.
 - the child's interest will be diverted towards positive play.
 - talking with the child about their feelings and the consequences of their behaviour and gently redirecting.
- * no physical, verbal or emotional punishment;
- * no use of controlling or humiliating techniques;
- * Behaviour guidance and management strategies should be framed in positive language to enhance the child's self esteem and self image encouraging the children to believe that acceptance does not depend upon their behaviour.
- * The environment will be arranged so that disciplinary problems can be minimised. eg;
 - ensuring that an adequate number of toys/equipment and stimulating experiences are available, to avoid misuse and conflict.
 - the activity is supervised adequately, and it is developmentally and age appropriate.
 - there is convenient storage available so that the children may easily assist with "packing up" and activity selection
 - there is a balance of quiet and active "user friendly" spaces for indoor and outdoor play.
- * Older children should be involved in the development of their group's behaviour guidelines. This gives children ownership of the guidelines and a greater understanding of what is acceptable behaviour.

“TIME AWAY”, “THINKING TIME” or “QUIET SPACE” (instead of “Time Out”)

Use the **“Time Away”** technique (instead of **“time out”**) to give both yourself (the educator) and the child, some time to regain composure. Separate the children, if necessary, not as a punishment but because the child's behaviour indicates that they are unable to play together at the moment. Explain briefly to the child who has, for example, hurt another child, “that because they are unable to be friendly, they cannot play with other children and redirect them to a solitary activity (they may need your support to calm down” – (Porter L. 2001).

(The "time-out" behaviour management technique is outdated and does not promote self-discipline in children, as it takes the responsibility of the inappropriate behaviour away from the child. Utilising "time-out" does not provide children with a logical consequence for their actions. In addition "Time Out" is a form of physical punishment and the Education and Care Services Regulation 2011 does not allow child management techniques to include physical, verbal or emotional punishment. Children should not be isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. 'Time Out' has many disadvantages and is ineffective in discouraging inconsiderate behaviour).

PROCEDURES:

- * There should be regular and open communication between parents and the educator. With the help of parents, the educator can develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental stage, the child's family, the parents' feelings and any recent events that may be influencing the child's behaviour. In turn the educator should confer with the parent if any inappropriate behaviours have been displayed by the child whilst in care, and how the educator responded to the behaviour.
- * Clear guidelines and limits should be explained to the child, and consistently applied.
- * Choices should be provided by the educator to help the child be a part of the decision making process.
- * Children should be supported to resolve any conflicts verbally, using socially acceptable language. This verbal skill will empower and help the child to cope with difficult situations which require negotiation and problem solving, both as a child and later, as an adult.
- * When attempting to resolve problems, it is important for the educator to be at the child's level and to establish eye contact in a non-threatening way. Using the logic of natural consequences is an effective way to solve problems.
- * If a child is behaving inappropriately, the educator should consider the most appropriate procedure for the individual child, taking account of age, stage of development, environment, etc.

GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATOR/STAFF BEHAVIOUR:

- * Educators and staff are to present as positive models of behaviour for the children.
- * Educators and staff should give consistent, clear and coordinated messages to the children about their positive behavioural expectations, so that children are not confused by different approaches.
- * Educators and staff should be familiar with the stages of child growth and development so that they have realistic expectations of children's behaviours. Some child behaviour may be displeasing for adults, but should be considered acceptable and age appropriate (eg; toddlers are developmentally unable to "share" or take into account other's feelings).

- * Educators and staff should respect the children in care as unique and individual, and recognise that each child's behaviour is an expression of feelings or an attempt to meet immediate or underlying needs.
- * Educators and staff need to be aware of the different discipline styles and behavioural expectations that parents may have, as child rearing practices vary greatly from culture to culture.
- * Educators and staff should take into consideration each child's family situation when dealing with their behaviour, consulting regularly with parents to develop collaborative strategies to meet children's needs both in care and at home. It is important to share any information which may identify possible stresses that might affect a child's behaviour

USE OF INAPPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES:

Forms of abuse consistent with those stated below will lead to educator or staff disciplinary action.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- * including inappropriate, or insensitive use of “**time away**”.
- * placing a child in a confined space, or in a location in which the child's safety is compromised.
- * shaking, smacking, biting, pinching, inappropriately restraining a child (eg. strapping a child's legs together or sitting on a child), or injurious lifting (eg; lifting a child by one arm).

VERBAL ABUSE

- * shouting, abusive words or tone, labelling, generalisations, etc. are all examples of inappropriate interactions and are not to be used at any time in family day care.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- * including withdrawal of hugs or ignoring a child's requests.
- * isolation of a child for any reason other than illness, accident or a pre-arranged appointment with parental consent.
- * favouring one child over another, in any situation.

Relevant Legislation: *Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011*; 155, 156; p163.

Key Resources: *Practical Policies and Procedures for Child Care Services; Somerville Community Services Inc. Porter L. Children are People Too, 2001. Porter L. Young Children's Behaviour 2003 Stonehouse A. Dimensions – Excellence in Many Ways, 2004*