

Policy Statement

Activity Centres Incorporated recognise the importance of promoting acceptable behaviour standards and appropriate methods of discipline within our services. All children have the right to expect a positive approach to discipline that fosters self-esteem and confidence, as well as respect for one's self and others. Our Child Behaviour Management Policy focuses on the importance of respect and dignity for the child, acknowledging and accepting children's feelings and encouraging these feelings to be expressed. Our services aim to provide an environment where all parents, staff and children feel safe, cared for and relaxed, which encourages cooperation and positive interactions between all persons.

References

- ✓ The Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- ✓ The Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011
 - Regulation 155 *Interactions with Children*
 - Regulation 156 *Relationships in groups*
 - Regulation 168 *Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures*
- ✓ The Education and Care Services National Quality Standards 2011
- ✓ My Time Our Place
- ✓ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ✓ Children's and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- ✓ NSW Government's Keep Them Safe: a shared approach to child wellbeing
- ✓ OSHC Code of Professional Standards

Procedures

Activity Centres Incorporated promotes a positive approach to managing the behaviour of all children. We believe in encouraging children to resolve problems, defeats and frustrations where appropriate. Acceptable behaviour guidelines will be established based on our be safe, be respectful and be responsible rules. Positive behaviour will be encouraged and self-discipline skills developed through positive modelling by staff and carers.

- Our rules 'be safe, be responsible and be respectful' will be displayed at each service.
- Our rules, *be safe, be responsible, be respectful*, will be discussed with the children, in both intentional and spontaneous teaching moments. Children will be engaged in conversations on what it means to 'be safe', 'be responsible' and 'be respectful', using real life situations they find themselves in to assist them to self-regulate their behaviour and guide them to think about how their actions affect others.
- Children will be given opportunities that enable them to be responsible for their own behaviour through the development of problem solving skills.
- Positive behaviour will be encouraged by role modelling, diverting children to more appropriate activities, showing appreciation for positive behaviour and building on each child's strengths and achievements.
- The service has a 'you deserve it' system in place which recognises children who are 'being safe', 'being responsible' and 'being respectful'. This allows staff to positively reinforce children's behaviour, allows us to recognise positive behaviours exhibited by children and encourage continued kindness, thoughtfulness, tolerance, perseverance and connection with the environment.
- All Children will be encouraged to seek support when problem solving has been unsuccessful.
- Potential disciplinary action will be relevant to the individual situation, dependent upon the child's age and level of development, and in no way demeaning to the child.
- Potential disciplinary action will not see the child be subjected to, or threatened with, corporal punishment.
- Potential disciplinary action will not see the withdrawal of food or other basic needs from the involved child(ren).
- Children may be redirected from activities or special events, if children display anti-social, unsafe or inappropriate behaviour, and will not follow staff direction to improve behaviour.
- Short term disciplinary action may include 'thinking time'. Children will be encouraged to sit and think about their behaviour.
- Thinking time is where children will sit and think about their choices, giving them the opportunity to cool down (if emotionally upset over an incident that has occurred) before returning to play, during thinking time children will not be humiliated or isolated. It is purely time to self-reflect on their choices. Staff will follow up all thinking time situations by discussing events with the child and working together on better solutions and strategies for future behaviour.

- Thinking time will only be used if prior discussions have failed, or staff see the need for a child to have some time away from the immediate play environment due to being highly stressed or emotional. A child may also request thinking time if they feel overwhelmed by the situation and want some time to collect their thoughts and emotions. Staff will accommodate this request and respect the individual's need for space.
- All staff will be provided access to education, training and support with regards to positive approaches to behaviour management on an annual basis.
- All persons (staff, school, and parents/guardians) should work in partnership in promoting a consistent and positive approach to behaviour management.
- At any given session, if a child repeatedly refuses to listen and not follow staff directions the shift supervisor, coordinator or manager will call parents/guardians to come and collect child from the service straight away.
- Staff are to record all behaviour incidents on our 'behaviour reflection form' so we can start to look for patterns in behaviour, or any triggers. This will help us to possibly determine why the behaviour is continuing to occur and if we can modify the environment to assist in improving the behaviour. These forms will assist staff to highlight concerns in behaviour and look at ways we can rectify the behaviour, in partnership with families.
- Children who continually do not listen to staff instructions or who display behaviour that puts themselves and/or others at risk will be unable to attend excursions. This exclusion will be discussed with families and child prior to excursion exclusion as a possible consequence of inappropriate behaviour.

