

5a. Discipline Policy and Procedure

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Policy

Lower Columbia College Head Start/EHS/ECEAP will promote positive behavior by creating strong relationships that are grounded in trust and respect. Teachers and staff will develop strategies that are individualized, developmentally appropriate, and build on each child's social, emotional, and behavioral skills. Classroom environments will be set up and maintained to provide for the safety and well-being of each child. Staff will use appropriate guidance techniques in follow through with routines and setting limits. Staff will not maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children as described in the HR 4a. Standards of Conduct - **link coming soon**.

Procedure

The program uses the Creative Curriculum framework and Conscious Discipline for the guiding, caring and teaching of children.

Staff will:

- Create a classroom community that is inclusive and without bias.
- Partner with families
- Validate children's and family culture
- Design a physical environment that meets the needs of the children
- Guide children's behavior
- Teach intentionally and responsively
- Assess children's learning
- Provide for safety, connection and problem-solving

Staff guide children's behavior in ways that promote self-regulation and conflict resolution skills:

- Using positive guidance strategies
- Developing rules for the classroom community
- Teaching social problem-solving skills
- Responding to challenging behavior by determining the cause and helping children regain control

The word discipline means to teach and guide. Discipline is not punishment. The discipline standard therefore reflects an approach that focuses on preventing behavior problems by supporting children in learning appropriate social skills and emotional responses.

Staff should guide children to develop self-control and appropriate behaviors in the context of relationships with peers and adults. Staff should care for children without ever

resorting to physical punishment or abusive language. When a child needs assistance to resolve a conflict, manage a transition, engage in a challenging situation, or express feelings, needs, and wants, the adult should help the child learn strategies for dealing with the situation. Discipline should be an ongoing process to help children learn to manage their own behavior in a socially acceptable manner, and should not just occur in response to a problem behavior. Rather, the adult's guidance helps children respond to difficult situations using socially appropriate strategies. To develop selfcontrol, children should receive adult support that is individual to the child and adapts as the child develops internal controls.

Staff members will NOT do the following:

- Threaten, scold, or humiliate a child;
- Spank, pull or hit a child;
- Make aggressive movements causing a child to expect to be hit;
- Threaten to call a child's parent;
- Tell children what another child did wrong;
- Label behavior as "bad" or "naughty";
- Scream in anger;
- Criticize a child's person or family;
- Laugh at a child's inappropriate/negative behavior;
- Discuss a child's inappropriate/negative behavior with adults in front of the child or other children.
- Food and Physical Activity shall never be used as a reward or punishment.

Universal Strategies for Prevention

We will provide universal supports for all children through nurturing and responsive relationships and high-quality environments. Classroom environments will be measured by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, Environment Rating Scales, Creative Curriculum Fidelity Checklist and observations. At the universal level we include the practices needed to ensure the promotion of the social development of all children through:

- High Quality Environments
 - Inclusive early care and education environments
- Nurturing and Responsive Relationships
 - Essential to healthy social development
 - Includes relationships with children, families and team members

All staff are expected and required to utilize proactive discipline that align with Conscious Discipline and Creative Curriculum to establish a positive classroom community that is respectful. An environment where children as well as adults feel safe and confident in their ability to successfully interact with others and learn together. Area Managers will monitor classroom practices to ensure positive behavior guidance/management techniques are being effectively implemented daily and ongoing.

This universal prevention process will include:

