

Behavioral Guidance/Discipline

Discipline means “teaching, not punishment”. Punishment is negative control over child and is intended to make the child sorry for something that he/she has done. Discipline, or guiding behavior, is not just stopping misbehavior, it is about teaching and giving children the tools to manage their own behavior and develop self-control.

It is our duty as parents and childcare provider or caregiver to guide, teach and help develop our children. Children's behavior will be guided by setting clear limits or rules. The goal of the discipline policy is to help children develop self-control and a sense of responsibility for their own actions. Children are respected as individuals and need the opportunity to make decisions concerning their behavior in order to learn acceptable behavior patterns. No matter what a child has done, the child will NEVER be told that he/she is naughty or bad, but that his/her actions will not be allowed.

Disciplining of a child is achieved through patience, consistency, and positive reinforcement. We also try and teach the children in our care manners, kindness and to be respectful to others. One of the ways in which we do this is by the example we as providers set. We understand that our actions and reactions speak much louder than our words. The children are explained the rules of the daycare frequently, so they know what's expected of them. Once the child is old enough to understand the rules and disobeys them by, exhibiting inappropriate behavior (hitting, biting, spiting, kicking, scratching or pinching, bullying or using bad words), hurts others, mistreatment of the daycare items or furniture, the following developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used. These techniques are as follows:

1. **Positive Reinforcement:** The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.
2. **Redirection:** The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
3. **Time-Out:** The child is separated from the group for an age appropriate amount of time (one minute per one year of age). This technique is only used when a child repeatedly will not follow our directions or listen to our words, is exhibiting temper tantrum type behavior, or hurting ones-self, others or equipment. The Time-Out space away from the group place of activity but within our sight. During Time-Out the child has the chance to think about the misbehavior which led to his/her removal from the group. After the minute, (per one year of age), the child care provider or the caregiver discusses the incident and appropriate behavior with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown the other children.

When time out is used as a discipline technique:

1. It shall be used sparingly and shall not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age;
2. It shall be appropriate to the child's developmental level and circumstance;
3. It shall not be used with infants (from birth to 16mos. Old) or toddlers (16-24mos. Old);
4. The child shall be in a safe, lighted, well-ventilated place, and within sight and sound of the childcare provider or a caregiver, and;
5. The child shall not be left alone inside or outside the home while separated from the group.

(Time out must not be used with infants and toddlers because they are too young to cognitively understand this consequence.)

4. **Last Resort:** When a child's behavior is continually upsetting or dangerous to others, a conference will be called with the parents. If the problems cannot be resolved, arrangements will have to be made for the child to go elsewhere for care.

Note: Sometimes if both a parent and a provider are both in the same area (examples would be during drop-off and pick-up times) a child may forget the rules or test the boundaries. **Please help show your child that you respect us, the rules of our house, and our property by reminding them that the rules still apply when you are around.** We will also remind them of the rules and correct them if needed.

