



GENERAL MANUAL POLICY

APPROVED BY:



Executive Director

CATEGORY: W.J. Griffis Children's Centre

TOPIC: Behaviour Guidance

Page 1 of 6

Ontario Regulation 137/15
Subsection 48 – Prohibited Practices

POLICY

It is the policy of the W. J. Griffis Children's Centre (Griffis Centre) to ensure a safe and secure environment where quality care and respect for the individual needs of children are of primary importance.

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Griffis Centre stresses the importance of teaching children self-regulation and responsibility. Children should never be discouraged from expressing their feelings; instead, they should be taught how to express themselves constructively. Children should be encouraged to verbalize their aggression, rather than to resort to physical action. However, if a child does resort to aggressive actions, the situation should be discussed with them so they may gain an understanding of the problem. If another child is involved, both children should be encouraged to discuss the problem and their feelings. Children who have become too upset to talk can be removed from the situation until a discussion can take place.

The Griffis Centre is committed to the principle of behaviour guidance using the methods set out below:

- Be patient and calm in your behavior, actions, and responses.
- Be consistent and set limits prior to activities and transitions.
- In any situation, be involved with the children without encroaching on their work or play.
- Arrange the environment so that children are guarded against dangerous situations.

GENERAL MANUAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC:

Page 2 of 6

- Remember that each child is different, so your approach or method of dealing with each child may also vary.
- Encourage the children to verbalize their feelings, fears, and anxieties.
- Be alert to the development of potentially difficult situations or disputes between children.
- Follow up when limits are broken by a child.
- Use a quiet voice.
- Seek assistance from another staff member if a situation or child becomes too difficult to handle alone.
- Recognition of needing help is a strength, not a weakness.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE PROCEDURE

The Ministry of Education's paper on How does learning happen? Provides information on ways staff and adults can engage in positive, responsive interactions and why this is critical for children's overall learning, development, health and well-being.

The research from diverse fields of study shows that children who attend programs where they experience warm, supportive relationships are happier, less anxious and more motivated to learn than those who do not.

Experiencing positive relationships in early childhood also has significant long term impacts on physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond.

Educators can know more about the complexity of each child and can deepen children's learning and experiences when they look at and listen to children from multiple perspectives, asking, for example:

- What are the unique strengths and needs, approaches, attitudes, and dispositions of each child?
- How do a child's relationships, families, home environments, and the cultural context in which the child lives influence his or her development and learning?
- What motivates a child's actions; what is meaningful to him or her; what brings a child joy?
- What can be done to extend and deepen children's learning?
- What do I know about each child's unique spirit and character?



GENERAL MANUAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC:

Page 3 of 6

Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways.

In addition, when the schedule allows for long periods of uninterrupted play, with few transitions, children are calmer and more engaged. When the environment supports children's growing autonomy and independence, challenging behaviours are reduced and educators can focus more fully on observing, interacting, and extending children's learning and development in meaningful ways. (Shanker)

The teacher:

- Tries to understand the child and the reasons for the child's behavior.
- Must consider the physical environment, anticipating problems, and arrange the environment so that it is safe and comfortable for the children, conducive to appropriate behavior by the child.
- Will respect each child and consider the individual needs of each child in each situation.
- Will try to develop positive and trusting relationships with families, staff and children.
- Will try to encourage the children to develop self-regulation and gain independence.
- Uses problem-solving techniques to encourage the children to discuss what has happened, their feelings, and other ways to communicate.
- Will redirect the children when necessary to help them interact more constructively.
- Will deal with the situation in a positive manner, and try to reflect the feelings of the children involved.
- Will guide children gently and respectfully, when necessary holding the child's hand.
- Will indicate to the children through the use of gestures, physical proximity, or a quiet voice about unsafe conduct or inappropriate behaviour.
- Never uses 'sitting out/ time out' – if a child needs to be gently removed from an area of the room or from the room altogether, then the staff person will remain quietly and supportively with the child.

Initial:

GENERAL MANUAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC:

Page 4 of 6

- The child and the staff member will return to the room when the child is in control of her/ his emotions and body.

