

Prohibited Practices Policy

Phoenix Child Centre - 2016

Purpose

Prohibited practices are in place to protect children and ensure that staff interacts with them in a positive and constructive manner.

Understanding Behaviour

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years submits that children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential. With this in mind, an understanding of why a child is having difficulty self-regulating their behaviour is necessary to help them cope with the stress they are feeling. Ongoing communication between parents and staff ensures the best possible care for children. This cooperation benefits children, especially during times when they are having difficulties coping with the daily routine at home or in the daycare. Parent-staff discussions may provide answers to a child's behaviour, which may otherwise be labeled a behaviour problem.

Factors that may affect a child's behaviour include:

- Lack of sleep
- Stress
- Sight or hearing difficulties
- Maturity
- Boredom
- Curiosity
- Rules that are not clearly defined
- Too many "no's"
- Family crisis
- Environment or food sensitivities
- Illness
- Physical discomfort
- Manipulative or masked behaviours
- Personality conflicts
- Testing limits

Establishing Expectations and Consequences

Establishing expectations for acceptable behaviour functions to raise the child's self-esteem by reminding them what they are capable of, and to set clear triggers for consequences (The Center for Parenting Education, 2006, p. 1). Children's behaviour is guided in a positive manner at a level that is appropriate to their actions and ages in order to promote and maintain self-regulation and the respect for the rights of others, and to ensure health and safety. Specific strategies and approaches practiced by staff include reflecting children's feelings, redirection, using positive language and positive reinforcement. These strategies set and reinforce limits, promote co-operation and support autonomy.

Autonomy can be further supported by enabling children to solve problems. The teacher's role in the problem-solving approach is to establish limits to behaviour to ensure children's health and safety, and also to follow through with logical consequences when limits are exceeded. This enables children to develop their own sense of accountability, by teaching them how to think independently, rather than telling them what to think (Markham, 2014, p. 1). To use consequences effectively in teaching self-regulation, consequences must be thought of as a teaching-tool, and not as punishment (The Center for Parenting Education, 2006, p. 1). When deciding on appropriate consequences consider what the child

needs to learn, and what would be the most effective way to instruct them. Consequences are most effective when children have to do certain things to have the consequence lifted; this gives the child more power, and lets them internalize the lesson (The Center for Parenting Education, 2006, p. 5).

Act with caution, care, and respect when enforcing limits

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years describes educators as "competent and capable, curious and rich in experience. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective, and resourceful professionals..." With such qualities educators are expected to utilize a variety of strategies, either direct or indirect, to intervene in children's behaviour (College of Early Childhood Educators, 2016, p. 9). The following lists outline tips for effective intervention.

Indirect Intervention:

- Focus on how children are grouped together
- Create sensory experiences in the learning environment
- Ignore certain behaviours
- Actively listen to children expressing themselves
- Intervene with words (College of Early Childhood Educators, 2016, p. 9)

Direct Intervention:

- Be consistent and use clear, developmentally appropriate language when setting limits and boundaries.
- Be flexible and prepared to change your strategies, interventions and problem-solving approaches in order to meet the needs of individuals and group dynamics.
- Consider if behaviours and situations are worth ignoring. Reflect on strategies for re-directing and distracting children when appropriate.
- Model positive emotional expression by acknowledging and labelling your own emotions.
- Always maintain a positive view of each child when deciding your response:
 - What is the child showing you they need in order to return to a state of calm? Do they need a hug, a quiet space or natural and logical consequences?
 - How can you support children to cope, solve problems and return to a state of calm? Show children you believe in them.
 - Reflect on whether you use the words "good," "bad" or "nice" throughout your day? What do these words communicate to children? What words are useful?
- Model problem-solving strategies.
- Look beyond challenging behaviours, observe potential causes and stressors and react warmly and supportively to a child who is struggling with self-regulation.

- Acknowledge and positively reinforce children's hard work in a meaningful way and be specific when describing actions and reactions.
- Seek support and advice from colleagues, supervisors and community resource persons (College of Early Childhood Educators, 2016, p. 12)

Prohibited Practices

RECEs should be aware that certain unacceptable practices are outlined in the College's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Standard V: A.1 states "ECEs do not abuse physically, sexually, verbally, psychologically or emotionally a child who is under the member's professional supervision." The unacceptable practices reflected in this standard are also included in Section 2(3) of the Ontario Regulation 223/08: Professional Misconduct under the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007 (College of Early Childhood Educators, 2016, p. 17).

Phoenix Child Centre will **not** tolerate:

1. Any type of corporal punishment (i.e. striking a child directly, or with any physical object, shaking, shoving, spanking or other forms of aggressive behaviour).
2. Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
3. Inflicting bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.
4. Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
5. A child being deprived of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
6. Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purposes of confining a child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision. Please note: Under our *Lockdown Procedure*, children could be contained to a room temporarily until the emergency is resolved.

If there are concerns regarding a child's behaviour or social, emotional, physical or cognitive development, the following procedures are followed:

1. The staff document observations made by the parents, and staff (confidential). There will be a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child to discuss the observations and plan strategies regarding the concerns. (i.e. if a child appears to have sight or hearing difficulties it is recommended for the child to see their family doctor or optometrist, or an outside agency may be discussed).
2. The staff and parent(s)/guardian(s) will continue discussions to help the child. All discussions are documented and are kept in the child's file at Phoenix Child Centre.

