

LINDGREN CHILD CARE CENTER

Behavior
Guidance

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

The center's daily scheduling, curriculum plans, classroom arrangements, and staffing patterns are designed to promote positive and enjoyable learning experiences, including respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children. To provide for the safety of all children, as well as the individual development of children's self-help and self-control skills, teachers maintain daily routines and set limits within each age group. These routines and limits are frequently discussed and defined with the preschool and toddler-age children. Consistency, or knowing what to expect throughout the day, helps children develop a sense of trust and understanding of their environment.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Positive, guiding communication with each child is our primary practice to help children develop a sense of independence, confidence, and competence in their own abilities to get along with peers and adults and to involve themselves positively in the classroom activities. Teachers “model” language and appropriate ways for children to express their feelings and emotions.

PROHIBITED ACTIONS

Teaching staff never use physical punishment such as shaking or hitting and do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion.

Teaching staff never use threats or derogatory remarks and neither withholds nor threatens to withhold food, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a form of discipline. Punishment for lapses in toileting is also prohibited.

The use of physical restraint is prohibited other than to hold a child where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm. If this is a repeated event a behavior plan is required. The use of mechanical restraints is prohibited.

Timeouts are never used at the Lindgren Child Care Center!

PROHIBITED ACTIONS

The Lindgren Child Care Center director may immediately reassign and/or terminate student personnel at the center if the action is necessary to insure the safety, health, and/or welfare of the children, parents, and/or other staff. Prohibited actions include;

- Rough handling
- Shoving
- Hair pulling
- Ear pulling
- Shaking
- Slapping
- Kicking
- Biting
- Pinching
- Hitting
- Spanking

In addition, subjection of a child to emotional stress will result in dismissal.

Examples include:

- Name calling
- Ostracism
- Shaming
- Making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family
- Using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PRESCHOOL ROOM

Children playing in a group need help and guidance. Use these principles to guide the children:

- Always face children when speaking to them.
- Be sure you have the child's attention before giving directions or making suggestions. Go to him/her; call him/her by name.
- Speak in a low, pleasant, but firm voice. Be sure to "drop" the voice at the end of statements of direction. Experiment a little and you will see the difference between saying "Put away the toys now" with the voice left up in the air and the statement with a definite lowering of the voice at the end. Use of words and tone of voice will help the child feel confident and reassured.
- Give positive suggestions. Say "Keep the crayons on the table", rather than "Don't put the crayons on the floor". This puts the child in the wrong without suggesting what he should do. The two statements may seem to mean the same thing, but there is a great deal of difference in the way they aid or hinder the child's actions.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PRESCHOOL ROOM

- Avoid comparisons and competitions among children. Children should not feel that their chances for approval depend on being “first” or “best” or beating someone.
- Give logical reasons when reasons are in order. Say “Throwing the ball in the house may hit someone. Would you like to color or play with the blocks now?” Avoid saying, “We do not throw balls in the house”. The child wonders what is meant by “We”, why he has to do as “We” do. He stops to please you or because you make him, without associating any reason or realizing any danger.
- Offer choices where possible. Say “John has the truck now. Would you like to play with the clay or the blocks?” The choice is between playing with the clay or the truck. If you say “Would you like to play with the clay”, you are suggesting a choice between playing or not playing with the clay. Suggesting choices helps in getting the child started to play. He needs special help. In both cases, you may wish to sit down, take the child in your lap, talk to him about what he might do, and then go with him to show what can be done with the toy.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PRESCHOOL ROOM

- Do not offer choice about routine. When you say “Will you wash your hands now”, you are implying the rest of the sentence, “or not”. Better to say, “Time to wash”.
- The best help forestalls trouble. When two children are playing and a third approaches, a suggestion such as “Here comes Mary and she can help set the table”, or “You can give her one of the picture books” helps them to accept the new child.
- When limits are necessary they should be clearly defined and consistently maintained. The adult must be responsible for limiting children so that they do not come to harm, hurt others, or destroy property. Teachers must establish methods for limiting the number of participants.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PRESCHOOL ROOM

- Give the child only as much help as he needs. Do not do things for the child that he can reasonably be expected to do for himself. You may suggest trying one way or another, then let him do it. The results may be a “poor thing, but his own”. However, be ready to give help before the child is completely discouraged by too much failure.
- Help the children to take turns and to share their toys. Say “Mary has the doll buggy now. Your turn is next”. Avoid “Mary had it first”. Soon you will see Mary clinging to the buggy saying “I had it first”, with all of thoughts on possession and none on sharing. Be sure to say to Mary, “You have had a turn. Alice and Ruth are waiting. You may have your turn with the ironing board”.
- These should be constantly held in mind. When talking to the children **STATE SUGGESTIONS OR DIRECTIONS IN A POSITIVE FORM**. A positive suggestion is one which tells a child what to do instead of pointing out what he/she is not to do. Children should be encouraged to treat each other, teachers, and materials with respect, and to put toys away. If a child has already done what he should not do or if we estimate that he is about to do this, he needs help in getting a better idea of what to do.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PRESCHOOL ROOM

REMEMBER:

- Very young children “play together” very little.
- The younger the child, the more quickly he goes from one thing to another.
- The tired child may be overactive and excited.
- Keeping calm helps the child to be more calm.