Prohibited practices:

- Any form of corporal punishment (physical violence such as hitting, spanking, kicking, pushing, shoving, grabbing, or squeezing arms, ears, etc.). If this type of action is witnessed, it must be reported the Children's Aid Society.
- Deliberate harsh or degrading treatment that would humiliate or undermine a child's self-respect.
- Abusive language, yelling, screaming and threats of denial.
- Depriving or denying children any basic needs (i.e. food, shelter, clothing or bedding).
- Using food to discipline children at snacks or lunch.
- Confining or locking children in any room or dark area for any reason. If this is witnessed, it must be reported to the Children's Aid Society.
- Children must never be left alone.

Procedure upon contravention of Behaviour Guidance Policy:

1. Any staff member observed using any form of corporal punishment or confinement of a child or children must be reported immediately to the Children's Aid Society.
2. Any staff member observed using disciplinary measures that contravene the provincial early years and childcare standards and the Griffis Centre's behavior guidance policy, shall be reported immediately to the supervisor, who will take immediate steps to investigate the alleged incident.
3. The supervisor will immediately speak privately to the staff member involved in order to assess the validity of the alleged incident. If necessary, appropriate action will be taken which may range from progressive disciplinary action, depending on the nature of the contravention, to immediate dismissal. The incident will be documented.
4. If a second incident of a similar nature is reported or observed, progressive disciplinary action will be followed.

GENERAL MANUAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC:

Page 5 of 6

De-escalating a Volatile Situation

It is recognized that in some extreme situations, wherein a child is endangering self or others, staff may find themselves having to respond to a crisis situation using physical guidance as a method to defuse or de-escalate a volatile situation. The Griffis Centre does not approve of the use of any form of restraint but recognizes there are times when children are at risk of hurting themselves or others. These guidelines reinforce the need to ensure that children are supervised and safe at all times. Supported strategies will only be used with the approval from parents, guardians and families.

De-escalating Volatile Behaviour Procedures

If any staff uses physical guidance in this type of situation, it will be treated as an emergency situation, and the following steps must be taken:

1. Staff will inform others that there is an emergency situation and they need assistance.
2. Two staff members will then support the child and will escort the child out of the room/area and to the planning office or the supervisor's office.
3. If the child is unwilling or unable to leave the room/area and the child is exhibiting physically and/or emotionally charged behavior, the other staff working will escort the group of children out of the room. Children may move briefly to the hallway or another room, remaining supervised at all times.
4. All behavior guidance techniques appropriate to this child and the situation will be implemented prior to the use of physical restraint. If the child needs to be restrained it will be done for safety reasons, and as a last resort only. Two staff members must be present before the restraint is initiated.
5. Once the child has de-escalated from the situation, she or he will be supportively introduced back into the program. The staff should remain with this child until they are involved in an activity or task.
6. The other children will be given an opportunity to discuss the disruptive situation.
7. The staff who used the physical guidance with the child will document the incident, sign the document and submit it to the supervisor.
8. The staff and supervisor will meet with the child's parent/ guardian to discuss the incident and determine the strategies to be utilized should the child encounter a similar situation. The parent/ guardian is required to sign off on the report and the strategies. A copy of the incident will be placed in the child's file.



Initial: *W*

GENERAL MANUAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC:

Page 6 of 6

9. The supervisor will contact the serious occurrence line and report the incident. In discussion with the consultant, the situation will be reported either as an incident or as a serious occurrence depending on the circumstances surrounding the situation.
10. If a child alleges that they have been injured, the centre must comply with the child abuse reporting policy.
11. The supervisor and staff will keep the parent/guardian up to date on the child's progress using a mutually agreed-upon method of communication i.e. phone, meetings, log book, etc. This also includes a review of the strategies.
12. If the child continues to experience challenging behavior, the centre will call in a specialized consultation service if parental consent is forthcoming. A strategy and intervention plan will be devised in consultation with the resource teacher, family and centre.
13. If further support is deemed necessary for the child to continue at the Centre, the supervisor may request child care support funds for the child.