

## Behavior Policy Example

We believe that all domains of learning are supported during play and through strong, positive interactions with adults. Promoting healthy social and emotional development, including self-control, should be one of the fundamental responsibilities of a program.

The early learning period is a critical time for children to learn to control their thoughts, feelings, attention, impulses, and behavior. Children are learning how to get along with others and how to be a friend. Children are not born with these skills. Teachers and caregivers must teach social and emotional skills just as they teach washing hands or learning colors and shapes. We know that when children are given the opportunities and support to develop (learn, practice, discuss, etc.), self-control and other social and emotional skills, it gives them the foundation needed for academic and life success.

Steps to follow when behaviors arise:

- Observe the children, and then identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior. It has been found that behavior concerns usually indicate that a child needs more time, support, and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social and emotional health.
- Rather than focus only on eliminating the behavior, teaching staff will focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.
- Teaching staff will respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the safety of the child and the safety of others in the classroom. The responses will be calm, respectful and provide the child with information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not. Consistency is important so children can trust their environment and feel confident in their choices. It is always important to teach a child what behavior they SHOULD be choosing, rather than focusing on what they should not.
- Programs will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted in a behavior tracking log.
- Teacher-parent discussions regarding a child's behavior will be held in private and focus on working as a team to develop and implement an inclusive care plan\* that supports

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the child's inclusion and success. Multiple meetings may be essential to find proper strategies per individual child.

- If necessary, appropriate intervention will ensure each child has access to professional services, such as referrals to a Inclusion Coach with USpireND, community mental health center and/or a private therapist.

If further guidance is required, actions taken will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's level of understanding.

\*Care plan template can be found on the [www.USpireND.org/inclusion](http://www.USpireND.org/inclusion)

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