

Chapter 11: BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Purpose Of These Requirements

Children are naturally curious and creative, which in turn, leads them to learn and explore. Children are also unpredictable and spontaneous. It is nearly impossible to prevent children from ever misbehaving; however there are positive steps caregivers can take to limit misbehavior and guide children towards more acceptable behaviors or positive choices. Positive relationships are essential for the development of children's social competence. In order for a caregiver to respond appropriately to a child's behavior the caregiver must know what behaviors are appropriate for the child's development. Secure relationships with caregivers provide the foundation for healthy social and emotional development. As children learn to respond appropriately to a variety of situations and people, their need to use challenging behaviors decreases. Providing positive guidance through nurturing and responsive relationships and supportive environments to promote children's self-control, teach responsibility, and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate behavior, the less time and effort caregivers have to spend correcting children's behavior. Effective guidance and behavior management techniques focus on the child's development. The purpose of these requirements is to ensure children are attended to in a nurturing and appropriate manner, in keeping with their developmental needs and to ensure parents are aware of the discipline and behavior management policies and practices of the child care center. In addition, this chapter discusses the important of a discipline policy and provides strategies to minimize problem behaviors and approaches to support children's social and emotional health.

Definitions

Staff: any regular or substitute caregiver, any volunteer, and any auxiliary personnel, such as cooks, secretaries, janitors, maids, vehicle drivers, etc.

Corporal Punishment: the use of physical discipline on the body of a child.

SECTION 1: DISCIPLINE REQUIREMENTS

NC GENERAL STATUTE 110-91(10)

Discipline Practices

- ★ Each operator or staff member must attend to any child in a nurturing and appropriate manner, and in keeping with the child’s developmental needs.
- ★ Each center must develop written policies, on discipline, describing the methods and practices used to discipline children enrolled in care.
- ★ The use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline is prohibited in a licensed child care center and may not be used by any operator or staff member of any licensed child care center. The written discipline policy must clearly state the prohibition of corporal punishment.
- ★ Corporal punishment may be used in religious sponsored child care facilities that operate under a Notice of Compliance only if the religious sponsored child care facility files with the Division a notice stating that corporal punishment is part of the religious training of its program, and the facility clearly states in its written policy of discipline that corporal punishment is part of the religious training of its program.

- Staff must attend to children in a nurturing and appropriate manner in keeping with the child’s developmental needs.
- The discipline policy of the center must explain the practices and methods that will be used by staff to promote healthy social and emotional behaviors and prevent and address challenging behaviors in the classroom.
- The policy must clearly state that corporal punishment is not used, unless the center has taken religious exemptions allowed by law. (Refer to Chapter 15 for allowable religious exemptions.)

HH – Effective guidance and discipline focuses on the development of the child. When thinking about how to respond to a child’s behavior, consider the child’s development and the behaviors that are typical for children at that stage of development.

HH - Caregivers have the responsibility to guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationships with peers and adults.

**GENERAL STATUTE 110-91(10) & CHILD CARE RULE .1801, .2318
Discipline Policy and Records**

- ★ The person who conducts the enrollment conference must provide a written copy of and explain the center’s discipline policy and practices to each child’s parents, legal guardian, or full-time custodian at the time of enrollment.
- ★ Each parent, legal guardian, or full-time custodian must sign a statement which attests that a copy of the center’s written discipline policies were given to and discussed with him or her.
- ★ The statement must include the child’s name, the date of enrollment, and if different, the date the parent, legal guardian, or full-time custodian signs the statement.
- ★ The signed, dated statement must be in the child’s record and must remain on file for at least one year from the date the child is no longer enrolled.
- ★ If the center changes its discipline policy at any time, it must give written notice of such a change to the child’s parents, legal guardian, or full-time custodian 30 days prior to the implementation of the new policy and the parent, legal guardian, or full-time custodian must sign a statement that attests that a copy of the new policy was given to and discussed with him or her. This statement must be kept in the child’s file.