- Forming a positive relationship with the child. Connection builds willingness. When children have a positive and trusting relationship with the adult, they are more likely to follow directions. This positive relationship occurs when the adult spends time talking to the children, listening to the child, following the child's lead, playing with the child, and responding to the child's needs. Components of connection include eye contact, touch, presence and a playful situation;
- Basing expectations on children's developmental level.
- Establishing simple rules and routines children can understand (e.g., use gentle touches, use kind words, use walking feet, use an inside voice, how children should use centers or materials).
 - Use visuals to increase understanding.
- Be proactive in teaching and supporting children in learning the rules and routines.
 - Creating a predictable daily routine and schedule with visuals.
 - When a routine is predictable, children are more likely to know what to do and what is expected of them. Predictability creates a sense of safety and decreases the likelihood of unsafe/unhelpful behaviors.
 - Reminders need to be given to the children so they can anticipate and prepare themselves for transitions within the schedule. Individualize for children that may need more support during transitions.
- Adapting the physical indoor and outdoor learning/play environment and materials to encourage positive behavior and self-regulation by providing engaging materials based on children's interests. Ensuring that the learning environment and materials promotes active participation of each child.
 - Well-designed environments are ones that are supportive of appropriate behavior in children and are designed to teach children the expectation and how to engage with one another.
- Modifying the learning/play environment (e.g., schedule, routine, activities, transitions, learning centers) to meet the needs of the group of children to support appropriate behavior.
- Use encouragement and descriptive praise more than command statements (5:1).
 - When clear encouragement and descriptive praise are used to give attention to appropriate behaviors, those behaviors are likely to be repeated.
 - Encouragement and praise should be stated positively and descriptively.
 - Encouragement and praise should provide information that the behavior the child engaged in was appropriate. Examples: "I can tell you are ready for circle time because you are sitting on your name and looking at me." "Your friend looked so happy when you helped him clean up his toys." "You must be so proud of yourself for putting on your coat all by yourself." Encouragement and praise should label the behaviors, not the child (e.g. "You picked up the toys; that was helpful." "Your eyes are on me; you want to learn.", good listening, good eating, instead of good boy.
- Use clear, direct, and simple commands. When clear commands are used children are more likely to follow them. The staff should tell the child what to do rather than what NOT to do. The staff should limit the number of commands. The staff should use first/then and when/then statements with logical and natural consequences. ("First your coat and then we go outside." "Pick up 3 toys and then we will go to

circle.”) These practices help children understand they can make choices and that choices have consequences.

- Showing children positive alternatives rather than just telling children “no”.
- Modeling desired behavior.
- Providing individualized accommodations for the needs of each child and modify curriculum activities, transitions and other practices as needed.
- We view children’s cultural and linguistic backgrounds as a resource to understand children’s behavior and will incorporate the child’s culture into the classroom as well as talk with parents about the child’s cultural and individual needs.

Secondary Prevention: Targeted Social Emotional Supports

The next level of guidance and discipline represents practices that target social emotional strategies to prevent problems and reduce challenging behaviors. The prevention level includes the provision of targeted supports to children at risk of challenging behavior.

- Targeted Social Emotional Supports
 - Explicit instruction and support
 - Self-regulation, expressing and understanding emotions, developing social relationships and problem-solving

Individualizing discipline based on the individual needs and learning styles of the child.

- For example, if a child has a hard time transitioning, the staff can identify strategies to help the child with the transition (individualized warning, job during transition, individual schedule, peer buddy to help, visual/auditory prompts, etc.). If a child has a difficult time during a large group activity, the child might be taught to ask for a break.

When a child is struggling to regulate and displaying challenging behaviors the goal is to assist the child with being able to self-regulate and express their emotions age appropriately and to successfully problem-solve conflicts. Staff may use:

- Setting limits and expectations using an assertive voice.
- Choices
 - Example – Would you like to hold my hand to walk to the sink or do you want to walk by yourself?
- Looking for classroom environment triggers which may contribute to the child’s display of negative behaviors.
- Recognition of behavioral cues which indicate distress or need for adult support before a situation escalates
- Redirecting a child away from a conflict or negative event to a more positive activity that interests the child
- Offering child choices among activities that are framed around what is acceptable.
- Assisting a child using logical or natural consequences from their actions.

