

Document Summary

Document Title	Behaviour Management Policy	Revision / Publish Date	March 2010	Next Date for Review	March 2011
Revised By Author	Natalie Higgins	Approved By	Natalie Higgins & Sharon Carrafa	Policy Reference	OHS_Policy_Behaviour Mangement Policy_Revision 9_March 2009
Family Input	Rachael West (10/7/2009)& Elise Dav (3/6/2010)	Team Member Input	Bree Hall Emma Hedley Jenna Anderson		
Consultation 02/06/2010	Amanda Russell, P.Burns, Tamara Cracknell, Julie Kortholt, Kirsten Allen, J. Del maestro, Melanie Moxon, A.Volvrict, Julie Paget, Amanda, Sarah Tofield,				
Revision History	Rev. 1 –05/06 (Natalie Higgins) Rev.2. – 23/11/09 (Bree Hall) Substantive change based on industry changes Rev. 3. – 18/05/2010 (Bree Hall) incorporating feedback and changes from consultation				

Purpose & Rationale

Children face many challenges throughout their lives and learning acceptable behaviours and being able to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments, or when interacting with their peers or adults are two of those challenges. We aim to empower children to recognize their own behaviours and adjust them appropriately depending on the social context by:-

- Encourageing acceptable forms of behavior by using strategies that build children’s confidence and self-esteem;
- Providing children with support, guidance and opportunities to manage their own behavior;
- Promoting collaborative approaches to behavior guidance between the service’s stakeholders and/or external agencies;
- Respecting the importance of interactions and relationships between children, families and caregivers;
- Promoting realistic play and behavior limits that guide children’s safety and security, rather than curb their play experiences, curiosity or creativity

- Defining clear and transparent caregiving strategies that communicate how behaviour guidance is implemented by the service;
- Recognising that there are many reasons that challenging behaviours occur and undertaking the correct techniques to establish where the behaviour originated from,
- Encouraging staff to undertake further learning in behaviour guidance to keep up to date with the latest research to assist both staff and children to have the best possible outcomes;
- Actively listening; asking the child questions about their behaviour and repeating what they say back to them so that they know you are listening and understanding what they are saying: and
- Role modeling appropriate behaviour with all children in the room as well as staff.

It is also important to acknowledge that behavioural expectations vary greatly among different cultures, social groupings and child rearing practices. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there are clear expectations from all parties on how children's behaviour will be effectively managed in a way that promotes integration and acceptance of cultural and social variance.

Strategies, Practices and Procedures

The term discipline is often associated with punishment because it has previously been defined by what adults do to children to control behaviours (Stonehouse , 2004, 47)effectively used as a threat or consequence of inappropriate behaviour. This is why throughout this document we avoid the word discipline and use instead the term behaviour guidance as this includes all forms of behaviour and not just those that are labeled as 'negative'.

At Smartie Pants we recognize and understand that children's behaviour may be affected by their:

- Age and Development;
- General Health and Wellbeing;
- Relationships with their family;

- Play and learning environments inclusive of physical environment, social dynamic and caregiver strategies and teaching styles;
- Experiences or media coverage of traumatic events; and
- Changes in home life e.g new addition to family, bereavement, separation.

In acknowledgement of the above staff/carers display respect and empathy towards children when dealing with problem behaviours.

Staff make sure to label the behaviour and not the individual child. This allows for the behaviours to be managed and addressed and not the children. Staff role model to the child's peers appropriate labeling of behaviour not digressing to the term's 'naughty' or 'bad'.

Similarly;

Traditional labels such as 'good boy' or 'good girl' identify the individual but not the positive behaviour.
(www.ncac.gov.au/policy_development/behaviour_guidance.doc)

- For example when a child completes a task as directed by an adult eg washing hands before a meal, staff/carers should identify the specific behaviour that reinforces the achievement and not the whole child. An example of a positive response from caregiver is: "Thankyou For washing your hands now they are all clean for you to eat your lunch".
- To encourage acceptable behaviour Team Members will:
 - Model appropriate behaviour suitable to the child's age and understanding.
 - Positively reinforce examples of model behaviours through the use of catch phrases such as -

"Hands are for helping not hurting"

"Listening is learning"

"Sharing is caring"

"Speak to please not to tease"

"Take turns to talk"

- Positively reinforce examples of model behaviours through the use of acknowledgement and reinforcement -
“It is great to see you help...open the door”

“That is good listening.....”

