

Positive Guidance & Challenging Behaviors

Please find the entire parent handbook on our [website](#).



At Earthplace Preschool, we believe that it is important for our teachers and caregivers to:

- Listen to our students
- Allow our students to express opinions
- Encourage our students to discuss options
- Foster independence and reasoning
- Place limits, consequences, and expectations on behavior
- Express warmth and nurturing
- Act in a fair and consistent manner
- Set the tone for our students
- Lead by example

It is our policy to use positive guidance techniques as well as an authoritative style of discipline. Authoritative discipline is characterized by reasonable demands and high responsiveness. While authoritative teachers and caregivers have high expectations for the children in their care, they also give children the resources and support they need to succeed. Authoritative teachers and caregivers are flexible. If there are extenuating circumstances, they will adjust their response accordingly. Discipline, then, takes into account all of the variables, including the child's behavior, the situation, and so on.

Children with or without special needs will exhibit challenging behaviors. It will become necessary for teachers and caregivers to redirect children when behaviors arise. It will also be necessary for teachers to intervene when interpersonal conflicts arise.

When interpersonal conflicts occur, the teachers will employ the **High Scope Method** of intervention and conflict resolution.

The **High Scope Method** includes the following steps:

1. Approach quickly and calmly; stopping any hurtful or harmful behavior
2. Acknowledge feelings
3. Gather information from all involved
4. Restate the problem as it was told to you
5. Ask for ideas and solutions and choose one together
6. Give follow-up support

The classroom teachers will, at all times, supervise and observe the children in their care. Teachers will, at all times, reserve judgment. Teachers and caregivers may never use physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child.

- **Examples of physical punishment:** Shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, and pulling of arms, hair, or ears; requiring a child to remain inactive for a long period of time.
- **Examples of psychological abuse:** shaming, name-calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, or frightening a child; ostracism, withholding affection.

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- **Examples of coercion:** Rough handling (shoving, pulling, pushing, grasping any body part); forcing a child to sit down, lie down, or stay down, except when restraint is necessary to protect the child or others from harm; physically forcing a child to perform an action (such as eating or cleaning up). (*Standard 1B.8 and 1B.10 ITPKS*)

We expect conflicts and challenging behaviors to arise as a normal course of the preschool experience. When challenging behaviors occur, the teachers will identify the events that precede the behaviors in order to determine if there is a pattern. If a detectable pattern exists, the teachers will make necessary adjustments to the classroom environment and or schedule. See below:

Room arrangement: The room is arranged with a number of different inviting areas of interest. These interest areas ensure that a variety of activities, such as drawing, painting, blocks, manipulatives, sand, housekeeping, and puzzles, are always available in the room. There are spaces for a small group, large group, and individual play. This includes a space for children to get away from the group.

Materials: All materials are in good condition in order to communicate to the children that they are to be taken care of in an appropriate manner. There are enough of each item so that a particular toy does not become the cause of difficulty within the group. Within each area, the materials are organized in a clear manner so that children can utilize and return the items to the shelf or area on their own. The materials in the interest area are kept "novel." For example, books are changed on a regular basis; different accessories are added to the blocks; the housekeeping area is turned into a store, office, or post office; supplies on the writing table are changed, or manipulatives are rotated to go with a particular theme.

Developmentally appropriate transitions: Transitions are clear, fun, and quick and are planned to encourage children's independent behaviors and decision-making abilities.

Setting the tone: The teachers set the tone of the classroom by welcoming all students and their parents.

Setting clear limits: Teachers set clear limits for the children through the routines they create in the classroom. These serve as an overall structure for the children's behavior throughout the day. The behaviors expected at group time, snack time, clean-up time, and dismissal are clear and consistent. Teachers also set clear limits with their directions for the use of materials in the classroom; they explain, discuss, demonstrate, and role-play the expected behaviors at group time and as individual incidents occur. For example, in the block area, the children learn that only those who have built a building may knock it down, that they may build as high as their heads, and that they take one block off the shelf at a time. The same methods are used to communicate the expected behaviors in interpersonal relationships. The children learn that they are to use words when they have a disagreement, include others who would like a role in dramatic play, and think of kind things to say when commenting on another child's artwork.