To assist in maintaining a positive, safe and caring environment the staff and children will have the following responsibilities:

Staff will be expected to:

- Accept and value every individual regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability.
- Treat each person equally, displaying respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Maintain positive communication at all times.
- When communicating with children staff will use age appropriate language to ensure that they are understood. Open communication will be encouraged through a friendly positive and courteous manner.
- Use voice intonations, facial expressions and explanations as methods of discipline.
- Encourage the development of decision making and negotiating skills through regular discussions with the children.
- Ensure that expectations, relating to the children's behaviour is explicit and clear and consequences are consistently applied.
- Act as a role model for acceptable behaviour through encouragement and recognition.
- Focus on the behaviour, not the child.
- Give praise and positive feedback to the children as often as possible and avoid shouting at children.
- Provide an environment, which will foster the child's self-esteem through development of warm friendly relationships.
- Help children develop self-discipline skills through positive example and direction.
- Introduce older children to simple conflict resolution skills.
- Help children to appreciate and care for each other and their surroundings.
- Not single out any children or make them feel inadequate at any time.
- Not be threatening or verbally abusing the children in any way.
- Adhere to OSHC Code of Professional standards

The Children are expected to:

- Accept and value others regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability.
- Treat others with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Maintain positive communication and relationships between all persons.
- Ensure that appropriate language is used at all times.
- Know and fulfil their responsibility to maintain appropriate behaviour, keeping themselves and others safe.
- Settle differences in a peaceful manner, utilising communication to resolve difficulties rather than resorting to violence.
- Develop self-discipline skills through positive example and direction.
- Develop an understanding that behaviour is a result of their choice to behave the way they do and that all behaviour has consequences.
- Treat all individuals with respect, physical violence of any kind will not be tolerated.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STEPS TO BE TAKEN FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1.1 Steps that will be taken for consistent unacceptable behaviour

Definition – what is meant by consistent unacceptable behaviour is a child who is repeatedly disruptive, disrespectful, uses racist and/or, uses inappropriate language, refusal to follow staff directions, rude inappropriate gestures and behaviours that are of an ongoing nature and child refuses to cease despite repeated discussions and redirection.

Step 1. Where a child demonstrates consistent unacceptable behaviour:

- ~ Staff will ensure the child is aware of what is unacceptable behaviour.
- ~ Staff will ensure the expectations are appropriate for the child's level of development and understanding.
- ~ Review the consequences to ensure they are not inadvertently encouraging the behaviour.
- ~ Look for and identify possible causes for the behaviour.
- ~ The shift supervisor, coordinator or manager will discuss the child's behaviour with the parents, this can be a formal or informal meeting. This will provide an opportunity to discuss issues and possible solutions to rectifying the behaviour.
- ~ Documented behaviour reflection forms will assist staff in highlighting the issues and strategies taken to rectify the challenging behaviour.
- ~ Parents/guardians and children will be notified that if behaviour continues the child will be placed on a behaviour management plan, parents will be expected to attend a formal meeting to discuss the plan that will be put in place.

Step 2 if the child's unacceptable behaviour continues:

- ~ The coordinator or manager will develop a plan of action involving behaviour management in consultation with staff, the child, parents, school and other professionals as required.
- ~ Each plan should be developed with the individual child's strengths, needs, interests, age and developmental level in consideration.
- ~ The plan should have clear and explicit guidelines for rewards and consequences, as well as the responsibilities of the child, staff and family, as well as any other 3rd party if required (such as the school, etc.).
- ~ A meeting will be set up with parents, child, management (and any other relevant professionals) so that all roles, responsibilities, consequences and expectations for all parties involved are made clear and agreed on. The meeting should be minuted.
- ~ It will be made clear to families that we are willing to work with any psychologists, doctors, the child's school or any other professionals they think will help throughout the process, we will offer help to families to establish support networks, if needed.
- ~ Record the plan of action ensuring all are aware of how to develop and implement an evaluation system, ensuring there is a review date.
- ~ The behaviour management plan will clearly outline the individual consequences that will be carried out if the behaviour does not improve. Management, parents and child/ren will know exactly what is expected. This can include exclusion from the service.
- ~ Families, child, staff and any other 3rd parties involved should sign the agreed plan, all parties should receive a copy of the plan.
- ~ It is important that the child be involved in the process and have a say in rewards and consequences, as they will be more likely to follow a plan that they have agreed upon, and it also gives the child a voice and a measure of control over the situation.
- ~ Behaviour reflection forms will continue to be completed, documenting any concerning behaviour. Staff should also document any observations in regards to improvements in child's behaviour. These documents will assist evaluating the success of the plan.
- ~ Parents/guardians should be updated on their child's progress throughout the implementation process, so they are informed of the plans progress and success.

