

Policy Title:	Behaviour Guidance Policy
Effective Date:	October 2010
Review Date:	As necessary under the Policy and Procedure Development Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Inner City Care (ICC) has a responsibility to support the development in children of an understanding of the limits to acceptable behaviour, and the reasons for these limits, without the use of physical punishment. As an adult's feelings about behaviour guidance may be affected by what he/she experienced as a child, ICC aims to be sensitive to people's feelings in the implementation of the behaviour guidance policy.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This policy was developed by the staff and Management Committee prior to 1998 and the sources have not been kept. The policy was reviewed by the Management Committee in May 2003, October 2005, June 2007 and again reviewed in October 2010 and no changes were made.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The need for a Behaviour Management Policy arises from a need for all the members of the ICC community to be consistent, clear and coordinated about expectations of behaviour. An atmosphere of clarity and consistency enhances ICC's ability to help children to learn and to be safe and secure. ICC believes consistency is important in order to maximise the benefits of socialising and to minimise confusion. ICC believes setting limits for behaviour is important for the safety and protection of children, others and the environment. Children need guidelines in relation to themselves, their environment and those around them – as well as for the world at large. Ultimately, setting limits for behaviour aims to teach children self-discipline and help them understand the consequences of their behaviour so that they understand how their actions affect those around them. The aim is to enable children to become self-disciplined and self-directed so that their needs and interests become clearer to themselves and those around them. Awareness of self, others and the environment is a vital quality for all children to develop in order to live harmoniously. Behaviour guidance is a means by which children are helped to develop that awareness.

POLICY DETAIL/ BUSINESS RULES

- By setting appropriate and consistent limits to behaviour we provide a secure environment in which children can explore their physical and social world.
- Effective behaviour guidance supports self-esteem and allows children to feel capable and competent. When guiding children's behaviour, staff will get down to the children's level and talk to them about the behaviour and why it is not appropriate in a clear, simple manner without raising their voice or humiliating the child in any way.
- Staff will always take into account a child's developmental level of understanding and ability when setting limits with children and when guiding a child's behaviour. Children under the age of two, for example, will not be able to talk about the reasoning behind their behaviour and thus apologise or "use their words" the same way a five year old child will.

- Staff will praise and acknowledge caring, cooperative and desirable behaviour in children.
- Staff will discuss the undesirable behaviour positively. They will talk of what we DO instead of concentrating on DON'T. They will at all times label the behaviour and its consequences, so children understand which specific behaviour is undesirable and why.
- Staff will give simple explanations to children, and offer alternatives so a child can make choices. In time this will aid the making of wise choices.
- Staff will at all times be consistent with behaviour guidance strategies. Communication between staff and parents is key to ensuring a consistency of setting limits and guiding behaviour.
- Staff will remember that positive behaviour guidance is based on self-discipline and self-control – not coercion and recognize that this is a gradual and developmental process.
- Staff will set limits WITH the children. By involving children in the process, it helps them to understand the limits. It gives them a sense of ownership over the limits and a sense of security and safety that they are respected and valued.
- At no times will staff use any form of physical punishment, including isolation. Staff will also use clear and calm voices when guiding behaviour and will not humiliate the children in front of other children or staff.
- If a child's behaviour is ongoing, and the above strategies do not seem to be effective, the staff and director may need to organize a meeting with the parents of the child to discuss the behaviour and develop specific clear strategies which may involve the input from other professionals.

SETTING LIMITS helps children to:

- feel secure
- find appropriate expression for feelings that are hard to control
- start a process that is a long time in the learning.

Appropriate limits to set:

1. We respect ourselves and other people. We show this respect by treating others as we like them to treat us. We all have a wide range of emotional reactions to situations.
2. Everyone feels different emotions. It is okay to be angry, frustrated, sad and hurt. However, it is really important to be aware of how we translate these emotions. Encourage children to talk about their emotions, where possible. Labelling their emotions helps children to understand them better and thus learn how to cope with them. When children are angry, offer strategies such as punching cushions or bean-bags, kicking a ball, stomping their feet or squeezing malleable equipment such as play dough, as opposed to taking it out on other people or themselves. Alternatively, they may be like to do something different, which may allow them time to think things through and/or forget about what it was that was bothering them. However, try and help children understand that destroying things such as toys and plants is inappropriate.
3. We are careful with our own and others' work and belongings.
4. We are respectful with insects, animals and plants - like us they are living things.
5. We keep ourselves and our surroundings clean. We are considerate to others when we move about our environment. We move calmly inside and safely outside.

AUTHORITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Centre Director is responsible for ensuring all ICC staff have read and understood this policy and have attended behaviour guidance training.

All ICC staff are accountable for the implementation of this policy.

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

Children's Services Regulation 2004
National Childcare Accreditation Council publications
Behaviour Guidance procedure, Rest/Sleep Policy, Preventing Biting Procedure

Approved by Management Committee	
Signature: _____	
Date: _____	Title: _____
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