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Behavior Guidance Policies

Effective behavior guidance and management require a positive approach, supervision and patience. We, at Little Victories, believe that the children's behavior is more easily and better handled through means of positive reinforcement. Through modeling and group discussion, children will be taught acceptable alternatives to inappropriate behavior. There will be redirection of negative behavior and a thorough explanation of appropriate behavior and why it is expected.

There will be times however, when thoughtful and purposeful discipline becomes necessary for the good of the individual child as well as the other children in the classroom.

- The safety of the children and staff will be protected at all times.
- Procedures will be tailored to the child's developmental level and the child's age.

Even In the best classroom situations, there will be disagreements among children. In these situations, the following basic guidelines should be incorporated into all classrooms. These procedures do not act in isolation, but are part of the total classroom environment.

- Be positive and friendly with others. Handle disagreements in respectful ways and don't discuss issues with staff or children in front of the children. Children observe your relationships with other children and staff and will be influenced by what they observe.
- Model appropriate behaviors. Follow the same rules required of children. While in the outside world there are differences between rules for children and rules for adults. There will be no such difference at Little Victories. Children cannot yet understand the reasons for such differences.
- Interact with children during activities. Use this to maximize the educational value of the activity as well as to stay in constant touch with children's reactions to what is happening. Knowing when it is time to move on or to add something new to an activity in progress will minimize boredom and inappropriate behaviors. In addition, being close at hand will allow staff members to intercede in disagreements between children before it gets out of hand.
- Redirect the children away from problems toward constructive activity in order to reduce conflict.

- Teach acceptable behaviors and rules to the children as part of group time. The consequences of not following rules will be discussed, and acceptable alternatives and ways to resolve conflicts will be taught. As the need arises, discussion of these rules with an individual child will take place.
- Should the behavior continue, as a last resort the child may be given a “time-out” aka a separation.

Separation From the Group

A child (16 months or older**) will only be separated from the group when:

- Less intrusive methods of guiding the child’s behavior have been tried and were ineffective.
- The child’s behavior threatens the well- being of the child or other children in the program.

A child who requires separation from the group will:

- Remain in an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person;
- The child’s return to the group is contingent on the child’s stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation; and
- The child will be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation abates or stops
- Staff will document all separations on the separation log and regularly review the log to determine patterns of consistently inappropriate behavior.
- If a child is separated from the group 3 times or more in 1 day, the child’s parent shall be notified and notation of the parent notification shall be indicated on the separation report log.
- If a child is separated 5 times or more in 1 week or 8 times or more in 2 weeks, the procedures for dealing with persistent unacceptable behavior must be followed.
- The Separation Log will contain the following:
 - The child’s name
 - The staff person’s name
 - Time
 - Date
 - Information indicating what less intrusive methods were used to guide the child’s behavior
 - How the child’s behavior continued to threaten the well- being of the child or other children in care
 - Notification to the parents if a child has been separated from the group three or more times

**Children between the ages of six weeks and 16 months will not be separated from the group as a means of behavior guidance.

Persistent Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to: rough handling, shoving, hair or ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, scratching, biting, pinching, hitting, spanking, name calling, inappropriate language, persistent refusal to follow instructions and destruction of property.

If a child has persistent unacceptable behavior the following consequences will be taken:

1. Verbal warning/correction.
2. Written Incident/Behavior Report kept in child's file and parents will be notified.
3. Conference with parents to discuss tangible Behavior Plan including discussion of previous Behavior Reports, Expectations for future behavior, Home and Center Strategy to encourage and achieve acceptable behavior, Measurable Goals for success, and professional intervention if necessary.
4. If Behavior Plan does not achieve the required results the child will no longer be invited to participate at Little Victories.

Forms of Discipline

The forms of discipline used at Little Victories are:

- Temporary loss of privilege-
If after a complete discussion about the unwanted behavior the child continues to mistreat another child and/or equipment, the child will temporarily lose the privilege to play with that child or equipment.
- Temporary exclusion from the group-
A child will be excluded from the group for a short period of time if the unwanted behavior continues after a discussion and the loss of privileges.
(All separations must be logged on the classroom separation log)

At Little Victories, any form of physical punishment such as hitting, spanking, shoving, pulling of hair or ears, shaking, kicking, biting, pinching, slapping, or any other form of rough handling is strictly prohibited and is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Also prohibited is any form of emotional disciplining such as name calling, shaming, ostracism, unkind remarks about the child or their family, or the use of language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens any child.

At Little Victories all staff members are prohibited from actions such as:

- Punishment for lapses in toilet training.
- Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or needed medical treatment.
- The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying.
- The physical restraining of a child other than being held to prevent injury to the child or others.
- Separation from the group unless the other less intrusive methods failed to redirect the unwanted behavior.

Biting Policy

If a child bites 1 time in a day, the parent will be called and informed that if we have 1 more bite today the child will need to go home. If a second bite occurs, the parent will again be called and the child will be sent home. The parent is then responsible for explaining to the child in age appropriate terms that biting is not ok. It is our goal to have this time at home seem like more of a punishment than a reward. In most cases being sent home only occurs once or twice.

- Little Victories reserves the right to withdraw a child if their needs are not being met by the staff to child ratios offered by the program.
- See Persistent Unacceptable Behavior Policy