

Phinney Cooperativa Preescolar en Español (PCPE)
A program of the Phinney Neighborhood Association (PNA)

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The PCPE Discipline Policy is based on the Positive Discipline Guidelines from the book, *Positive Discipline*, by Jane Nelson. We help children learn positive strategies for interaction and problem-solving, understand the perspectives of others and why his/her behavior is not acceptable, and to gain self-control. Physical punishment and humiliation are **never** permitted at our school, by staff, children and parents.

Below are some of the key principles that our discipline policy is based on; the complete guidelines can be found or downloaded at: www.empoweringpeople.com/guidelines.html.

- A. **“Misbehaving children are "discouraged children"** who have mistaken ideas on how to achieve their **primary goal- to belong**. Their mistaken ideas lead them to misbehavior. We cannot be effective unless we address the mistaken beliefs rather just the misbehavior”.
- B. **“Punishment may "work" if all you are interested in is stopping misbehavior for "the moment."** Sometimes we must beware of what works when the long-range results are negative-resentment, rebellion, revenge, or retreat.”
- C. Use **encouragement to help children feel "belonging"** so the motivation for misbehaving will be eliminated. Celebrate each step in the direction of improvement rather than focusing on mistakes. A great way to help children feel encouraged is to spend special time "being with them." Many teachers have noticed a dramatic change in a "problem child" after spending five minutes simply sharing what they both like to do for fun.
- D. **Teach and model mutual respect**. One way is to be kind and firm at the same time -- kind to show respect for the child and firm to show respect for yourself and "the needs of the situation. This is difficult during conflict, so use the next guideline whenever you can.
- E. **Get rid of the crazy idea that in order to make children do better; first you have to make them feel worse**. Do you feel like doing better when you feel humiliated?
- F. Teach children that **mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn!** A great way to teach children that mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn is to model this yourself by using the Three Rs of Recovery after you have made a mistake:
 - 1. **Recognize your mistake**.
 - 2. **Reconcile:** Be willing to say "I'm sorry, I didn't like the way I handled that."
 - 3. **Resolve:** Focus on solutions rather than blame. (#3 is effective only if you do #1 & #2 first.)

- G. **Focus on solutions instead of consequences.** Many parents and teachers try to disguise punishment by calling it a logical consequence. Get children involved in finding solutions that are:
1. Related
 2. Respectful
 3. Reasonable
 4. Helpful
- H. Make sure the **message of love and respect** gets through. Start with "I care about you. I am concerned about this situation. Will you work with me on a solution?"

We will use constructive techniques such as redirecting children to other activities, counseling the child in a calm but firm voice about the situation, offering positive alternatives for behavior, or gently separating the child from the group for a brief period of time. The following is a suggested list of positive discipline steps that should be used by the teachers and/or parents:

- A. Model appropriate behavior. Tell the child what he/she can do.
- B. Establish eye contact with the child when talking to him/her.
- C. Come down to child's height.
- D. Give the child choices whenever possible.
- E. Redirect a child to another activity.
- F. Encourage the child to problem solve and try to work out conflicts (see the Six Steps to Problem Solving below).
- G. Give the child the option/asking them if they'd like to take a break or in other words a "positive time out" for them to cool off and to help them feel better. A note about time-outs: "time outs" should not be used as a punishment, but rather they should only be used as a break doing something that will help the child feel better, for example hugging a stuffed animal or reading a book in the library, or going outside for a walk or sitting on the stairs and taking deep breaths/blowing pretend bubbles (of course, with a supportive adult present).

Note for Parents on Shift: If the situation does not improve ask teacher for assistance. **Parents do not give consequences to children at school.**

The Six-Step Approach to Problem Solving for the Classroom/School

Step 1 Approach (initiate Mediation)

Get close enough to intervene if necessary; stop aggressive behavior or neutralize the object of conflict by holding it yourself.

Step 2 Make a statement

“It looks as if you both want the same toy”

“I see you are yelling at each other “

Step 3 Ask Questions (Gather Data, Define the Problem)

“How did this happen?”

“Is there something you want to say to him or her?”

“How can we solve this problem?” “How can you use it without fighting?”

Step 4 Generate Alternative Solutions

Ask questions: “Who has an idea of how we can solve the problem?”

Step 5 Agree on Solution

When both children accept a solution, rephrase it. “So both of you agree that Child – A- is going to be the first one to use it?”

Step 6 Follow Through

Monitor to make sure agreement is going according to plan: If the decision is turn-taking, you may need to be a clock-watcher. Reinforce the resolvability of the problem.

For more helpful information on Positive Discipline, see “Words that Help” and “Positive Guidance and Discipline Skills” in the Appendix. PCPE also has a number of resources available for you to check out, including the book *Positive Discipline*.

If a child is having more difficulty than usual with discipline in the classroom, the behaviors displayed by the child will be discussed with the parents along with specific techniques being used by the staff to help guide the child to more appropriate behavior. Parents and staff must have shared understanding of the reasons for the behavior and strategies for managing it.

APPENDIX A: POSITIVE DISCIPLINE RESOURCES

Positive Guidance and Discipline Skills – Examples

Examples from “The Developmental Parenting Highway” of Jean Illsley---Clarke, from *Growing Up Again, Parenting Ourselves, Parenting Our Children*.

Behavior of concern: Situation of child hitting others or hurting them in some way

Nurture— Focus on modeling and teaching skills of pro---social values; build self---confidence and sense of being “lovable.” Nurture actions provide guidance to prevent incidents of acting out and inappropriate behaviors. (We don’t provide nurture directly after an incident of hurting)

Assertive Care – Adult kindly talks with the child about expectations in group settings. Teach the child calming skills and assertive language to express needs, feelings and wants.