- Each child care center must develop and adopt a written discipline policy.
 - The written policy must:
 - Describe methods and practices that will be used by staff to promote healthy social and emotional behaviors and prevent and address challenging behaviors
 - Clearly state that corporal punishment is not used
 - This policy must be given to and discussed with parents at the time of enrollment.
 - A parent, guardian, or full-time custodian must sign a statement which attests that a copy of the center’s policy was given to and discussed with him or her.
 - The signed statement must include:
 - The Child’s name
 - Date of enrollment
 - Date the parent, guardian, or full-time custodian signs the statement (if different than the date of enrollment).
 - The signed statement must be maintained in the child’s record.
- HH** – When developing your discipline policy, be sure to set clear and consistent rules that focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided.

-  In licensed public school programs, the written policy and signed statements do not have to be kept on-site at the licensed program. However, the **Public School Off-Site Records Verification of Children's Records** must be on-site that identifies the storage location, name, and contact information of the individual responsible for maintaining the record, and a statement that the record is on file and contains the appropriate information. This form is available in Chapter 6.
-  There are two samples of **Discipline and Behavior Management Policy** templates available in the resource section. Use these samples to help guide you in developing a policy that works for your program.
-  A list of state resources is available in the resource section to assist you with developing your discipline policy and promoting positive social and emotional health.

CHILD CARE RULE .1801

Appropriate Discipline Practices

-  The discipline policy developed by the child care center must assure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or physical discipline.
-  Discipline must be age and developmentally appropriate.
-  The use of physical restraints is strictly prohibited and may not be used on children at any time.

- The following behaviors are prohibited in all child care settings and by all caregivers:
 - No child shall be handled roughly in any way, including shaking, pushing, shoving, pinching, slapping, biting, kicking, or spanking.
 - No child shall ever be placed in a locked room, closet, or box or left alone in a room separated from staff.
 - No discipline shall ever be delegated to another child.
 - Discipline shall in no way be related to food, rest or toileting.
 - No food shall to be withheld, or given, as a means of discipline.
 - No child shall ever be disciplined for lapses in toilet training.
 - No child shall ever be disciplined for not sleeping during rest period.

- No child shall be disciplined by assigning chores that require contact with or use of hazardous materials, such as cleaning bathrooms or floors or emptying diaper pails.
- ☑ Physical restraints also include the use of therapeutic holds, even in Developmental Day Centers. Therapeutic holds can only be used if indicated in a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the caregiver must follow the documented procedures indicated in the IEP.
- ☑ Other forms of physical restraint that are prohibited could include putting a child in a highchair for purposes other than feeding or in a bed or crib for purposes other than sleeping.
- ☑ In an emergency situation, it may be necessary to intervene by physically separating or removing a child from a situation to prevent the child from harming him or herself or others. For example, if a child is about to run into the street the Division would expect the caregiver to protect the child and keep the child safe by stopping the child from running out in the street.
- ☑ Nap/rest periods should be limited to no more than two hours. Children must be given alternative activities if they are unable to sleep during nap/rest time. It is not appropriate for children to be forced to remain on their cot or mat for the entire rest period if they are awake.

SECTION 2: Behavior Management Strategies

Importance of a discipline policy:

- A discipline policy is developed to provide information on appropriate methods of behavior management to support children's social and emotional health. Early care and educators play a critical role in the social and emotional development of young children.
- The goal of a discipline policy is to implement behavior management strategies and practices to support children as they regulate their emotions and behavior.
- Behavior management strategies are implemented to enhance children's social success in group settings and prevent and address challenging behaviors.
- Effective behavior management strategies includes careful planning, providing children with meaningful learning opportunities, and the use of guidance procedures such as redirection and planned ignoring to support children as they navigate the development of social relationships with peers and teachers.
- Positive, supportive relationships between caregivers, the children and parents are important for healthy social and emotional development.

Parents:

- The parent, guardian or full-time custodian must be provided information about the child care programs discipline policy.
- Parents should be well informed about the behavior management strategies implemented to support their child's social and emotional health.
- If the child is displaying challenging behaviors, families should be informed of strategies and resources available to support the child's problem behavior.