“That is really great sharing...”

Also is it great to encourage the child to think about their feelings also with sayings like - “Well done ...!
How did it feel to share your toy.....”

The difference between praise and encouragement is that praise motivates children to do things for extrinsic reasons (to please others) as opposed to encouragement which motivates children to do things for themselves (intrinsically).

We can make positive feedback more positive by:

- - Naming the behaviour we want to encourage;
 - - Focus on the specific attributes of a child rather than generalities;
 - - Emphasize the process not the product;
 - - Be sincere and direct;
 - - Deliver encouragement privately in a natural voice;
 - - Avoid comparisons
 - - Help children appreciate their own behaviours and achievements.
-
- Arrange the environment to enhance the learning of acceptable behaviours by reducing competition, boredom etc.

- Use descriptive encouragement when appropriate behaviour is occurring, eg. “I know how much you enjoy playing with blocks and it was really kind of you to let have a turn.”
- Promoting empathy and understanding of others. Taking the time to recognize when someone else is hurt and to reflect on how you might feel if you were that person.
- Working with children and families to promote and develop positive self regulation skills as well as reasonable and safe outlets for venting frustration, anger and hurt. This involves assisting children to label, talk and positively vent their feelings.
- While staff are aware and respect the individual children’s and families backgrounds and beliefs, it may be necessary to balance these individual needs with staff’s knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices and current best practice recommendation from NCAC and other governing bodies.

Here at Smartie Pants we are proactive in our behaviour guidance strategies. Instead of waiting for inappropriate behaviours to occur, we attempt to minimize the circumstances in which they are more prone to occur. As children grow and develop they strengthen their social and emotional skills and abilities. We recognize this and implement limits and boundaries based on these abilities and realistic expectations. Children are also actively involved in setting these guidelines and cues are set up throughout the day to remind children of them: Such as posters with pictures, conversations about appropriate behaviours, photographs of positive interactions and staff role modeling appropriate behaviour and language.

When unacceptable behaviour is occurring or about to occur, Team Members will implement the following actions:

- State limits - the setting of limits and rules prevents injury, promotes safety and social interaction and is in itself a major learning process. Limits are defined and clearly stated in a positive manner that is always clear to the child.
- Re-direction - substitute a negative activity for a positive one.
- Distraction - change the focus of the activity or the behaviour.
- Active listening - to determine the underlying cause of the behaviour.
- Repetition - if unsettled behaviour continues, re-direction is repeated until the child becomes settled in a secure and calm area.

Ways in which we can manage challenging behaviours are:

- Learn as much as possible about each child, their abilities, families, culture, developmental levels, play skills, interests, what makes them happy, sad or angry;
- Boost each child's self esteem with all children believing that they are treated in a consistent and respectful manner and that they are valued as individual's, listening and responding when they communicate;
- Intervening early in challenging behaviour, by staying calm and taking the time to understand the source of the behaviour;
- Realising that when attempting to break a behaviour that it takes time and consistency;
- Arranging play spaces to avoid frustration and aggression;
- Limiting open spaces indoors which encourage running and bumping;
- Limiting noise and constant loud music;
- Creating predictive program with consistency;
- Allowing for long periods of uninterrupted play and children having the time to complete and fully discover a task;
- Limiting competitive games, violent toys or violent role models such as superheroes;
- Allowing time in the day for rest and quiet play as well as solo play spaces;
- Listening attentively and asking a child who, what, when and where to get them to communicate with you what is on their mind;
- Show empathy by validating and paraphrasing what a child is telling you;
- Respond to the need being expressed in the child's message and reflect with them about how the situation concluded giving them the tools to help deal the next time it occurs;

Further note we consciously look for other tell tale signs of the onset of challenging behaviours

- i. Physiological: Tears, weeing, clenched teeth, pallor, rigidity, rapid breathing, sweating, fidgeting, vomiting, clenched fists;
- ii. Behavioural: Downcast eyes, withdrawing, hair twirling, thumb sucking, hair sucking, clothes sucking, hoarding, clinging, biting fingernails, whining, noisy quiet, screaming, masturbating, smirking and giggling.

