

CFS Child & Family Services Operations Manual	X	Program Information	X	Procedure	Policy
	Document Title: <u>Child Behavior Guidance</u>				
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	Regulatory <u>Head Start Performance Standards, Maine Rules for License of Child Care</u>				
	References: <u>Facilities, Department of Educare</u>				
Key Word1: <u>Behavior</u> Key Word2: _____					
Related Documents: _____					

Child Behavior Guidance

Purpose:

All children are served with the belief that the most effective means to support social development is to treat each child with trust and respect. Regular routines and consistent fair limits combined with empowering children to express their own thoughts, feelings, and be involved in decision-making supports this growth. Children need sensitive adults who listen, value their views of the world, offer them new experiences and allow for individual growth. When adults/staff model and promote positive methods of child guidance and discipline, they encourage self-regulation, self-esteem, and promote cooperation. Individualized approaches will be implemented to support social-emotional growth and full participation in program activities; child-specific plans will be created in collaboration with parents, supervisors, consultants and/or developmental specialists as appropriate.

Procedure:

Staff will employ a continuum of guidance and positive discipline techniques, ranging from proactive techniques to more restrictive interventions as developmentally appropriate. The continuum of guidance includes:

- Providing focused classroom/child supervision and support.
- Environmental changes, including: classroom layout, voice tone, staff positioning, signaling transitions, routine, classroom schedule, etc.
- Implementing Conscious Discipline*, with emphasis on Three Premises:
 - Controlling and changing ourselves comes first and has a profound impact
 - Connection governs behavior
 - Conflict is an opportunity to teach self-regulation
- Incorporation of positive touch to assist children to self-regulate or feel secure, including: hugs, hand-holding, a pat on the back, and a choice to sit on one's lap.
- Supplemental Curriculum (social skill building, relaxation techniques, yoga, etc.).
- Child Support Plan developed with family and other professionals working with child.
- Implementation of Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) in collaboration with parents and Child Development Services.

Guidance and teaching are the only forms of discipline used within Child and Family Services programs. Staff will utilize the following methods for implementing positive behavior guidance in the classroom.

- Maintain a positive voice tone while talking with children at their level with a non-threatening body posture
- Get children involved in the promotion of prosocial behavior and the development of conflict resolution strategies
- Be respectful, understand the child's message
- If you say it, mean it, and follow through with kindness and firmness
- Create clear consistent routines
- Provide opportunities to help
- Usage of acceptable physical prompts
- Maintain a patient and calm demeanor, and be present in the moment

Staff will utilize the following guidance techniques with children. (Some collaborative locations may require additional procedures. These procedures should be reviewed with Supervisors and partners before the program begins. See age rating at the end of each technique to assure appropriateness for C&FS age groups.)

1. Positive reinforcement: (0-5)
 - Reinforce the behavior skill you want to teach by consistently praising the positive behavior when observed.
2. Offer choices: (0-5)
 - Assure choices are developmentally appropriate, and are clearly choices not directives. E.g.; *“When you’re finished, would you like to put the truck away first or the blocks?”* The choice empowers the child to truly make a decision.
3. Positive Redirection: (0-5)
 - The staff will approach the child and help identify the communication attempt connected with the behavior.
 - The child's input to a solution will be encouraged.
 - The child is supported to choose an acceptable activity.
 - Staff and/or children will demonstrate strategies for connection and conflict resolution.
4. Prompting: (0-5)
 - Prompts are verbal and physical techniques utilized to support skill development.
 - Verbal Prompts
 - Gestural Prompts
 - Pictorial Prompts (use pictures with words to encourage participation)
 - Object Prompts (natural cues, e.g.: point to a child’s toothbrush when it’s time to brush teeth)
 - Hand-over-hand assistance (gentle physical guidance to teach skills)
 - Physical Escort (temporary touching or holding of hand, shoulder, or back for the purpose of moving a student voluntarily)
5. Time-Away: (Older toddlers-5)
 - Time-Away is described as “taking a break” or “cool down time.” It is a strategy that is similar to redirection. This strategy teaches impulse control. Goals of this technique are to give everyone a chance to regain control in a safe place, help the child recognize their emotional level and regulate, so when the child is ready to re-enter the group he/she is capable of success.
 - Time-Away intervention is helping the child find a designated safe place to regroup and calm down. Have a conversation with the child to recognize and identify his/her feelings. Observe or remain attentive to the child during the process and welcoming the child back to the group, with sincerity and warmth.
6. 6When a child’s behavior has escalated or safety concerns exist that require more than a physical prompt and other methods described in this policy are not successful, discussion with the Direct Supervisor is required and a Child Support plan will be developed and implemented. The Child Development and Behavior Support Process outlines possible next steps.
7. The following discipline techniques will **not** be utilized in our program as indicated through Head Start Performance Standards and Maine Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities.
 - Time-out
 - Verbally degrading or belittling a child
 - Rough grabbing or handling of children
 - Physical restraint
 - Seclusion (Involuntary confinement of a child alone in a space and prevented from leaving)
 - Corporal Punishment
 - Detrimental practice (Anything that could cause physical or mental harm)

If an extreme safety concern presents itself and a child is moved against their will the incident must be documented and copied to a Program Director.

**Conscious Discipline is a research-based social/emotional curriculum based on current brain research, child development information, and developmentally appropriate practices.*

References:

- National Association Education of Young Children
- Head Start Program Performance Standards
- Maine Rules for The Licensing of Child Care Facilities
- Conscious Discipline: <https://consciousdiscipline.com/>

Related Documents:

- Child Development and Behavior Support Process
- Child Support Plan