

35. Guiding Children's Behaviour



Introduction

Guiding children's behaviour can be challenging for both families and educators. For children, learning to take control of their emotions and responses, and understanding how their behaviour impacts on others is a lifelong learning process. It is important that families and educators work together to support children to develop these skills. Guidance is most effective when educators and families develop joint strategies for guiding children's behaviour which can be implemented both at the centre and at home. Appropriate strategies are guided by the services policies which should explain and support the practices used in the services. (NCAC fact Sheet for families)

Purpose

To provide a safe environment for all children and educators which assist the child to develop increasing self-control, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility and social competence while promoting an inclusive and anti-bias environment. For educators to act as role models and apply their understanding of child development and practices outlined in the National Quality Standard and the Early Years Learning Framework and Framework for School Age care when guiding children's behaviour.

Goals – What are we going to do?

Children are provided with support, guidance and opportunities to regulate their own behaviour. The behaviour and guidance techniques used by educators and staff are designed to show children the utmost respect, and to assist them to develop skills to appropriately and successfully resolve conflicts and differences of opinion. Where challenging behaviours exist or develop, we promote proactive partnerships with families to positively support children's behaviour. Behaviour guidance strategies will not under any circumstances involve the use of any physical punishment, isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labelling.

Strategies – How will it be done?

- Give positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour.
- Respect the values and cultural beliefs of the child's family.
- Give praise and encouragement to children freely (emotional support).
- Express limits to behaviour in clear and simple positive terms.
- Encourage children to settle their differences in a respectful manner.
- Encourage appropriate ways of expressing feelings.
- Role model positive and responsible behaviours.
- Discourage unacceptable language.

- Seek professional support where unacceptable behaviour continues.
- Be consistent with appropriate behavioural strategies
- Create an environment which assists in reducing the incidences of undesirable behaviour.
- Get down to their level when communicating
- Set responsibilities and consequences.
- Make your child feel important.

All **educators and staff** must ensure that each child is given positive guidance towards socially acceptable behaviour and is not subjected to or threatened with:

- Any form of corporal punishment
- Any punishment that takes the form of immobilisation or force feeding
- Any punishment that is intended to humiliate or frighten the child
- Refer to ACECQA Inappropriate discipline Information sheet.

Positive Guidance

To help children know **what to do** instead of **what not to do**. When a child is stopped or redirected, we should explain why. Self-regulation can only be achieved if the children are aware of their limits within the centre, and carers/educators are consistently role modelling and guiding their behaviour. Through this process children can observe and practice behaviours.

Educators are guided and supported in their understanding of how to support children's behaviour and emotional regulation and put this in to practice through professional development opportunities and mentoring.

Reasons for Inappropriate Behaviour

There can often be many reasons for inappropriate behaviour. Reasons can include:

- Lack of understanding
- Lack of self-control
- Developing communication skills (poor language)
- Tiredness
- Poor social skills
- High activity level
- Jealousy
- Imitation
- Boredom
- Anger and frustration
- Temperament
- Culture
- Developmental delays or a disability

Educators and staff should talk to children about their behaviour and help them to reflect and self-evaluate and set realistic goals. The child will need some reason or motivation to change their behaviour.

What to do:

Each case will be considered with regard to the probable cause of behaviour, as well as the ability, development, culture and background of each child.

Evaluate whether adult intervention is necessary and assess behaviour. Many children are able to resolve their own conflicts independent of adult assistance.

Acknowledge and accept the child's feelings of anger, frustration or jealousy, even when you think the reaction is completely out of proportion to the cause. Discuss feelings with the child and that the feeling is okay but that the behaviour exhibited is not.

Behaviour management plans for individual children are a collaborative approach with the child (where appropriate), parents, professionals, room educators and centre management meeting as many times as needed to action a plan that holistically supports the child in our environment. Once this is developed all centre educators review the plan to ensure they understand triggers and strategies that will support and guide the child. Everyone has the opportunity to give feedback on the plan as we move along over time and any changes are again noted to all stakeholders involved.

Children 0-2 years – Tell the child to **STOP** then explain simply to them what has happened. Ask them to help you comfort the child if appropriate and to assist with cold pack or attending to the injury if necessary. The child should then be directed to an activity or the carer should then involve the child in an activity, guide, and redirect and remove temptations. The environment will be structured appropriately and redirection used.