Supportive Care – Offer choices such as “You can help put the blocks away or put books on the shelf” when it is clean up time. If child is getting upset – “If you are frustrated or upset, you can take a break in the library or ask for a hug.”

Structure – Provide rules, limits and boundaries to teach the child self---control

Nonnegotiable Rule – “Stop. Hitting hurts. Use words to solve problems.” (Coach the child on what are appropriate words to use to solve the problem; or have them take a break to calm down in a quiet area of the room, with the message that she or he can return when they are ready to be gentle with friends.)

Negotiable Rule – “Our rule is to touch gently and use words to solve problems. How can we help our friend feel better?” (Hurting others is never negotiable.)

Behavior of concern: Two children exclude another

Nurture – providing loving, empathetic role modeling and caring.

Assertive Care – Talk and read books about feelings; coach children on how to talk about their own feelings and recognize feelings of others.

Supportive Care – “I like spending time with friends and it hurts my feelings when I feel left out.” Such a statement models what you want the child to learn. For child who is excluded, you can ask, “Which of your friends would you like to invite for a play date?”

Structure – Respond to the message “You can’t play” with agreed upon limits

Nonnegotiable Rule – “Our rule is to use kind respectful words. Everyone gets a turn at school.” We may also say, “We don’t use put downs” if it fits the situation.

Negotiable Rule – “It hurts his feelings when you say that. You can offer him a turn when you are done or find a way he can join your game now.” To child excluded, we may say, “You can say I’m disappointed, or that hurt my feelings.” Provide choices for entering play now or agreeing to play together later.

Example from “Promoting First Relationships” regarding guidance relating to meeting the social and emotional needs of young children.

Behavior of concern: Child pulls dog’s tail repeatedly after being told to stop.

Feelings

Adult – Frustrated, angry

Child – Curious about dog and about testing boundaries

Needs

Adult – to feel competent and in control

Child – to feel safe and stimulated in my exploration

Strategies

Nonnegotiable rule – “We touch the dog gently. Pulling her tail hurts. You may throw the ball for her or pet her gently.”

Follow---through – Separate the child and dog, or have the child take a break from being with the dog until she/he is calm and ready to remember the rule.

WORDS THAT HELP

Note that we want to use positive statements. Tell the children what they can do. These are words that I most often use in guiding children. I think this will be useful for you.

Don't give the child a choice if there is no real choice. Instead of "Do you want to _____?" say "It's time to _____."

Instead of using good or bad when describing action. For positive actions say "You learned how to _____." or "You worked a long time on _____."

For negative actions say, "You can _____ or _____ but you can not _____."

"What are the rules about _____?" or "You forgot and _____."

General:

"Chairs are to sit on."

"Tables are for snack and work."

"You can _____ or _____. If you can't make a choice, I will help you."

"We are gentle with people. Pushing is not gentle."

"Your body is showing me that I will have to help you move."

Art:

"When there is space I will come and get you."

"Walk carefully when you carry paint."

"Look at all the blue you used, you filled the entire page with blue."

"That was an accident. The sponges are over there; you can clean it up.

Paint spilled intentionally, "Paint goes on the easel paper." "The sponges are over there, you can clean the paint off the floor."

Sensory:

"Keep the _____ in the sensory table."

"If you throw the _____ again, you will have to find somewhere else to work."

"I'll help you find someplace else to work." (later invite the child back to the _____ area)

Blocks:

"Towers are as tall as your chin."

"We build with blocks here."

"You can help rebuild Scott's tower."

"You crashed their work, come, I'll help you find somewhere else to work."

Circle Time:

- "Now is the time to listen."
- "You can visit with your friend later."
- "Here's a lap to sit on."
- "Here is your special spot."
- "I wonder what Teacher_____ is going to say."
- "We use Preschool words for our songs."
- "You are having trouble sitting in the circle, you can go sit in the library or at the drawing table, when you are ready to sit and sing you can come back."

Sharing (Children at this age do not understand sharing try not to use that word, but describe the process.):

Two want the same toy,

- "She has the ball now, you can ask her to give it to you when she is finished."
- "When he has finished, it will be your turn. Now you can play with_____."
- You can say, "When you are finished, I want a turn."

If a child hits or grab,

- "John is using it now, it's John's turn. You can ask him for a turn when he is done."
- "I won't let children get hurt."
- "I'll help you find someplace else to work."
- "I know that you are mad, I understand that you want that_____, but I won't let you hurt someone."
- "You have to go somewhere else till you feel calm."
- "When if feel angry I count to ten and take a deep breath."

Clean-up:

- "It's _pause_ time to clean up."
- "The blocks go on the shelf."
- "All the puzzles go on the shelf."
- "I see clothes on the floor."
- "Here's the garbage can."

Some of these suggestions come courtesy of : Sally Zuck-Jones, revised by Sharon Kovacs 6/82, revised by Chris David 9/93, 7/97, 9/98, 7/02,8/04,8/05, 8/06

RULES FOR PRESCHOOL

1. MATERIALS CAN'T BE THROWN.
2. A CHILD CAN'T DESTROY ANOTHER CHILD'S WORK.
3. A CHILD CAN'T HURT ANOTHER CHILD WITH HITTING OR WORDS.
4. A CHILD CAN'T HURT THEMSELVES.
5. ADULTS MUST FOCUS ON FUN, PLEASURE, DELIGHT, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND SATISFACTION.