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- Step 3 if the child's unacceptable behaviour continues after plan is in place: exclusion from the service may need to occur;
 - ~ Parents/guardian will receive written notice of unacceptable behaviour from the coordinator or manager outlining the child's behaviour and the warning of a period of exclusion if the behaviour continues, this will be in line with the child's individual behaviour management plan.
 - ~ The letter will clearly outline what behaviour has led to the warning and what improvements need to be made.
 - ~ Committee will be informed that we are at a warning stage for exclusion.

 - Step 4 Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour will be enforced if the child continues to display unacceptable behaviour.
 - ~ Parents/guardian will receive written notice from the Coordinator or Manager of the exclusion period. Coordinator and manager are to ensure that child's behaviour management plan has been followed and all steps have been followed.
 - ~ The exclusion period will be outlined with the dates of exclusion.
 - ~ Parents/guardians and child/ren will be expected to meet with a member of management to revise behaviour management plan, prior to returning to care. This way all parties involved are aware of expectations and consequences from the first day back in care. Consequences in the updated plan for not following service rules or improving behaviour will be that the child's place will be terminated.
 - ~ The plan should have clear and explicit guidelines for rewards and consequences, including the responsibilities of the child, staff and family, as well as any other 3rd party if required (school, etc.). The meeting should be minuted.
 - ~ Without an agreed revised behaviour management plan in place the child will not be permitted to return to the service, regardless of what the return date on the exclusion letter states, this will be outlined in the letter provided to parents/guardians.
 - ~ Committee will be informed of the exclusion and revised plan and given regular updates throughout the process.
 - ~ If we have to exclude a child from the service due to this process, families will be expected to pay fees to hold their child's place at the service.

 - Step 5 On return to the centre an acceptable level of behaviour is expected:
 - ~ As per condition of enrolment and this policy an acceptable level of behaviour will be expected and clear guidelines and expectations will be established for accepting the child back into the service (See step 4)
 - ~ The behaviour management plan will include a review date in which all parties involved will meet again to evaluate, reflect and discuss the level of success the plan has had on behaviour modification and if any changes need to be made.
 - ~ Behaviour reflection forms should still be completed and outline any concerning behaviour. Staff should also document any observations, in regards to improvements in the child's behaviour. These documents will assist when evaluating the success of the plan that has been implemented.
 - ~ Communication between the service and parents/guardians should be maintained, so parents/guardians are informed of the plans progress and success.
 - ~ As outlined in the revised behaviour management plan, if the unacceptable behaviour continues when the child returns to the service, they will be at risk of their place being terminated.

 - Step 6 Termination of a child's place due to unacceptable behavior.
 - Parents/guardian will receive a written notice from the manager or committee outlining the child's continued behaviour and that child's place has been terminated, this will be in line with the agreed individual behaviour management plan.
 - The letter will clearly outline what behaviour has led to the termination and what the service has done to attempt to correct the behaviour.

The service will work with the parents/family throughout the entire process to ensure:

- ~ Adequate support is available.
- ~ Early intervention of unacceptable behaviour should be followed up with the parent.
- ~ Parents/guardians have been notified and given the opportunity to discuss their child's behaviour.

- ~ Parents/guardians have been referred to other agencies, where necessary.
- ~ Coordinator /Manager has given careful consideration to the issue, with consideration to the needs of both parties involved and the welfare of others at the service.
- ~ Clear procedures have been established for accepting the child back into the service.

1.2 If the child is physically violent (Deliberate hitting with intent to hurt) – where no serious injury has occurred

(hitting with an object, like a bat/racquet etc., kicking, punching, biting etc., with the intent to hurt.)

****Physical Violence of any kind will not be tolerated and has an automatic consequence of being excluded from the service for 2 days. No behaviour/attitude or event justifies being violent with another individual.

****Children need to use their words, seek assistance and deal with frustrations in methods other than physical violence.

