

Daydreams Childcare Center



Behavior Guidance Policy

Effective January 2004
Updated September 2010

This policy will be reviewed with all staff at Daydreams Childcare Center and with parents of each child at the time of enrollment. This written policy must be posted and adhered to at all times.

Daydreams Childcare Center does not permit:

1. Corporal punishment, including but not limited to the following:
 - Striking a child directly or with physical objects
 - Shaking, shoving, spanking or any forms of aggressive physical contact
 - Requiring a child, or forcing a child to repeat physical movements
2. Harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form including verbal, emotional or physical
3. Confinement of, or isolation of a child or children
4. Deprivation of a child's basic needs, including food, water, shelter, clothing or bedding.

Expectations for Children

Children at Daydreams Childcare Center will be expected to follow three rules:

1. **Be kind to yourself**
2. **Be kind to your friends**
3. **Be kind to our things**

Staff at Daydreams Childcare Center believe that the best way to get children to behave is to keep them busy and to "**Catch them being good**". Positive reinforcement and a well-planned daily schedule keep most behavior issues to a minimum. When necessary we use discussion and/or redirection to help children work out their issues and get back to learning and having fun!

Each child will be seen as an individual and any behavior issues will be dealt with as such. Children will be given opportunity and encouraged to freely explore their environment as long as they are being safe and following classroom rules. Teachers must also remember that each child is unique and will explore and process information in different ways. Teachers must plan daily activities that allow for children's different learning styles. Teachers must also remember that children learn best by being able to make mistakes and by being given the opportunity to solve their mistakes either independently or together with other children and teachers.

Guidance Techniques

Guidance techniques are designed and carried out in such a way as to help the individual child develop self control, sensitivity for others and to assume responsibility for his or her actions.

Some of the guidance techniques regularly used at Daydreams Childcare Center include:

- Setting up a developmentally appropriate environment and creating regular routines to eliminate many potential problems. The toys are all age appropriate and we provide ample amounts for all of the children. If we observe an area under used or used inappropriately we may rearrange or close a space as needed.
- Redirection, along with a simple explanation
- Natural and logical consequences
- Limits and boundaries are set and remain consistent between educators, children and events
- Educators' model appropriate choices are given and children are encouraged to choose for themselves.
- Developmentally appropriate choices are given and children are encouraged to choose for themselves.
- Positive encouragement, and reinforcement.
- Communication and problem solving are encouraged. Children are brought together to work out conflict with educator support. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings, actions and plans to work

towards solutions. Through these actions children learn to cooperate, compromise and have empathy for others.

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, consequently some aggressive behaviour will occur (i.e., hitting, yelling, name calling, biting, pinching, kicking, etc.). Although we do not allow this behaviour to persist, it takes 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 his/her feelings).

Environment and Materials

Classrooms must be set up to encourage positive behavior. If teachers notice problem behaviors they must first look to see if the behaviors are a result of poor classroom design and utilization. When setting up play areas within a classroom, teachers must consider:

- Which **types of play** will take place in each area. Noisy and messy areas should be kept away from quieter areas.
- **Traffic flow.** Environment should work with flow to minimize accidents. Don't place areas in front of doorways or the middle of traffic flows.
- **Toys and materials** available in each area. Ensure toys and materials are in good supply, in good repair, and are age appropriate. Ensure availability of toys is open-ended and could be used in a variety of ways.

Programming Ideas

Teachers must make sure that all programming is completed ahead of time. Children should not have to wait to complete an activity because their teacher is not prepared. When planning your scheduled activities remember that children need a balance of activities, they need to exercise their minds, senses, and bodies in different ways throughout each day to keep them stimulated. They also need to experience things firsthand and be actively involved in the learning process whenever possible (try not to just tell them about something, let them feel, taste, see, and hear it whenever possible).

If children are learning and participating in activities that interest them and allow them to channel their energies constructively they will be less likely to misbehave.

Schedules/Routines

Children need a well-planned consistent schedule. This will help them develop a sense of trust, security and control over their environment. Schedules should provide a good balance of active and quiet activities, indoor and outdoor play, and individual and group activities. Each teacher needs to understand the importance of maintaining a consistent schedule; they also need to be a little flexible in some circumstances. If something in a child's schedule is going to change teachers must let children know about the change ahead of time so they can re-organize their expectations for that day's activities. All teachers must understand the negative effects staff turnover can have on a child's daily schedule. We must do our best to minimize any negative outcomes by providing consistency in as many other aspects of center life as possible, we must understand and support each child as they readjust to any changes this may bring to their day.

Prevention and Intervention

There are many teaching strategies that can be used in the classroom to help minimize conflict situations. Remember that we will never be able to eliminate all conflict within the classroom. If handled correctly most conflict situations can be great learning experiences for children's social skills. Teachers should, when possible, encourage children to solve problems together, or help think of ways to eliminate unwanted behavior. Teachers also need to be aware that some problems need immediate intervention and should step in whenever necessary. **The goal of teacher intervention should be to provide guidance and support, not punish or solve problems for the children.**

The following is a list of prevention and intervention strategies that should be used as a guideline to help you promote positive behaviors in your classroom.

Prevention Strategies

1. Establish clear, consistent and simple limits and provide explanations for limits.

Limits are statements of what behaviors are expected. Ensure that limits are explained to children so they are clearly understood. Limits should be related to safety, protection and rights of self, others and environment.

2. State limits in a positive way, and remind children of limits often.

Tell children what behaviors are acceptable, instead of focusing on what is unacceptable.

3. Provide opportunities for children to make choices throughout the day.

Allow activities that require children to practice their decision-making skills. Give them choices whenever possible.

4. Focus on the behavior, not the child.

When disciplining a child focus on their behavior, which will preserve their dignity. Always provide a child with ways they could correct their behavior.

5. Ignore minor incidents.

As long as behavior is not compromising safety it is often best not to interfere.

6. Prepare children for transitions

Give children plenty of warning before changing to another activity.

7. Model and encourage appropriate behavior.

Children learn their behaviors by watching others around them.

8. Interact with children.

Interact with children during periods of free play as well as during scheduled activities.

Intervention Strategies

1. Physical closeness and touch

Often an adults touch, or a hug can help children regain self control and practice appropriate behaviors again.

2. Remind and redirect if necessary

Remind children of classroom rules. If necessary children may need to be redirected to another activity until they are able to follow rules.

3. Get child's attention

When intervening be respectful. Try to get to child's level, establish eye contact, and remain calm.

4. Acknowledge feelings

Always acknowledge the feelings of any child involved. Help them find words for how they are feelings.

5. Assist children in problem solving a situation

Help children find their own solutions. State what the problem is, ask what should be done, and provide choices if necessary.

6. Remove privileges

In extreme situations, when nothing else seems effective you may have to limit or remove materials or equipment or a child from a particular situation. Be sure that children are told of this consequence before hand.

Helpful Hints for Teachers When Dealing with Behavior Issues

- Catch them being good!
- Keep your own emotions under control.
- Maintain calmness in your own voice tone and body language.
 - Don't be judgmental of children.
- Get to know children's family and communicate behavior issues.
 - Don't demand that children apologize.
 - Avoid sounding moralistic.
- Avoid using abstract, subjective terms like "play nicely". Be clear and describe behaviors.
 - Don't hold a grudge.
- If you feel your own frustration rising, ask for a break or have someone else take over.