

PROVIDING POSITIVE GUIDANCE POLICY

RATIONALE

Lets Grow is committed to providing positive guidance to children attending its centre. This guidance is directed towards promoting social competence for each child.

Consistent guidance will be given to children. Each child will be treated with respect and dignity. Peaceful conflict resolution will be promoted and children will be supported in resolving their own issues.

Our primary focus will be to give positive guidance promoting appropriate behaviour by using praise and encouragement, to build self esteem within each child. Thus the need to enforce the disciplinary procedure will be minimised.

We believe children need guidelines and developmentally appropriate boundaries within which they are free to make choices and to be shown love and understanding.

EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN

- To treat other children and adults with respect.
- To care for the environment.
- To care for each others mana.
- To respect the space and activities of others.
- To use the equipment appropriately.

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF AND ADULTS

- To treat all children and other staff with respect and dignity at all times.
- To endeavor to be clear and consistent in their expectations and actions.
- To be firm and consistent, fair and non-threatening.
- To endeavor to anticipate trouble and take steps to prevent it.
- To ask for help if a situation becomes stressful or they require assistance.
- To respect the space and activities of others and to care for the environment.
- To use the equipment appropriately.

PROCEDURE

Lets Grow teaching teams will discuss, formulate and document their own centre strategies and/or practices to positively guide children's behaviour. This should be done in consultation with parents/whanau and by using relevant material – [Providing Positive Guidance – Guidelines for early childhood education services – Ministry of Education 2000]

POSITIVE GUIDANCE

We believe that the most effective way of guiding children's behaviour is with the use of positive methods.

These will include:

Good Supervision - We will endeavor to watch all of the children and the whole area of activity in an effort to anticipate the children's actions and moods before problems develop.

Providing a safe and nurturing environment - All children, including babies need stimulation from things that are familiar and loved, combined with things that are new and exciting. Each day we will include a variety of quiet and noisy, busy and restful, single and group, physical and thoughtful activities.

Clear Expectations - Children need to know what the rules and expectations are and why we have them. We will endeavor to give clear and positive instructions.

Consistent Handling - Inconsistent handling confuses children and causes behavioural problems. Children need to be able to predict what will happen in their day, and peoples reactions to events. We will endeavor to be consistent and predictable.

Encouragement - We will give children lots of encouragement and reinforcement for acceptable behaviour, so that children do not need to misbehave to get attention.

Awareness of Stress - We will endeavor to be alert to signs of stress in children's behaviour, and provide appropriate stress reducing activities and techniques. For example, providing books, water play, physical activities, favorite toys, music and quiet times, cuddling and soothing, as well as listening to children's concerns.

Building Self Esteem - We will help to build the children's self esteem by expressing respect, acceptance, and comfort for children, regardless of their behaviour, recognising that behaviour such as messiness, crying, resistance and aggression are not unusual or 'bad'.

Building the development of self control - Children learn self control when adults treat them with dignity and use management techniques such as providing encouragement, guiding children with clear, consistent and fair limits, and in the case of older children, helping them to set their own limits. We will endeavor to do this.

Valuing mistakes - We will help children to value mistakes as learning opportunities and help them to resolve conflicts and their own problems.

Staff modeling - We will model good social skills and positive interactions with other children and each other.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

When a child consistently exhibits inappropriate or challenging behaviours:

- Management will provide guidance and support.
- 'Observations' of the situations and behaviours will be completed.
- Management will discuss the situation with the child's parent/whanau/caregiver and Centre Staff.
- Management will then make a plan of action. This may include short term plans which are designed to immediately manage the problem, and long term plans designed to identify the reason for the behaviour and to help the child learn more appropriate ways of reacting or behaving. It may also include obtaining advice and support from outside agencies.

Information about children and their families is considered confidential and will not be discussed with other Centre parents, or disclosed to an outside agency or person without the parents written permission, unless the staff have reason to be concerned for the child's safety.

In rare and extreme cases where a child's behaviour is putting the other children or staff at risk of danger, and if all avenues above are covered and there is still no improvement then the child will need to be removed from the centre.

TECHNIQUES IN HANDLING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Some examples of positive redirection and reinforcement:

- Getting an angry child to dig in the sandpit, pound some play dough or hammer a nail.
- Providing two dolls when children are fighting over one.
- Helping two children who fight a lot to become friends, rather than putting energy into always separating them.
- Smiling and nodding across the room at a child playing gently or appropriately.
- Allowing children to finish playing with a toy before they are expected to share it.
- Explaining the proper use of a toy and what will happen when it is misused.

If at any time in the Centre a child is angry or upset, they must have a staff member with them until they are calm and reassured. Occasionally the staff use supervised 'sitting apart', where the child is temporarily removed from their play activity until the child decides that they are ready to rejoin the group. This must only be used in extreme cases and with support from the Management.

Staff must never smack, hit, grab, shake, handle roughly, bite, punch, tease, insult, humiliate, label, frighten, ridicule, neglect, shout at, threaten, or confine any child. They must not laugh at children's behaviour or discuss it amongst themselves in the presence of children or parents. These methods are either illegal or unprofessional in a Early Childhood setting and have proven to be bad for children in Childcare. Children learn acceptable behaviour from positive example and love, and not from violence and anger.

Even if staff believe in some of these methods and/or use them at home they must not do so in the Centre. They are considered to be 'serious misconduct' and any staff who does this will face disciplinary action, as per their employment agreement.

All parents/whanau are welcome at any time to discuss with the Management, any aspect of the care and education their child receives.

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