

## Woden Early Childhood Centre

# POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Woden Early Childhood Centre promotes a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour within an environment that is consistent, supportive and safe for all children.

### **RATIONALE:**

Being sensitive and supportive in helping children develop self-control and learn and practice desirable behaviour is critical to children developing these important life skills.

This policy supports inclusive practices at Woden Early Childhood Centre. Please refer to the Inclusion Policy.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all staff within the Centre.

### **RELEVANT LEGISLATION:**

*ACT Centre Based Children's Services Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences 2000 part 5; 5.5, 5.6*

### **QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM:**

*Quality Improvement & Accreditation System – Quality Practices Guide, 2005 (QA 1; 2;4;5; 1.1, 1.2, 14, 1.5, 1.6, 2.3, 4.2, 5.1)*

### **LOCATION OF INFORMATION**

This information is also in the Staff Handbook CD policies.

### **SOURCE DOCUMENTS**

\* *ACT Centre Based Children's Services Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences 2000 part 5, 5.5 &5.6*

\* Slee, J (2003) *Managing Difficult Behaviour in Young Children. Research in Practice Series (Vol 1 No3)* ECA.CCCNSW, Marrickville.

\**Guiding Children's Behaviour in Positive Ways.* (Stonehouse, NCAC, 2006)

### **KEY RESOURCES**

\* Porter, L (Ed) 2003. *Young Children's Behaviour: Practical Approaches for Caregivers and Teachers* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edit. McLennan and Petty, NSW.

### **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy is reviewed on a biannual basis both by the centres staff and then by families. Once the Policy has been reviewed and changes are made it goes to the management committee for ratification. Please refer to the Policy development and review policy.

Woden Early Childhood Centre  
Adapted from Community Child Care Co-operative Model Policy

**Date endorsed by Committee/Board: 23.3.09**

**Date to be reviewed: 23.3.10**

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Learning to manage feelings and behaviour is an important process for all children. By focusing on each child's strengths and taking a broad view of acceptable behaviour, staff can support each child to develop appropriate personal behaviour and social skills. At all times the rights and dignity of the child are respected in all situations.

Consistency in the approach to behaviour guidance among families and staff is important to ensure children's sense of security and understanding of these complex processes. Therefore, on enrolment discussions will take place on guidance strategies, both from the family's perspective and the Centre's procedures. The staff value the family's input and try to establish a partnership with them.

By getting to know the child and family and communicating effectively and respectfully, staff can begin to understand the child and how best they can support the child. Consideration needs to be given to varying parenting styles, to the family's cultural or social values and to the age, abilities and temperament of the individual child.

Staff also discuss ways to be pro-active not re-active and prevent undesirable behaviours e.g. through the set up of the environment, use of materials and equipment and so on.

### **Practices**

#### **1) Consider the context**

When considering positive behaviour guidance strategies and techniques, it is important that staff consider the context of the situation as well as the behaviour itself, in their response to the behaviour. For example-

- i) Has a particular situation or the play environment created the undesirable behaviour?
- ii) Is the behaviour just 'annoying' or is it really hurting someone?
- iii) What do you think were the child's intentions of the behaviour?
- iv) Is my response to the same behaviour consistent with all children and generally across most situations?
- v) Am I expecting children to behave in ways that suit my values and beliefs, which may be different to those of families and/or other staff?

#### **2) Supporting children**

- a) Staff will guide children's behaviour in positive ways by:
  - i) treating all children with respect and dignity
  - ii) focusing on each child's strengths
  - iii) ensuring that expectations of children's behaviour are individually, culturally and developmentally appropriate to each child

- iv) using positive words and directions when guiding children towards desired behaviour
- v) assisting children to recognise their feelings and find ways to express them that are appropriate/acceptable
- vi) use simple words and explanations for younger children and help older children find words and reasoning to behaviours
- vii) supporting protective behaviours by helping children use assertive phrases such as "Stop, I don't like that" in appropriate contexts
- viii) assuring children that at times suggested strategies eg for them to try to resolve conflict, may not always 'work' and that if it doesn't work they can come back to staff for further assistance
- ix) talking with children about how their actions affect others and themselves
- x) trusting children and helping them understand and develop simple rules
- xi) ensuring that expectations and limits are consistent and clear to children
- xii) supporting children positively when they are meeting expectations
- xiii) ensuring that behaviour which is not acceptable is responded to immediately
- xiv) helping children to show empathy and begin to resolve conflicts
- xv) providing an environment and daily/weekly plans that are child focused and safe to minimise confrontation and conflict
- xvi) keeping up-to-date with current trends in positive guidance by participating in professional development and training opportunities.

b) Staff can be effective role models for children by:

- i) interacting with children and other adults in positive ways
- ii) listening to children so that the appropriate cause of behaviour can be determined and alternatives to undesirable behaviour are encouraged.
- iii) modeling desirable behaviours that display trust, respect and empathy
- iv) responding calmly and sensitively to children's challenging behaviour
- v) seeking assistance from other staff when they need help so children can also feel confident about asking for help from other children or adults
- vi) labeling the desired behaviour, rather than labeling the child or focusing heavily on undesirable behaviours.

### **3) Working with families**

Staff will work in partnership with families by:

- i) encouraging on-going open communication between them and the child's family
- ii) sharing and discussing relevant information about the child to ensure positive guidance is consistent in the Centre and at home
- iii) being sensitive when discussing concerning behaviours with families
- iv) working with families in positive ways and not being critical or judgmental of family practices

- v) clarify any family approaches that may be inconsistent with the Centre's procedures and how mutually agreeable goals and strategies can be reached
- vi) ensuring families have access to the Centre's behaviour guidance procedures and other resources
- vii) providing information to families about external supports services and other resources in the community.

#### **4) Supporting each other**

Staff can support each other to positively guide children's behaviour by –

- i) discussing their own values and beliefs about desirable behaviours in young children and how these can be promoted
- ii) helping each other being consistent by monitoring each others responses to situation
- iii) stepping in when staff may show signs of frustration or not coping with a child's difficult behaviour
- iv) sharing information and perspectives on how to best support children to be self-regulated
- v) working together to develop consistent strategies to be implemented within the room
- vi) senior staff will ensure all staff within the room including relief staff are aware of expectations in relationship to positive behaviour guidance

#### **5) Managing very difficult behaviours**

When a child's difficult behaviour becomes extreme and/or continues to be a cause of concern to staff, in consultation with the family, whilst ensuring confidentiality staff may –

- i) discuss the situation at an all-of- staff meeting and develop a specific plan of action
- ii) monitor the plan and evaluate the outcomes
- iii) consider seeking external intervention support, if appropriate

**Time out:** If the staff feel it is necessary to remove the child from the group then "time out" may be used however this strategy will only be used when all other strategies have been implemented and found to be unsuccessful. "Time out" must not last longer than a minute for each year of the child's age i.e. 3 minutes for a three years old. The child will never be left unsupervised and expectations of appropriate behaviour and reasons for the use of "time out" explained to the child.

**Note:** At no time should staff use behaviour or language that conflicts with the Centre's *Code of Conduct* when guiding children's behaviour. It is unacceptable for staff to use any techniques that may humiliate, frighten or threaten the child. Staff should not use food or rest time as a punishment and should never isolate the child or use any form of verbal, physical or emotional punishment.