Presence: The teachers know that simply their presence and positive, nurturing manner promote cooperative behavior as they move about the room.

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Modeling: The teachers model the behavior they expect from the children. This would include saying "please" "thank you," and "excuse me." It would also include washing hands at appropriate times, sitting on chairs, and using indoor voices.

Positive Expectations: The teachers state the behavior that they expect from the children. For example, "When I ring the bell, I expect everyone to stop, look, and listen."

Child-directed activities: The teachers honor the children's interests and communicate a caring attitude by organizing the materials needed for the children to follow their ideas.

Teacher-directed activities: The teachers make sure that these activities are developmentally appropriate so that the outcome is a positive experience for all of the children. For example, group times are fun, active, and an appropriate length. Art experiences are creative and open-ended.

Techniques to be used when teacher intervention is needed

Positive redirection: The teachers redirect the children in a positive manner. For example, "Use words," "Blocks are for building," or "Paint on the paper."

Add novelty: The teachers add a novel element to the play. For example, colors, soap, baby dolls, and/or sponges could be added to the water table.

Explain your intervention: The teacher tells why he/she is intervening and what will happen if the behavior continues. "When you splash other people you are showing me that you don't remember how to play at the water table. Keep the water in the table or you'll have to choose another place to play."

Accept children's feelings: The teacher demonstrates that she/he accepts the children's feelings, but not necessarily their actions. Let the children know that they can be mad about something, but that they must work to solve the problem. The teacher explains to the children that she/he will not let them hit anyone and that she/he doesn't want anyone to hit them.

Help the child/children verbalize: The teacher encourages the children to say what they are feeling, or what they think happened, or what they want to do next, etc. The teacher discusses how to solve the problem next time.

Stop hitting or throwing: The teacher tells the child specifically what to do. "Put your hands down," or "Put the block down." The teacher may also put her/his arms around a child to stop him/her from hitting. The teacher lets go quickly and then discusses the situation.

Give choices: The teachers explain to the children what their choices are in the situation. For example, they could stay in the area (or with a friend) and play constructively, or they could choose another area or friend. Or the teacher could give the choice to move to one of two areas. The ideas that there are different choices to make in terms of behavior, areas being played in, or friends being played with, are important concepts to convey.

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Time away from the classroom: The teacher removes a child from the room only if his/her behavior is dangerous or disruptive to other children. This would include continuing to throw objects, hitting other children, loud screaming, and a tantrum that does not calm down quickly. The child goes to the hallway or takes a walk with the teacher. The teacher talks with the child about his/her feelings. The child is not kept out of the classroom for more than 10 minutes. The goal of the teacher is for the child to regain control. The teacher helps the child to reenter play or organized activity.

When behaviors are developmentally inappropriate, persistent, hurtful, or dangerous, an incident report will be completed by the classroom teacher. The *Behavior Incident Report* includes a written description of the behavior, the teacher's intervention, and the child's response to the teacher's intervention. The goal is to communicate clearly and openly with our families and to provide ongoing support. The report will be signed by the Preschool Director and the Parent(s). After three reportable incidents have occurred, we will schedule a meeting with the Lead Teacher, the Parent(s), and the Preschool Director to develop an *Individualized Behavior Care Plan*. The *Behavior Care Plan* lists appropriate support services including modifications to the learning environment, the equipment, the schedule, and the teaching strategies. It may also become necessary to refer the case to an outside specialist or agency such as a social worker, Birth To Three, or the child's home school district to conduct a screening and/or a comprehensive evaluation.

If, after we have exhausted all avenues of intervention, we determine we cannot meet your child's behavioral or educational needs or if your child is a danger to self or others, we will refer you to another program. (*Standard 1E.1 ITPKS*)