



## **Discipline Policy**

Our goal in discipline is for children to develop inner controls leading to self-discipline. We use positive guidance to empower children to form positive relationships, resolve conflicts, and show respect for others. We affirm each child's importance by working to find techniques that work best to guide the behavior of each individual child. All discipline will be respectful and never humiliating.

*Consistent Routines and Limits* We create consistent yet flexible routines so children know what to expect. We set limits for children based on safety, responsibility and respect. We give information, point out natural consequences and give reasonable choices. We make sure children know that we, as the adults, will make decisions and enforce rules to keep all children safe.

*Environment* We set up the environment to meet children's needs at their developmental level. We provide activities that provide stimulation and minimize frustration. We make sure there are enough materials and multiple versions of favorite objects. We maintain adult to child ratios that allow children the amount of support they need. We constantly observe and evaluate the environment to anticipate problems before they occur. Whenever possible we modify the environment to meet the children's individual needs instead of trying to adapt children to meet the environment.

*Natural Consequences* When a situation occurs that isn't acceptable, we encourage children to take responsibility for their actions and correct the situation when possible. If a child bites another, he/she helps wash and hold ice on the bite. If a child throws toys, he/she helps pick them up. If a child knocks down another child's block structure, he/she helps rebuild it. To reinforce natural consequences, we use "when, then" scenarios. Examples: "When you crash the bike into other children, then it is time to get off the bike", "When you pick up the puzzle pieces, then you may choose another activity.", "When you put your coat on, then you will be ready to go outside." If

consistent unacceptable behavior occurs, such as a child hitting other children, we remove the child from the situation stating what we see. "It looks to me like you are having a hard time controlling your body. I'm going to move you to an activity close to me so I can help you use gentle touches." When the child feels ready, he/she may try again, while a teacher supervises and coaches to help the child learn self-control. We use this type of method rather than sending the child to "time-out" because we do not want to embarrass or punish children; we want to support the development of empathy.

*Respectful, Positive Language* We use clear and simple statements about behavior and try to do so positively. Example: "Food stays at the table" instead of "no walking around with food". We offer choices when possible. Example: "Do you want to put your coat on by yourself or do you want me to help you?" We talk about the behavior, not the child, because while behavior is or isn't acceptable, children are not "good" or "bad". We listen to children's feelings and support them in solving problems.