Child Guidance/Classroom Management/Conflict Resolution

Policy:
Child guidance and classroom management will promote positive social skills, foster mutual respect, strengthen self-esteem, and support a safe, nurturing environment.

Procedure:
- The classroom environment will support children socially and emotionally.
- Staff will be consistent in the use of the daily schedule.
- Staff will develop classroom rules with the children, and will post them in the classroom. Posted rules will include words and pictures that the children will understand and is tailored to the developmental level of children.
- Classroom rules will be clear and consistent, and few.
- Classroom rules will be referred to pro-actively.
- Children will be taught how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior to reduce conflict.
- Activities will be engaging to the children as to lessen the possibility of negative behaviors.
- Staff will be available for children needing more support.
- Staff will provide a warning when transitions will be happening so that transitions will be smoother and support will be given to children who have difficulty with transitions.
- For day to day unacceptable behaviors, staff will provide immediate and directly related consequences for child’s unacceptable behavior. Examples of strategies used include redirecting, giving choices, and problem solving with the child.
- Repeated occurrences of inappropriate behavior requiring intervention will be handled by staff immediately.
- Intervention for behavioral problems will be progressive and based on the situation and individual needs. Children will be provided services in the LRE (Least Restrictive Environment).
- Children who forget the rules will be reminded of expectations, referred to posted rules, and redirected as needed.
- When safety is an issue either for behaviors that are a danger to the child or others, staff will provide immediate intervention. Options to consider are:
  - Redirection—children and groups away from problems and toward constructive activity to reduce conflict.
  - Providing an opportunity and space for the child to calm down
  - Debriefing and problem solving
  - Request for Planned and Documented Intervention (PDI).
- Communication with parents and guardians will be maintained concerning the child’s behavior and progress (such opportunities may be used to support and model positive parenting strategies).
- Behavior that is chronically unacceptable may be an indicator that further assessment is needed. This support may include:
  - Planned and Documented Intervention (see Planned and Documented Intervention Policy/Procedure) in consultation with the child’s parent(s).
  - Referral for mental health observation
- Referral for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).
- Referral for In-Home Counseling
- Referral for outside Mental Health Services

- Staff will use the curriculum approach to provide conflict resolution and social/emotional techniques including:
  - Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.
  - Acknowledge children's feelings.
  - Gather information. Ask “What's the problem?”
  - Restate the problem:
  - Ask for solutions and choose one together.
  - Be prepared to give follow-up support.

- Head Start staff, providers, and consultants will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in any of the following activities:
  - Corporal punishment including but not limited to rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting, or spanking.
  - Emotional Stress including but not limited to name calling, ostracism, shaming, using derogatory remarks about a child or a family, or using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens a child.
  - Separating a child from the group except within rule requirements.
  - Punishments for toileting accidents or denial of bathroom privileges.
  - Withholding food or water, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment.
  - Use of physical restraints other than to physically hold a child where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
  - Use of mechanical restraints such as tying.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR Section 1304.21
Approved by Policy Council on February 16, 1999
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