If trouble seems to be brewing, a change of activity helps most. This is the time to sing a song, have a drink of water, go for a walk, etc. Redirect before, not after the outburst.

Children need time to change activity or routine. Give “advanced warning” of planned changes. “When you finish your story (your block building, etc.) it will be time to go outside” (or to the bathroom, etc.).

Children and adults must adhere to three basic rules at all times:

- Children and adults may NOT hurt themselves.
- Children and adults may NOT hurt others.
- Children and adults may NOT purposely damage facility or equipment.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE TODDLER ROOM

- In the toddler room the staff are trained to do the following procedures to help toddlers in conflictive situations and to help the room operate more positively. I feel if a room is surrounded by positive remarks and is consistent, conflicts between toddlers are less.
- Staff are trained to have face-to-face interaction when setting limits, rather than talking from across the room
- Staff should tell toddlers what to do instead of what not to do. Say “walking feet inside”. Instead of “Don’t run or no running”.
- Limit the use of negative words such as “Don’t, Can’t, Won’t, and No” The word “no” sometimes has to be used, however, when a child is causing great harm to a child or to himself.

Principles for Guidance in the Toddler Room

- The staff will praise the toddlers as much as possible, Catch them doing something good.
- Give choices to a toddler if they are refusing to do something. The choices that you give need to have the same outcome. Ex. Child does not want to wash hands. The staff can say “Do you want to put the soap on your hands or should I” either way the desired outcome will happen.
- If two children are fighting over a toy the staff will find another one of the same toy and give it to the child who wanted it.
- To avoid conflict between toddlers the room has two of every toy, because developmentally toddlers can not share yet.
- If a child is hurtful with a toy, the child is first told and shown what the toy is used for, but if they continue to hurt again with the toy, then they are removed from that area and redirected somewhere else to play. Ex. A child hits a child with a block; the child is told that blocks are for building only. Child hits again with the blocks, the child is removed to another area of the room

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE TODDLER ROOM

- Staff always show comfort to the child who was hurt first and then address the child who was hurting.
- Staff will teach toddlers to talk instead of hurting. Some words include: Move, My turn, Help.
- Sometime distraction still works, so use it if necessary
- Redirect toddlers when you see a conflict that might take place.
- When giving a direction keep it simple, 2-3 words work the best. Ex. Please walk, wash hands please etc...

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE TODDLER ROOM

- Give toddlers time to comply with requests and limits (about 10 sec)
- If a child keeps putting toys in their mouth, instead of continuously telling them to keep the toy out of their mouth, give them a teething toy from the refrigerator, they are probably teething.
- Acknowledge the child's feelings and desires as legitimate even if you cannot give them what they want.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE IN THE TODDLER ROOM

- If a child bites or has another form of consistent hurting behavior, the behavior is documented in a notebook. The staff are instructed to write such details as time, place, which child was hurt and how the staff handled the situation. The lead teacher shares this information with the parent at pick up.
- If a child does bite more than 2 times, then the lead teacher will sit down with the parent or parents and discuss writing up a behavior plan. The behavior plan will have both the teacher's and the parent's input. Once the plan is agreed upon by the parents, teacher and director, then the plan is discussed with the staff and implemented in the classroom.

INFANT GUIDANCE

Infant Guidance

In general, if a child is doing something they are not to do, the infant staff responds calmly, using one or more of these methods:

- Substitute an acceptable item for an unacceptable item.
- Redirect child to another activity.
- Remove child from a situation.
- Remove object from child.
- Remove an object from the environment.

General Guidelines:

- Staff should be down on the floor close to the babies, and move with the babies, to **prevent** unsafe situations.
- Saying “no” from across the room is usually ineffective for this age group. A staff should calmly intervene by physically moving closer and redirecting the child.
- Instead of a number of staff saying the child’s name when the child is doing an undesirable behavior (which gives the child a lot of attention for the behavior) one staff person should move in physically close and calmly take action.
- Say things in the **positive**. “Out of your mouth”, instead of “Don’t eat that”. Say “You can have a teething toy” instead of “Don’t chew on the book”. A lot of “no’s” and “don’ts” sets a very negative tone in the room. Find positive ways to say what the child *should* do.
- Be specific. Instead of “Be nice”, you could say “Touch gently”. “Nice” is vague and can mean different things. Maybe to the child, being “nice” means to smile or hug and you want them to stop hitting.
- Do not expect sharing of infants. There are duplicate toys for the older babies who are at the age of wanting the same toys as others.
- Do not label a child (“naughty”, “mean”, “stubborn” etc.)
- Say, in a *positive* way, what you’re doing when you guide infants. To a child who is pushing against another child, you could say, “I’m going to help you move to a different spot where there is more room.”
- Develop the ability to watch the *entire* room, even while working with an individual child.
- If a behavior of a child is beginning to make you feel irritated, switch babies with another staff, to prevent yourself from over-reacting.