Children 2-6 years – Ask the child “**what are you doing?**”, or “**what have you done?**”, or “**what should you be doing?**” The child should then be directed into some other area of play e.g. a specific table or organized activity.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure educators, staff and parents/guardians are provided with a copy of the Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy or are aware of where to access it and comply with its requirements.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the centre's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families
- Ensure children are adequately supervised, that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times and the environment is safe, secure and free from hazards
- Ensure educational programs are developed and implemented in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child
- Ensure the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators
- Ensure that educators provide education and care to children in a way that:

- encourages children to express themselves and their opinions
 - allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
 - maintains the dignity and the rights of each child at all times
 - offers positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour
 - has regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for
- Organise appropriate training for educators/staff to assist with the implementation of this policy
 - Ensure educators and all staff members at the service who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances (National Law: Section 166). Refer to ACECQA Inappropriate discipline Information sheet.
 - Ensure that procedures are in place for effective daily communication with parents/guardians to share information about children's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships
 - Ensure educators and staff use positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others
 - Co-operate with other services and/or professionals to support children and their families, where required
 - Maintain confidentiality at all times

Educators will:

- Create an atmosphere that is generally relaxed and happy.
- Deliver educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child
- Deliver programs that develop a sense of wellbeing and identity, connection to community, and provide skills for lifelong learning in all children
- Role model appropriate behaviours and use positive language
- Develop relationships with each child's family.
- Develop appropriate environments, routines and rules collaboratively with children.
- Deal with the behaviour in an appropriate manner.
- Communicate with children and families at all times in a respectful and positive manner.
- Develop a consistent approach with families in managing the child's behaviour.
- Provide information to families about external support services and other resources in the community.

- Ensure that expectations and limits are consistent and clear to children.
- Discuss any issues the family may be aware of that could be contributing to behavioural changes.
- Maintain confidentiality when dealing with behaviour management.
- Monitor child's behaviour and if necessary document behaviour
- Use intervention or redirection to assist negative behaviour
- Provide adequate supervision at all times
- Trust and respect the children in your care as unique and special, and recognise that each child's behaviour is an expression of feelings or an attempt to meet immediate or underlying needs

Families will:

- Read and comply with Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy
- Listen to concerns of educators. Encouraging on-going open communication between educators and families.
- Inform educators/staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the service (e.g. moving house, relationship issues, a new sibling)
- Discuss incidents of inappropriate behaviour with child – set consequences and follow through.
- Participate in meetings, formal or informal with educators or other involved parties when requested.
- Work with educators to implement appropriate consequences at home, be consistent with their approach
- Provide educators with regular feedback on behaviour at home.
- Strongly discourage retaliation and support children in feeling comfortable approaching educators if another child has behaved inappropriately to them.

Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 168

Links to other policies and documents

- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being and Becoming
- The Framework for school age care in Australia: My Time, Our Place

Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 168

Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 5.1, 5.2

Sources

- ACECQA –Guide to the national Quality Standards www.acecqa.gov.au
- Donna MacIntyre – Approved Provider
- Community Early learning Australia – CELA
- Guiding Children's Behaviour in Childcare – NCAC fact sheet for families
- ACECQA Inappropriate discipline Information sheet
- Bandura – Social Learning Theory
- Knitzer and Lefkowitz – Social and Emotional Development

Procedure for addressing extreme challenging behaviours



Definition of Extreme challenging behaviour

Our definition of extreme challenging behaviour is any chronic behaviour involving repeated threat of physical harm or actual physical harm to another child, family member or educator, any repeated behaviour causing threat to the emotional wellbeing or sense of security of other children, family members or educators and any repeated behaviour which causes deliberate destruction of the physical environment.

