

# THE GOWRIE (QLD) INC

## BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

### CONSIDERATIONS:

QIAS	Principle 1.1, 1.2 and 4.2
REGS	Child Care Regulation 2003 Section 10

### POLICY STATEMENT:

To teach children appropriate ways to manage both positive and negative behaviours by empowering them with a range of strategies to manage conflict situations. To encourage children to take responsibility for their own actions.

### RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Circle of Security

### SOURCES:

- Carter, M. (2001) Conflict Resolution Strategies in Children's Settings.
- SDN Mosman: Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy.
- Porter, L. (2003) Young Children's Behaviour Second Edition. Practical Approaches to Caregivers and Teachers.
- Kinnell, G/Stonehouse, A (2003) No Biting Policy and Practice for Toddler Programs.
- Dolby, R. (2007) The Circle of Security: Roadmap to building supportive relationships.

**REVIEWED: March 2011**

**Date to be Reviewed: June 2012**

## IMPLEMENTATION:

BEFORE YOU  
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Staff need to:

- understand the guidance approach used and why it is valued;
- have knowledge and realistic expectations of children's developmental stages and individual differences;
- recognise that children behave in certain ways for a range of reasons eg environment, equipment, home situations, skill level in relation to conflict resolution;
- see how social problem 'solvers' and routines can effect the way children behave;
- understand that conflict situations are a normal part of life and children need support from adults;
- work at building trusting relationships with each child where self-esteem and feelings of competence are developed to assist in coping with conflict;
- use the environment as the third teacher by incorporating the children's interests and ideas into the program;
- understand that developing effective interpersonal and intrapersonal skills is a life long process and there is a process that children need to go through to become skilled (appropriate to their age level);
- support collaborative relationships and open communication between families and staff regarding children's behaviour, because it ensures consistency between the home and the Service and may provide insight into possible causes for behaviour;
- encourage children to appreciate the capabilities and limitations of others;
- believe that children are competent thinkers and are able to participate in problem solving situations;
- listen to children's concerns and problems and use this type of intervention as a tool for preventing potential inappropriate behaviour;
- encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build confidence and self- esteem.
- network and consult with behavioural specialists when necessary.;
- understand that appropriate behaviours need to be modeled for the children – that what adults do matter as much (if not more than) what they say;
- encourage and support not just positive behaviours but also the children's awareness of appropriate behaviours.

<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">P R E V E N T I O N</p>	<p><b>PREVENTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Model positive behaviour through the appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal communication to encourage children to express their needs and feelings. <i>Communications should be without blame, judgement or assumptions.</i></li> <li>- Evaluate the effectiveness of the physical environment both indoors and outdoors. <i>This evaluation is then reflected in follow up planning and implementation.</i></li> <li>- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems with equipment and activities.</li> <li>- Establish clear and consistent guidelines, limits, expectations and consequences of behaviour eg gentle hands, calm voices, hands to self, kind words, walking feet and listening ears.</li> <li>- Involve children (3-5 years) in establishing rules and problem solving through group discussions, role-playing and literature.</li> <li>- Provide positive feedback for children's appropriate behaviour and acknowledge children's efforts to behave appropriately.</li> <li>- Develop close relationships and an interest in each individual so self esteem and confidence is constantly built on.</li> <li>- Allow children verbal prompts through out the day in regards to what is happening next with the routine eg "In 5 minutes we need to start to finish what we are doing because we need to pack away for morning tea".</li> <li>- Provide a consistent, firm and respectful approach to guiding behaviour by discussing issues with colleagues and parents.</li> <li>- Recognise that feelings and emotions are important in resolving conflict and children need opportunities to explore and discuss a variety of emotions. <i>This can be achieved through 'feelings and faces' lotto game, through discussing with children the responses they are seeing from peers and adults, through story books and by using puppets and music.</i></li> <li>- Use relaxation and visualization techniques as part of the daily program.</li> <li>- Discuss with children ways of dealing with conflict, emotions and interpersonal relationships and in the development of problem solving skills.</li> </ul>
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<p style="text-align: center;">A C T I O N</p> <p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff must immediately follow up inappropriate behavior.</li> <li>- Focus on the child's behaviour e.g. "When you use your rough hands I am worried that someone is going to get hurt". <i>Let children know they are still loved and valued but the behaviour is inappropriate.</i></li> <li>- Provide simple explanations to the child about how their behaviour has affected others and equipment eg if a child is throwing blocks you might say, "Blocks are for building with." or "If we throw the books on the floor they might get ripped let's put them on the shelf together".</li> <li>- Use positive "I" statements when setting guidelines e.g. "I like it when you keep the sand in the sandpit" or "I like it when you use your walking feet inside".</li> <li>- When a child is engaging in tantrum that is not harmful to the child, peers or adults. "I can see you're really angry at the moment, I'm going to give you some space by staying here and waiting with you while your body starts to calm down" or "I can see you're really upset at the moment, would you like a cuddle?" <i>When the child has calmed down, redirect them to a new activity, or discuss their emotional reaction and how to deal with it appropriately. Staff should remain available and at an appropriate distance if the child is needing space, staff should reassure other children during this time that they are safe and that staff are supporting the child to process their emotions.</i></li> <li>- Model and praise empathy, encouraging children to assist and support others eg "It's nice to see you giving your friend a cuddle when they are sad".</li> <li>- Acknowledge and validate children's feelings. There are 4 steps in this process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen for feelings.</li> <li>2. Identify the child's feelings.</li> <li>3. Validate the child's feelings.</li> <li>4. Accept the child's feelings, specifying the importance of distinguishing between feelings and actions.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
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<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> <p><b>S P E C I F I C  B E H A V I O U R S</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> When dealing with hurting behaviours such as hitting, biting, pushing or kicking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use a calm voice.</li> <li>- Gain the child's eye contact.</li> <li>- Discuss with the child that these behaviours are inappropriate by tone of voice, facial expression and redirect the child to another activity.</li> <li>- Use age appropriate responses, for example,</li> </ul> <p><i>For a 3-5 year old:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Stop and think before proceeding any further.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Find out what happened (What's happened? /What's the problem?)</i></li> <li>3. <i>Identify the problem from everyone's perspective.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Encourage children to brainstorm alternative possible solutions (What else could you do? / How could you do this?)</i></li> <li>5. <i>Help children identify the consequences of their possible solutions (What might happen if.....?)</i></li> <li>6. <i>Restate the problem, the proposed solutions and accompanying consequences.</i></li> <li>7. <i>Help children find and agree on a solution they are satisfied with. If no solution can be reached, make some suggestions for the children to choose from.</i></li> <li>8. <i>Work out a fair plan of action with the children, identifying what each child needs to do (who, what, how, when) to follow through with the plan.</i></li> <li>9. <i>Work out with the children what to do next time.</i></li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use quiet/reflection time.</li> </ul> <p>If an older child continues to participate in dangerous play, remove the child to a quiet activity within view of staff eg a puzzle, book or drawing. Quietly sit with the child and discuss how the play/behaviour has affected others. The child will then be encouraged to reflect on the incident and reengage into the group. Later the child is assisted with an activity which allows for positive reinforcement which in turn helps the child to build feelings of competence and self esteem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inform parent/guardian about the incident.</li> <li>- If a serious incident has occurred the Director will contact the parents/guardian with a courtesy call.</li> <li>- In circumstances of recurring behaviour staff will discuss guidance strategies for individual children with the family and actively seek information to assist with the response to this inappropriate behaviour.</li> </ul>