Caregivers/Teachers:

- Teachers and caregivers must be knowledgeable about the development and goals of the discipline policy due to the vital role they have of teaching behavior expectations and providing children with social and emotional support.
- Taking a proactive approach in daily practices can decrease the possibility of challenging behaviors with the children in care.
- It is important for caregivers and teachers to receive training and professional development for promoting social skills, preventing problem behaviors (through classroom arrangements, individualizing to children's interests and abilities), and providing effective intervention strategies when needed.

The list below outlines positive approaches to minimizing problem behaviors and strategies that support children's social and emotional health.

Promote an Effective Workforce

- It is important for caregivers to receive training and professional development for promoting social skills, preventing problem behaviors (through classroom arrangements, individualizing to children's interests and abilities), and providing effective intervention strategies when needed.
- It is important for caregivers to know typical patterns of development and be able to recognize variations. Deeper knowledge of the steps and stages of child development leads to reasonable expectations for children.
- It is also important for caregivers to understand why a child may misbehave. Children usually misbehave because they:
 - Feel rejected.
 - Lack knowledge and experience.
 - Are upset and insecure.
 - Are discouraged.
 - Feel unloved.
 - Lack confidence.
 - Want attention.
 - Do not feel well.
 - Are upset by changes
 - Are testing limits.

- Once you understand why they misbehave, it is easier to know what to do about it. Ask yourself, "Why are they acting this way? What are they trying to gain by misbehaving?"



For a guide on the developmental milestones of children refer to the following resources:

- The Talaris Institute provides a research-based timeline organized by a child's age. Available at www.talaris.org/timeline.htm.
- Infant-Toddler Foundations: Guidelines for Development and Learning for North Carolina's Infants and Toddlers (Birth to 36 months). Available from the Division of Child Development or online at www.ncchild.net.
- Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success. Available from the Department of Public Instruction or online at www.osr.nc.gov.

Provide Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

Supportive, responsive relationships among adults and children are an essential component to promote healthy social emotional development. Building positive relationships with families is important in order to gain valuable information about the individual child and the needs and to ensure smooth transitions between home and school.

- Ways to build positive relationships with families may include:
 - Spending time playing and interacting with children and parents during indoor and outdoor activities and other daily routines.
 - Sit, eat, and talk with children during meal and snack times.
 - Take time to learn children's interest by asking children about their family members, pets, and other special interest in their lives.
 - Communicate with parents often through casual conversation, positive notes and telephone calls about good or fun things the child has done.
 - Respect and value cultural views, language and strengths of each family as related to the development of the child.
 - Provide periodic parent conferences.
 - Keep anecdotal records of special times in the class. Some caregivers carry around a small notebook, or sticky notes to collect and use later.
 - Record things that children say, then tell parents.
- Engage in one to one face to face interactions.
- Get down on the child's eye level for face to face interactions.

- Provide children with warm responsive physical contact
- Communicate calmly to children on their eye level.
- Positive responses include telling the child what he or she did well.
- Use a pleasant calm voice and simple language while making eye contact with children.
- Help children learn classroom expectations
- Expressions of warmth and affection are most effective in the context of an ongoing positive relationship between a child and caregiver.
- Warmth and affection can be expressed in so many different ways including smiles, laughter, voice tone, words of endearment (“I missed you”, “little one”), encouragement, and many types of physical contact (a quick pat on the head, a special handshake, gentle stroking, hugging).

Create Supportive Environments to Promote Positive Social Interactions

Environmental strategies are changes and adaptations that can be made to a classroom’s physical environment, schedule, activities and materials to encourage positive social interactions between children in the classroom.

- The design and layout of the physical environment has a strong impact on children’s behavior and learning.
- When an environment is designed appropriately, children have freedom to move about safely while participating in a variety of activities with little intervention required by caregivers.
- A poorly arranged environment may trigger behavior such as aggressive play or running. Observe how children use the space and be willing to modify the arrangement of equipment and furnishings when necessary.
- Arrange the environment and select activities and materials that encourage positive peer interactions.
- Provide options for children. Do not expect all children to be doing the same thing at the same time.
- Remember that each child is unique. A wide range of activities and behaviors is normal for children of the same age.
- Many challenging behaviors often occur during transitions from one activity to another. Young children benefit from a schedule that requires a limited number of transitions throughout the day.