- Oops! It is time to choose something else to play with. It is not okay to break our toys.
- If a child dumps water on the floor. Oops! Do you need my help or can you wipe it up by yourself?
- Intentional instruction in appropriate conflict resolution skills for the child or group of children that are struggling.
- Respond to the victim first, using Conscious Discipline techniques to assist the child with identifying the emotion and the words to address the aggressor. Bring the aggressor and the victim together (if appropriate) to provide an opportunity for the victim to state how he/she is feeling, what they want the aggressor to do and allow the aggressor to respond.
 - Protect other children from being harmed or having their play interrupted. Encouraging respect for the feelings and rights of others, materials and personal properties.
- Using “active ignoring”. Certain behaviors can be actively ignored when it does not create a safety issue.
 - Use planned ignoring for annoying but harmless behaviors. Do not use planned ignoring for behavior that is harmful like hitting or biting.
 - Ignore minor misbehavior by taking away your attention. Remember that paying attention to misbehavior can accidentally reward the child and can encourage him/her to misbehave again.
 - To ignore, you should act as if he is not there. Do not look at or talk to him/her.
 - Do not laugh at the child if he is being cute or funny. These actions are considered accidental rewards.
 - It is important to try to remain calm. Provide positive attention as soon as the child stops the undesirable behavior and behaves appropriately.
- Natural or Logical Consequences
- Utilize FLIP-It strategies – Feelings – Limits – Inquiry – Prompts

When a child goes into survival state:

- The adult should stay composed and download calm to the child:
 - Breath-Take deep breaths and tell yourself, “I am safe, I can handle this”
 - Notice-Describe what the child is doing and verbally describe. (Your face is going like this...)
 - Assertive – Use a voice of no doubt

Safe Place

When a child is struggling to self-regulate, staff will use the safe place with the child.

The infant and toddler classroom, the teacher (primary caregiver) is the safe place and co-regulating is the goal. These classrooms will use emotion faces of familiar caregivers, the child and/or peers, instead of the manufactured Conscious Discipline Emotion faces – from birth until a child is 36 months. The primary caregiver is the safe

place but a location will be created with a few comforting items for older toddlers, to scaffold learning from co-regulation to self-regulation.

Conscious Discipline states:

"Infant-Toddler Safe Place Progression:

1. *Chest (chest to chest contact)*
2. *Lap (with eye contact)*
3. *Safe place with adult (safe place large enough for the adult to fit)*

The first step in composure for infants and toddlers is for the adult to actively calm themselves. 93% of communication is nonverbal and energetic, so children must see and feel your composure first, before you can assist them."

Each preschool classroom is required to provide a Safe Place within the classroom environment where a child can go to have privacy when upset, when feeling overwhelmed or just needing some alone time. The safe place will be part of the curriculum that is taught from the beginning of the year and will be available to children when class starts and continued through-out. Some children may need an adult to stay near them and follow steps for an older toddler. This space should offer picture images of breathing, choose board or notebook, feeling buddies, books and other visuals or materials that will assist the children in using the center to regulate and regain selfcontrol. Teachers will teach how to use the safe space and materials.

If space allows, classrooms could have two "Safe Places." This space must be able to be supervised visually at all times for the safety and protection of the children and staff members. If attempts of redirection or use of the Safe Place are unsuccessful, this may indicate that the child is overwhelmed. A staff person may need to assist the child by staying close by and offering to listen to the child or help the child to utilize one of the choices to help while calming. This is a good time to utilize the Conscious Discipline and Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence materials to help the child express their feelings and to find a solution together.

All efforts should be made to verbally deescalate a situation with a child. All responses to unsafe or inappropriate behaviors will be grounded in the understanding that children's behavior conveys a message; unsafe or inappropriate behaviors are almost always signaling distress or unmet needs. Staff will make every effort to understand the causes of such behavior and find solutions that support the healthy social-emotional development of each child. Responses to behavior will be individualized based on the needs, situation and characteristics of each child.

Intensive Interventions

Staff should always intervene immediately when a child's behavior endangers the safety of self and/or others. Your job is to keep everyone safe. The staff should use ageappropriate interventions. For example, a toddler can be picked up and moved to another location, in the room, if s/he bites other children or adults. A preschool child can be invited to walk with you first but, if not compliant, taken by the hand and walked to

another location in the room. Staff should practice ongoing self-care and strategies to remain calm and helpful. If unsafe behaviors persist, parents/guardian, direct service staff, content experts and administration should create a child/family support plan target behavior and increase child's sense of safety. For example, a plan may be developed to celebrate safe behavior and to support the child in learning safe ways to get their needs met. Staff should consider what might be maintaining/causing this child to have unsafe actions and the plan should directly address this. The effectiveness of the plan should be monitored/documented and re-evaluated until safety is established.