Some difficulties a child may experience are beyond the scope of the staff and parent(s)/guardian(s). In these situations, appropriate agencies are accessed for guidance and assistance. Parents who refuse to allow Phoenix Child Centre to access these agencies will result in the centre giving parents

the option of reducing the number of hours in care or a notice of withdrawal of the child from the program. While one month's notice is the usual standard notice period, Phoenix Child Centre reserves the right to amend the notice period based on the severity of the situation and the health and safety risks to the child and others who are in contact with the child.

Phoenix Child Centre makes every effort to serve the parents and children enrolled in the program; however, there may be exceptional circumstances where Phoenix Child Centre is unable to meet a child's needs. **The Board of Directors reserves the right to suspend a child temporarily with conditions or permanently as the situation may warrant.** The parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed of the decision in writing and if possible an alternate arrangement is suggested. The District Consultant at Children's Services is notified of the child leaving care. Phoenix Child Centre will endeavour to provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with one month's notice to arrange alternative care for their child; however, notice will depend on the severity of the situation and the safety of other children and staff. Confidentiality is respected throughout this difficult time.

Consequences for Contravention of the Prohibited Practice Policy

Behaviours by staff or volunteers that violate this policy may be reported as a serious occurrence, and may be considered child abuse. The following actions will be taken in response to every violation (*Please note that unionized centres must follow their collective agreement and the following procedures may not apply*):

1. Any staff member or volunteer observed using measures that contravene the standards outlined in this document, shall be reported immediately to the centre Supervisor. The Supervisor will take immediate steps to investigate the alleged incident.
2. The Supervisor will immediately speak privately to the staff member involved, at which time the Supervisor will have to be satisfied that they have the facts, that the facts are as reported, that the incident is documented, a copy of the documentation is placed in the staff file. A letter of warning will be issued to the staff member.
3. If a second incident is reported and the Supervisor is fairly certain that this incident occurred, the Supervisor will briefly discuss the incident with the staff and a meeting will be arranged for the next day with the staff member, the Supervisor, and the Board of Directors.
4. The outcome of this meeting will be based on whether the employee would place children at risk. If the employee remains on staff, the employee will be issued a warning letter, and a copy of the letter will be placed in their file. Arrangements will be made for the employee to attend professional development workshops centered around behaviour guidance.
5. Any further incidents will result in immediate suspension, followed by an emergency meeting with the employee, the Supervisor, and the Board of Directors, at which time dismissal would be considered.
6. If the Supervisor is observed contravening the standards outlined in this document, the observer, whether parent or staff, will report the incident directly to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will attempt to get clarification and meet with the Supervisor as quickly as possible in order to take appropriate measures. The Board of Directors has to be satisfied that this is an isolated incident. However, if the Board hears of one or more incidents the Board would follow steps 3, 4, and 5, except that the meetings would be with the Supervisor and the Board of Directors.

7. Documentation will be kept and filed at each step.

References

College of Early Childhood Educators. (2016, June). *Practice Guideline: Supporting Positive Interactions with Children*. Retrieved from Members: Resources: https://www.college-ece.ca/en/Documents/PracticeGuidelines_ENG_FA_Digital.pdf

Markham, L. (2014). *Parenting Your Strong-Willed Child*. Retrieved from Aha! Parenting: <http://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/positive-discipline/Parenting-Strong-Willed-Child>

The Center for Parenting Education. (2006). *Consequences Made Easy - An Effective Discipline Tool*. Retrieved from The Center for Parenting Education: <http://centerforparentingeducation.org/library-of-articles/discipline-topics/consequences-made-easy/>

Revision Control

Date	Revision	Effective
August 29/16		Immediately
July 10 th 2017	Removed humiliating and belittling from wording in statement	Immediately

Supervision of Children and Compliance with the Prohibited Practices Policy

Name of Staff: _____ Dates of Observation: _____

OBSERVATION	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Provides constant supervision of all children, never leaving them unattended						
Supervision of children, including establishing and defining expectations for groups and individuals						
Provides positive reinforcement						
Guides behaviour in a positive manner						
Is firm and consistent when guiding behaviour						
Models attitudes and behaviour patterns as expected of children.						
Establishes and maintains control of the room						
Encourages problem solving and decision making						
Punitive, authoritarian attitudes without respect for the child						
Passive - avoids or ignores situations where behaviour guidance or limit setting is required						
Competent and consistent in behaviour guidance and limit setting while maintaining child's feeling of self-worth						
Exercises patience, retains calm in directing behaviour or relaying information repeatedly						
At ease, able to appreciate and enjoy children						
Natural, spontaneous, creating an enjoyable atmosphere with affection and attention to all children on an equal basis						
Result of observation - In compliance:						
Staff/student/volunteer confirms they have not observed any noncompliance:						

Observation 1 comments:

Signature of evaluator: _____ Signature of staff/student/volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Observation 2 comments:

Signature of evaluator: _____ Signature of staff/student/volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Observation 3 comments:

Signature of evaluator: _____ Signature of staff/student/volunteer: _____ Date: _____