

## Child Guidance

CDL staff members are responsible for guiding children to live safely and with satisfaction in the world as well as with others. Staff members interact with children and their families with an attitude of respect for each person as a unique and valued individual.

Helping young children acquire appropriate social skills, constructive ways for expressing feelings, and strategies to develop self-control are critical parts of an ongoing process in the early childhood. Young Children need support and structure to facilitate their socialization process.

At the CDL, we try to balance the needs of the child with the necessity of setting limits. Children can only develop a personal sense of autonomy and initiative when the adults around him/her are loving and firm. We have confidence in the child and in ourselves; and, we believe that in time and with the support of responsive adults, a child will learn to be assertive at appropriate times and in constructive ways.

CDL staff members follow the basic guidelines for setting limits for young children:

- Accept the child's need to assert himself/herself
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Restate the expected behavior or communicate the limit
- Target acceptable alternatives
- Implement choice-giving and define consequences
- Use consequences that "fit the action"
- Discuss ways a child can be responsible for his or her actions
- Teach problem solving skills and strategies to resolve conflict

CDL staff will:

- Plan the environment and the daily schedule with predictability, flexibility, and the child in mind
- Model the behaviors we are teaching children
- Stop behavior that is hurtful to a child or harmful to materials and/or disruptive to the group
- Explain the appropriate behavior and the potential consequences of the child's actions
- Select consequences related to the action or "mistaken behavior" exhibited by the child  
***("Time Out" is not implemented as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.)***
- Provide structured choices and/or redirection appropriate to the situation and the age as well as the developmental level of the child.

Staff members focus on talking with children about what they can do, rather than frequently using statements that begin with "Don't" or "No." Each classroom posts the basic I Care Rules for children to follow. They use the wording of the rule with children as it pertains to situations that arise in the classroom as the day progresses.

1. We listen to each other.
2. Hands are for helping, not hurting.
3. Use I Care language.
4. Care about others feeling.
5. Be responsible for what is said and done.

Over time, children learn to solve their own problems with less and less intervention from adults. The goal is for children to become intrinsically controlled, considerate of others, and a responsible member of a classroom community.

***At no time will children be subjected to physical or psychological punishment! No restricted methods of behavior management will be administered!***

- ***No spanking or other corporal punishment***
- ***No cruel, unusual, or severe punishment, humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment***
- ***No denial of meals or snacks, drink, rest, bathroom facilities or outside time as punishment***
- ***No force-feeding***
- ***No punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet***
- ***No punishment related to eating or not eating food.***

In the event that there is a persistent challenging behavior or behaviors, we will take these measures:

1. Meet with staff and parents/guardians to outline the concerns and develop a plan for managing the behavior(s).
2. Share the cooperative plan and obtain signatures of parents/guardians.
3. Implement the plan.
4. Monitor the plan daily and schedule follow-up conferences weekly or biweekly to discuss progress in achieving the plan.
5. Contact professional resources with parent/guardian permission as needed.

***If progress is not made to modify the behavior or the center director and assistant director determine that the CDL environment is not the most appropriate environment for the child, the child's enrollment will be terminated.***

***When a child's challenging behavior threatens the health, safety and comfort of other children or adults, the child's enrollment will be terminated without advance notice.***