- Process to follow when dealing with physical violence (where there is no serious injury): -
 - ~ Remove all children from the situation.
 - ~ Evaluate the need for medical attention (if no continue with this list, if medical attention is needed see 1.3)
 - ~ Ensure the safety of others.
 - ~ Record the incident on the accident report form, indicating date, time, victim, injury, offender and staff who attended.
 - ~ Shift supervisor, coordinator and/or management to call parents/guardians at earliest time possible and inform them of the incident and that we will be investigating. Inform families that we require the child/ren to be picked up from the service immediately and they will be excluded from the service for the rest of the day's session and the next 2 day's their child is booked in. Physical Violence results in an immediate exclusion from the service for 2 days.
 - ~ Inform families that a meeting , in which parent/guardians and the coordinator/management meet to discuss what had occurred, and what were the events that lead to the incident happening. It will also outline expectations and goals that are required for child/ren to attend the service again. This will be an opportunity to discuss what happened and how we can resolve the issue.
 - ~ We will then work through the behaviour management steps as outlined in point 1.1.
 - ~ Depending on the circumstances of the incident and the events leading up to it, the service management reserve the right to start at any step in the process, be it 1, 2 or 5. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis, all reports, meeting minutes and reasons for decisions made will be documented and discussed with parents/guardians.
 - ~ Inform committee of incident and steps taken to modify behaviour.

1.3 If the child is physically violent (deliberate hitting with intent to harm) - inflicts serious harm on another (where medical attention is required);

**** Physical violence will not be tolerated: - when a child inflicts serious harm on another individual, this behaviour has an automatic consequence of being excluded from the service for 5 days. No behaviour/attitude or event justifies being violent with another person.

- Process to follow when child inflicts serious harm on another (if it be on another child or staff) –
 - ~ Remove the child from the situation.
 - ~ Evaluate the need for medical attention.
 - ~ Seek immediate medical attention for those who need it, conduct first aid, contact emergency services (if needed).
 - ~ Ensure the safety of others.
 - ~ Record the incident on the accident report form.
 - ~ Shift supervisor, coordinator and/or management to call parents/guardians at earliest time possible and ensure they are informed of the incident and that we will be investigating the incident. Also inform families that we require the child to be collected from the service immediately and they will be excluded from the service for the rest of the day's session and the next 5 days that the child is physically booked into care. The management committee reserves the right to extend exclusion period or instantly terminate the child's place, depending on the outcome of the investigation carried out.
 - ~ Ensure that coordinator/management follow up with the parents/guardians and that they are notified in writing of the incident and that an instant exclusion period is in place. Include date of incident, when exclusion will start and end and when child can return.
 - ~ Request a meeting date with parents/guardians to discuss incident and consequences of behaviour.
 - ~ Management will investigate the incident to establish what happened by gathering evidence from any witnesses.

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- ~ Inform Committee of results of investigation.
 - ~ The results from the investigation will determine if the child will be allowed back to the service or if their place will be terminated. A letter will be provided to the families outlining why their child's place has been terminated
 - ~ If child is permitted to return to the service they will be placed on a behaviour management plan, that will be put together at the meeting between parents/guardians and management, and will be considered to be at step 5 on the behaviour management steps outlined in point 1.1.
 - ~ Report of the incident to regulatory authority, and any other appropriate government and legal authorities must occur within 24 hours of the incident having taken place in line with ACI Reporting to the Regulatory Authority and ACI Child Protection Policy.
 - Full fees will be required to keep their child's place at the service for any type of exclusion. Should the fees not be paid your child's place will no longer be available to you and you will be asked to seek alternative care.

 - If at any point throughout this process the child's family refuses to work with the service to rectify consistent inappropriate behaviour the ACI committee and management have the right to terminate the child's place without having to work through any of the outlined steps in this policy. We will work with and support families, but cannot address matters of behaviour on our own, without the cooperation and partnership of families.

Checklist for Staff

- Ensure rules be safe, be respectful and be responsible are in place
- Ensure children are aware of the rules be safe, be respectful and be responsible and consequences
- Guide children in a positive way to avoid any conflict or unacceptable behaviour.
- Program to ensure children are busy – boredom can result in inappropriate behaviour.
- Use thinking time as a last result if speaking to the child is not working.
- Inform the shift supervisor or coordinator if there is continued inappropriate behaviour.
- Inform the coordinator or manager immediately if serious harm has been inflicted on anyone.
- Document any incidents that require any follow up on our behaviour reflection form – step 1.
- Step 2 – create a behaviour management plan.
- Follow steps outlined in this policy to develop management plans.
- Step 3 & 4– unacceptable behaviour continues then exclusion from the service will occur.
- Step 5 – return to service new behaviour management plan. Expectations outlined for continued placement at the service.
- Step 6 – Termination for unacceptable behaviour.
- Physical violence will not be tolerated. There is no excuse for being physically violent with another individual. Automatic exclusion period applies for physical violence.
- Work in partnership with families and other agencies to support child management.

_____ end of policy _____

Policy is only endorsed if initialled by 2 members of the management committee

Endorsed by the Management Committee on the 17th August 2016

Management Committee Policy is to be reviewed by the 17th August 2019