A teacher may separate a child from the other children when that child needs to regain control of him or herself. During separation time, the child must remain under the appropriate level of supervision of a staff person.

- Separation time should be minimized and appropriate to the needs of the individual child.
- If a child is separated from other children, a teacher must:
 - Consider the child's developmental level, language skills, individual and special needs, and ability to understand the consequences of his or her actions; and
 - Communicate to the child the reason for being separated from the other children.
 - Remove the child to a licensed space and if a licensed space is not available, then the staff may use an unlicensed space and the staff person responsible must stay fully engaged with the child. When using an unlicensed space, it should be for a minimal amount of time.
 - The parent will be notified that the child was removed from the room to support self regulation.

If an early learning provider follows all strategies in this section, and a child continues to behave in an unsafe manner, a staff may physically remove the child to a less stimulating environment. Staff must remain calm and use a calm voice when directing or removing the child. Physical removal of a child is determined by the child's ability to walk:

- If the child is willing and able to walk, staff may hold the child's hand and walk him or her away from the situation.
- If the child is not willing or able to walk, staff may pick the child up and remove him or her to a quiet place where the child cannot hurt themselves or others.

Room Clears

In the event that a child's behavior may endanger other children, a room clear may be implemented. Children will be removed to a licensed location if possible and provided with activities until safe to return to the classroom. If a group of children must be removed and remain in an unlicensed space, this space must be childsafe and activities provided. A notice will be put on the classroom for parents and caregivers to know where their child is located.

Physical Restraint

In the event that a child's behavior endangers his or her safety or the safety of others, a child may be physically restrained.

- Physical restraint must only be used if a child's safety or the safety of others is threatened, and must be:
 - Limited to holding a child as gently as possible to accomplish restraint;
 - Limited to the minimum amount of time necessary to control the situation;
 - Only performed if staff have been trained in escalation and restraint technique;
 - No types of binding a child may be used to limit a child's movement when restraining this includes ties, blankets, straps, car seats, high chairs, activity saucers, or heavy weights (including an adult sitting on a child) to physically restrain children;
 - Trained staff must remove him or herself from a situation if they sense a loss of their own self control and concern for the child when using a restraint technique if another staff is present. If a staff observes another staff using inappropriate restraint techniques, the staff must intervene.
- If physical restraint is used, staff must:
 - Assess any incident of physical restraint to determine if the decision to use physical restraint and its application were appropriate;
 - Document the incident in the child's file, including the date, time, early learning program staff involved, duration and what happened before, during and after the child was restrained;
 - Notify parent by the end of class time;
 - Area Manager or Leadership will notify licenser within 24 hours;
 - If a child has had one physical restraint, an Individual Care Plan will be created with input from the teacher, area manager, specialist, and the parents or guardians to address underlying issues and reduce need for further physical restraint.

Clear documentation of restraint and of the parent/guardian and licenser having been notified after a restraining incident occurs. Staff will utilize case management and Safety Intervention Report (EDUC 5b) to document the restraint. Once a child/family support plan is in place, staff members are responsible for following it and sharing barriers/concerns as they arise with their supervisor.

Physical restraint is limited to a seated hold. A seated hold can occur with the staff member sitting on the floor or in a chair. The surface should be stable and secure with the child being held in front of the staff members. The staff member will be cautious to hold the child in a way the breathing is not impacted and pressure is not placed on joints and/or sensitive organs.

No child will be expelled or suspended. If the enrolled child continues to have serious safety risks to self and/or others, it may be determined that the current environment is not the most appropriate placement for the child. Before considering alternative

placement, the program must explore all possible steps and document all steps taken as described in Coordination Summary Checklist-Supporting Students with Safety Needs and Challenging Behaviors (MH 2b). The program, in consultation with parents, the child's teacher, the agency responsible for implementing IDEA, and program content area specialists must work with such entities to directly facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.

Resources used to guide this procedure

- Head Start Performance Standards
- ECEAP Performance Standards
- WA State Childcare WAC's
- Conscious Discipline
- Caring for Our Children 3rd Edition: Standard 2.2.0.6; 2.2.0.7; 2.2.0.10 and these discipline measures are considered best practices
- Creative Curriculum Framework
- Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children