

Useful Behaviour Management Strategies

These guidelines are in conjunction with the Northshore Playcentre Association
Providing Positive Guidance Policy

Immediate:

1. **Safety: Immediate safety of the children has priority.**
Depending on the child's stage of development, if not yet able to follow step 2, go immediately to step 3.
2. **Encourage each child to talk / explain / listen** (allow disagreement).
Provide each child with the opportunity to seek his / her own solutions. Help each child to recognise their feelings and express them in appropriate ways. It can help to reflect children's feelings.
e.g. "*You are angry because*"
"*It's okay to be angry, but we are gentle with one another at Playcentre.*"
3. **Explain simply:**
 - a) Stop or Wait (use child's name)
 - b) Give reasons or identify behaviour. Use 'I' statements where possible.
e.g. *I see two children and one toy or It is not safe to throw sand we keep sand low at Playcentre. It could hurt someone's eyes.*
 - c) Consequences of repeating.
e.g. the equipment will be removed if they continue to use it unsafely.
 - d) Say what behaviour is acceptable.
e.g. *We use kind words at Playcentre*
e.g. *Show me how you can keep the sand low.*
4. **Provide alternatives / use diversion / use humour:**
 - a) Talk / listen
 - b) Another piece of (similar) equipment / activity.
 - c) Another area of play
 - d) Other children.
5. **Seek help of other adults.**
6. **Soon after- reinforce positive behaviour** by giving positive feedback and encouragement.
e.g. "*I like the way you are*" or "*You must feel happy about*" or "*You look excited about*" or "*I see good sharing happening.*"

7. **Use of Positive Guidance Time**

This involves the child taking time apart from the activity to watch how others do it. It involves seating the child apart from the group, beside an adult. There are two steps

Step 1 involves explaining the child's disruptive behaviour to the child in terms of the effect it had on the activity.

Step 2 involves supporting the child back into the play by pointing out examples of the sort of behaviour that would be more helpful.

8. **Diversion**

This involves an adult diverting a child. Adults would need divert the child to other ways of playing sometimes prior to an inappropriate behaviour occurring or after an event occurs. They may need to shadow and/or play alongside the child, role model and reinforce positive behaviour.

9. **"Cool-down time"** is recommended where a child is not able to exercise self-control or redirection. It is a quiet, relaxed, neutral break so that the child is able to regain self-control; a settling period. i.e. a time away from the activity or person/s that is causing difficulty. A favourite or familiar activity, or a quiet area such as playdough/ library.

9. **"Solitary Time-Out"** This intervention must not be used in Playcentre. It is an intervention strategy that is used to deal with excess anger or a lack of control. It consists of removing and isolating the child from the action. Although some parents may use it at home, Solitary Time-out is not an acceptable strategy in the early childhood education context. Solitary confinement is deemed an unacceptable practice in early childhood education under the Regulations. (refer *"Providing Positive Guidance"* p. 28)

Ongoing:

1. Check the child's physical / emotional needs.
2. The play environment needs to be safe and challenging, welcoming and stimulating for each child.
3. Consider triggers - such as adequate resources, space, hunger, the weather, noise, the children's energy levels. All these triggers can lead to inappropriate behaviour. Once children and adults are aware of the trigger the adult can assist the child in expressing how they feel and what action they can take to resolve it. Eg: giving the child the words to use such as "May I use the digger too?" etc.
4. Keep the children informed of events that are about to happen.
e.g. *home time, a fire drill, fingerpaint's ready*
5. Discussion between children and adults on acceptable / unacceptable behaviours.

6. Encourage / reinforce the development of positive behaviours that enable them to play / work alongside others.
 - a) Model appropriate behaviour for children in adult-to-adult and adult-to-child interactions.
 - b) Encourage with praise, positive behaviours - like turn taking, negotiation and sharing.
 - c) Describe the behaviour you want in a *positive* way e.g. "Hey, it's walking inside" rather than "don't run you guys".
 - d) Give encouragement when a child has positive behaviour.
 - e) *Remember – children learn by observing others.*

Development of an individual / group programme for behaviour which is causing concern.

*** This needs to be a supportive process.**

- a) Consult with parent/s (caregiver/s): agree how to work together and keep all concerned parties informed (e.g. other sessions).
- b) If required, encourage the parent/s (caregiver/s) to contact either the Playcentre Child and Whanau Support or the Specialist Education Service.
- c) In consultation with the parent/s (caregiver/s), some observations could be done.
- d) Observe to work out what triggers the behaviour.
- e) Close supervision of the child or group is essential.
- f) Include the child / children; ask questions, listen.
- g) Help children to develop the language they need while playing.
- h) Ongoing evaluation: look at the progress that has been made.

Reference: "Providing Positive Guidance" p.20-24
Special Needs Policy – October 2008

Relevant Regulations

Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 1998 (section 33)

Education Act 1989 Section 139A (no corporal punishment)

More help and Relevant Reading

Providing Positive Guidance: Ministry of Education

Children's text "There's a Volcano in my Tummy"

Playcentre Association Child and Whanau Support (contact details in Association phone book)