

## POSITIVE GUIDANCE OF CHILD BEHAVIOUR.

### POLICY:

It is important for families and Centre Personnel to understand that “*no child is born socially adept*” (Slee, 2003, p.3 Managing Difficult Behaviour in Young Children). It is also important to note that most children’s behaviour can be affected by their **development, the environment, the time of day, actions (modelling) of staff and other children, family experiences and the family cultural background.**

Also, it is important for the community in an early childhood setting (parents/guardians, children and Centre Personnel) to develop agreeable methods of guiding children’s behaviour.

### AIM:

To assist the family in understanding children’s behaviour. Also, to encourage families to be directive rather than reactive to negative behaviours.

To provide **Centre personnel** with a clear pathway on what the Centre’s expectations are of their own behaviour, responses and reactions when working with children and their families.

To provide our **children** with life skills that enable them to interact positively with others and that these established skills are continually built upon to establish social competence.

*“Social competence is an ability to establish satisfactory social relationships.....and the demonstration of appropriate social skills at the right time and place.”*  
(Slee, 2003, p. 2 & 3 Managing Difficult Behaviour in Young Children)

### EXPECTATIONS:

The Centre has established expectations. These expectations are necessary to protect the safety and well being of every child. It is important that expectations be kept to a minimum so the children can remember and understand the reasons for them. However, it is important to note, that the following may be slightly altered or added to during the year according to age appropriateness.

1. Centre Personnel, Parents/Guardians and children, (according to age appropriateness) demonstrate an understanding of appropriate socially acceptable behaviours.
2. Centre Personnel, Parents/Guardians and children must not leave the play room without discussing it with another adult.
3. All Centre Personnel, Parents/Guardians and children are encouraged to walk inside for reasons of their own protection and others.
4. All Centre Personnel, Parents/Guardians and children are encouraged not to throw Sand, tanbark and other toys for reasons of their own protection and others.
5. Toys and/or paraphernalia that promote the concept of violence or encourage anti-social behaviour are not encouraged at the Centre.

Centre Personnel and Parents are encouraged to continually assess the appropriateness of certain items children are exposed to and the impact of this exposure on others.

## **GUIDANCE STRATEGIES:**

### **Parent & Centre Personnel.**

We as a community support children in learning that socially acceptable behaviours are more effective in achieving their goals rather than antisocial behaviours. As role models we all need to focus on and reinforce positive behaviour rather than focusing on negative behaviour.

We need to be aware of the assumption that young children know what socially accepted behaviour is and just choose to behave antisocially. We, as a community, need to continually reinforce through our communication the appropriate expectations in relation to socially acceptable behaviour in individual situations.

The Centre community values an environment that teaches children how to act thoughtfully toward others. This is reinforced through role modelling, expressions of empathy and the offering of choice throughout the child's day.

The use of rewards and/or punishment is not encouraged, as these tend to excite resistance in children.

### **Centre Personnel.**

**This Community recognises the utmost importance of communication** between Home and Centre. Most behavioural disruptions can be prevented if Parents/Guardians and Centre Personnel are aware of what is happening in the daily life of the child.

Personnel will create **environments** that are conducive to supporting and promoting positive behaviour patterns – by providing enough equipment, variety and challenges for the children.

Personnel will anticipate negative behaviour patterns and use positive strategies to prevent and manage the situation by using re-direction, providing alternatives, choices etc.

Personnel will **model** desirable behaviours in their own everyday interactions with their peers, children and other adults – children learn through observation.

Personnel are professionals and have a clear knowledge of children's **developmental sequences**, and thus understand the reasons behind children's behaviours.

Personnel actively and **consistently implement** the Centre's written policy on Positive Guidance of Child Behaviour. Personnel will be consistently emphasising and explaining socially acceptable behaviours for each individual setting. They will be evaluating continually the effectiveness of their responses within the Section. Reinforcement is essential for children learning social competence.

Personnel will assist and encourage children to talk about and manage their feelings. As well as encouraging children to think about how others might feel (**empathy**) when they i.e. knock down their building. Staff acknowledges and supervise children's efforts to solve problems and act positively.

## **PERSISTENT ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:**

The following steps are to be implemented when considering intervention to assist with persistent antisocial behaviour:

1. **Model Social Competence in all Interactions with Children.**  
Children learn so much from example; adult reactions should be appropriate and consistent at all times. Model the expected social competence for **all** situations.

2. **Changing the Stimuli in the Child's Environment.**

This is a short term measure which prevents escalation of the antisocial behaviour/s. Consider the following:

Is there adequate and safe playing space?

Is there ample equipment?

Are there allowances for personal play space?

Is there quiet play space?

Is there active play space?

Is there equipment/materials easily accessible for children to choose from?

3. **Choices.**

It is important to explain there are choices – the child can wait their turn, or play at another activity while they wait. Or if they are not going to use the blocks for building or help the team build a structure, then they can play at a different activity, or build their own structure.

4. **Unresolved Antisocial Behaviour**

Step 1. When difficulties arise it would be expected that collaboration, in the interest of the child, between personnel and parents/guardians will be undertaken. A management plan will be developed based around shared strategies, progress reports and continuing goals (sample attached). A management plan will provide effective outcomes for the child.

Step 2. Persistent antisocial behaviour will need to be referred to professional agencies so as to offer the child, family and Centre, management guidance techniques that will support positive outcomes for the child.

**References and Further Reading.**

**Porter, L. (2003). Young Children's Behaviour: Practical Approaches for Caregivers and Teachers. Second Edition.**

**Quality Improvement & Accreditation System – Source Book. National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc, First Edition 2001, p12-14 NSW.**

**Slee, J (2003) Managing Difficult Behaviour in Young Children. National Capital Printing Canberra.**

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