

## **Discipline**

The objective of discipline at the Mustard Seed is to help each child be a part of a safe, nurturing environment. In order to meet this objective, the children are encouraged and shaped to appropriate behaviors when needed in a very positive manner. The ultimate goal within the classroom is for the children to be able to use self-control and self-direction. Intervention with inappropriate behaviors will be clear, concise and immediate—always being fair and consistent. “Time-out”, removing the child from the group or activity, may be appropriate in some cases. Corporal punishment is not allowed.

## **Behavior management policy**

This child care center uses indirect guidance techniques:

- We give previous warnings: “You have 5 more minutes to play before it’s time to clean up”.
- We give choices: “You may paint with the other children or you may read a book in the quiet corner”. We have a regular routine: “We always wash our hands before lunch. After lunch is story time”.
- We avoid nagging: We tell the child what we expect just once, follow it by asking the child if he/she remembers what we asked, and then offer to help the child do what was asked.
- We are consistent: We do things the same way each day so the children know what to expect and learn to trust and feel safe in their environment.

We also use direct guidance techniques:

- We use the affirmative: “We use walking feet indoors, rather than “Don’t run!” or, “Use your words to tell us you’re angry” rather than, “Don’t hit!”
- We get the child’s attention by crouching down to his/her level, making eye contact, speaking quietly and asking the child to repeat the directions.
- We try very hard to be fair. We examine our expectations to make sure they are age-appropriate and we don’t make rules just because an activity is too noisy or messy.
- We avoid arguments by following through with solutions that address the problem, but also offer the child a way to exit gracefully from the problem: “You can choose a quiet place to calm down or I can choose one for you”.

If a child is unable to demonstrate self-controlling behavior, a brief time-out results for the child to regain control. Time-out occurs only when other measures fail, and is used as an opportunity for the child to re-group, not as a punishment.

If a child is unable to gain control and requires more individual attention than can be given within child to staff ratios, we will need to contact a parent. A child requiring one-to-one attention may have to leave the center temporarily for safety's sake. Repeated uncontrollable behavior can lead to discontinuation of child care services.

### **Child abuse, neglect, or exploitation policy**

Please be informed that the Mustard Seed management and Staff are required by Washington State Licensing requirements to report immediately to police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. The Center Staff are not obligated to inform parents if police or CPS are called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.