- When transitions are necessary, it should be well planned to allow enough time for children to participate at their own pace.
- Eliminate waiting time when children have nothing to do. When children have nothing to do but wait you are asking them to invent something to do. Inappropriate behavior often occurs during long waits.
- Make sure there are sufficient materials and toys available to all children in care to provide children with choices.
- There must be duplicates of popular toys. Young children are beginning to learn how to share, but have not fully developed that social skill. Having duplicate toys prevents conflicts that could potentially occur.
- Choice of materials should closely match the interests and developmental abilities of the children in care.
- Rotating toys is an excellent and cost-effective means of maintaining the "newness" and novelty of materials. Simply shelving materials so they are not available for a few weeks and reintroducing them to the classroom can make them appear brand new and greatly increase the children's interest in them.
- Arrange the environment to ensure easy visual supervision of all children at all times.

When misbehaving does occur some strategies are:

REDIRECTION

- Use sensible problem solving strategies to redirect children.
- Developmentally appropriate problem solving activities helps children to learn and understand.
- Identify inappropriate behaviors and engage children in problem solving
- Quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity.
- Assure child he/she is valued even when challenging behavior must be stopped.
- Use positive instructions instead of negative commands.
- Help child to understand why positive behavior is better.

IGNORE

Planned ignoring includes:

- Ignore minor misbehaviors and focus on positive behaviors.

- Children may exhibit challenging behaviors to acquire adult attention, so ignoring those behaviors and focusing on positive behaviors can eliminate the challenging behaviors.
- Mildly challenging behavior should be ignored but redirect the child without focusing on the challenging behavior.

Logical and Natural Consequences

- Letting logical consequences follow children's behaviors is a natural way to increase or decrease behaviors
- When children exhibit challenging behaviors give alternatives to correct the problem.

TIME-OUT

- Time-out is short for "time out from positive reinforcement." Children are removed for a brief time from teacher and peer attention and from classroom activities.
- Time-out is only effective when used in the context of a comprehensive approach to behavior support that is designed to teach, nurture, and encourage positive social behaviors.
- Time-out should only be used when the challenging behaviors have been fully addressed with high quality preventative and pro-active practices such as redirection and guidance have been implemented and the child is still using destructive behavior and aggression towards peers and adults.
- Time-out should only be reserved for the highly aggressive acts, and teachers should agree on what challenging behaviors are reserved for time-out.
- Remember that time-out is only effective if it is used infrequently.
- The time-out approach is not appropriate for infants and toddlers.
- When it is agreed that time-out should be used, the following actions should be followed:
 - Teachers should receive training on the appropriate procedures for the use of time-out.
 - Once the child is calm the teacher should address the challenging behavior with the child. Teachers should always remain calm, respectful and display a non-angry approach towards the child.
 - Remember that time-out is only effective when used in the context of a comprehensive approach to behavior support that is designed to teach, nurture, and encourage positive social behaviors.

- During time out, children are taken to a place in the room away from others to calm down.
- The area used for time out must be in a spot that can be easily supervised by the teacher.
- Before a child leaves time-out talk about what he/she should have done instead by providing a brief explanation.
- One minute for each year of the child's age is appropriate.

 Information on time-out was taken from the *What Works Brief #14* titled, *The Role of Time-Out in a Comprehensive Approach for Addressing Challenging Behaviors of Preschool Children*, developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/

RESOURCE SECTION

Chapter 11: BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The following pages contain resource materials discussed in or related to the preceding chapter.

Some of the resources are forms created by the Division of Child Development and must be used by licensed child care centers. Other materials are provided as a resource only for child care centers and can be used at the discretion of the center.

Center operators may also wish to use this section to add any additional resource materials they have that are related to the chapter or information that is specific to their child care center.