1. Nominated Supervisor will contact Area Manager (or in her absence another member of the management team) and discuss their concerns. Together a decision will be made to begin the procedure for addressing extreme challenging behaviour. If a decision is made to NOT begin the procedure, continue to update Area Manager (or as above) on the child's interactions and behaviours and wherever you feel it has become necessary again request to begin the procedure for addressing extreme challenging behaviours.
2. At all times follow all applicable centre policies. In particular Policy 19. Interactions with children and this policy - Guiding Children's Behaviour.
3. At all times communicate honestly and openly with the child's parents/guardian to accurately depict the child's interactions and behaviours during their time at the centre. Record these conversations including dates and details shared and the parent's response to the discussion. Take particular note of inconsistencies in behaviour between home and school (as amongst other things this can indicate a sensory processing concern)
4. Ensure that any time a child or educator is physically injured an incident report is also recorded for the child who caused the injury and is kept in their file. Also ensure an incident report is completed when an incident is felt to threaten the emotional wellbeing or sense of security in the centre or when property is damaged e.g. window broken etc. Ensure the same procedure is followed with a parent/guardian required to sign an incident report and given a copy.
5. Complete detailed Behaviour record checklist
6. Reflect on Behaviour record checklist and adjust strategies accordingly. Ensure strategies trialled and used are documented and their effectiveness evaluated with specific examples/documentation.
7. Continue to complete detailed Behaviour record checklist
8. Send all documentation through to Area Manager for review and discussion at each step
9. Organise a meeting with the child's parents/guardians. This meeting should involve the centre Nominated Supervisor, Area Manager (if the service wishes) and a minimum of one primary contact room educator. At this meeting
 - Discuss concerns
 - Share documentation of behaviour
 - Share documentation of strategies used and evaluated
 - Provide further opportunity for parents/guardians to suggest strategies
 - Ask parents/guardians to further detail any outside professional services the child is involved with e.g. paediatrician, occupational therapist etc.

- Parents/guardian, Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Room Educators will work together to create a behaviour management plan to put into place at the centre
 - Discuss with parent/guardian that if the service feels that a child's behaviour has escalated to a point where educators feel that they are unable to intervene or the other children or educators in the room feel threatened or safety of children and/or is compromised they will receive a phone call requesting that they pick up their child immediately. If a family refuses to do so other people on their authority to collect list will be contacted.
 - Also discuss with families that if the child's behaviour does not show improvement following the introduction of behaviour management plans that the service may need to reduce the child's days at the service or terminate their enrolment.
10. Meet with the family as needed to provide updates on child's progress. Continue to communicate openly and honestly about the child's interactions and behaviours on each day of attendance and document as discussed in 2.
 11. If the child's behaviour continues to escalate or does not show improvement, follow steps outlined in parent meeting in regard to contacting families to collect child and reduction of days/ termination of enrolment.

Behaviour Record Checklist

Child's Name: _____ Week Beginning: _____

	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:
Physical and Aggressive Behaviour e.g., biting, hitting, pushing, or shoving, kicking, throwing items, breaking things, violent or unsafe behaviours					
Emotional behaviour e.g., teasing, shouting, bullying, swearing, screaming					
Social behaviour e.g., excluding others					
Self-harming behaviour e.g., head banging, biting self, hitting self, hair pulling					
Sexualised behaviour in public					
First Aid Applied Was first aid applied to the child or any other child or educator (ice packs, band aids)					
How many children were involved					
Known triggers e.g., overstimulated, not understanding a task, overcrowding, too noisy, drop off/pick up times, too bright, peers, sharing					
Strategies used e.g., redirection, sensory box, book/social story, breathing techniques					
Additional Comments:					
Parent notified	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N

	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:	Date: Time started: Time Ended: Educator:
Physical and Aggressive Behaviour e.g., biting, hitting, pushing, or shoving, kicking, throwing items, breaking things, violent or unsafe behaviours					
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Strategies used e.g., redirection, sensory box, book/social story, breathing techniques					
Additional Comments:					
Parent notified	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Educator Name:			Parent Name:		
Educator Signature:			Parent Signature:		
Date:			Date:		



Behaviour Management Plan – Child’s Name – Child’s Room

DOB:	Start Date at Tillys:	Plan Date:
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Child’s background information:

Behaviour/s of concern:

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Known triggers for behaviour:

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Warning signs before behaviour:
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Short term goals regarding behaviour:
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Long term goals regarding behaviour:

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Support and resources needed:

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Preventative strategies before behaviour:	Who is responsible?
Management strategies and/or consequences when occurring:	
Good behaviour recognition:	
Communication strategies with family:	
Future action from Centre:	

Additional Comments:

Comments from family:

I acknowledge and understand the terms of this Behaviour Management Plan and will cooperate with the services decisions regarding this individualised plan.

Parent Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Educator Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Management Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Additional Signatures:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____