If these behaviours are not responded to quickly and effectively they can escalate into aggression and agitation causing the child to become upset and possibly losing control. The first principle of teaching and limiting negative responses is to be POSITIVE. Communicate to the child what you wish them to do NOT the behaviour you do not want.

Important:

The use of physical punishment¹ by staff/carers/students/volunteers/visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances.

The use of isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labelling by staff/carers/ students/ volunteers/ visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances.

In meeting the service's duty of care under the Children's Services Regulations 1996 there is a shared responsibility between the service and its stakeholders that the behaviour Guidance Policy and procedures are adhered to.

Many authoritative bodies outline and define the rights of a child and Smartie Pants as an ethical operator, wholly accepts and adopts these:

- *United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, or*
- *Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics (2005).*

Behaviour Management Tools

At Smartie Pants we employ a number of mechanisms to observe, measure and assess challenging behaviour.

These include:

- Anecdotal observations;

¹ For the purpose of this policy, physical punishment includes smacking, hitting, slapping, kicking, pinching, pulling, pushing, shoving or the inappropriate manhandling of a child by an adult.

- Time Samples;
- Running records with trigger points;
- Written communication with carer's at home with the child;
- Another more analytical method which probes to identify 'root causes' of challenging behaviour is Functional Assessments which asks us to look at the ordinary environment in a special way using ABC analysis:

A for Antecedents – events that take place right before challenging behaviour including demands, requests, difficult tasks, transitions, interruptions, peer actions, etc. This however is not a description of the setting or environment which includes the group size, room set up, noise and other environmental factors.

B is for behaviour which a specific description of what behaviour has been observed.

C is for consequences and describes what happens after the challenging behaviour occurs. How does the carer react? How do the other children react? What does the carer do in response? Etc.

ABC analysis used with setting events point towards the function of behaviour in 3 possible ways:

- the child gets something (eg attention)
- the child avoids or escapes from something;
- the child changes the level of stimulation.

The best way to learn about a challenging behaviour is to observe and collect information yourself and to obtain as much current and accurate information as possible, preferably from more than one source. It is also good to involve everyone in a brainstorming session to try to figure out what is going on, involve parents and share ideas on strategies and how to be consistent.

Two reasons for observing are:

- a. with data you can measure change reliably;
 - b. enables you to see the relationship between the environment and the challenging behaviour.
- REMEMBER: Negative feedback is likely to further damage a child's negative self image and escalate challenging behaviour.

In all cases where a challenging behaviour is identified at Smartie Pants, including those associated with developmental delays or disability, a Behaviour Management and Additional Needs Management Plan is required to be prepared and implemented.

The purpose of a behaviour Management and Additional Needs Management Plan is to;

- To discuss positive behavioural supports for the challenging behaviour therefore, helping the child's family and our team to:
- Understand why a particular behaviour may occur;
- Develop intervention strategies for organizing environments to decrease the possibility of challenging behaviours;
- To facilitate improved communication between the family and the centre team;
- Help the family and our team to learn more about strategies to support challenging behaviours; and
- To assist each child achieve their fullest potential.

Representation from senior management (e.g. a co-ordinator or director) and the corresponding assessing Room Leader must be involved in the development process. Other persons who may be invited to provide feedback into the plan could include:

- Other team members with specialized knowledge in a challenging behaviour; and
- Other team members who may have had close contact with a child and their challenging behaviour.

Room leaders are to compile their observations and draft a management plan before inviting families and other team members to an introductory interview and discussion

While each plan will be unique to a particular child, family or carer's needs, the format of the plan should include:

- Details of the child and family;
- Relevant history (both medical and behavioural)
- Summary of any previous diagnosis by medical professionals;
- Identification of key challenging behaviours and relative severity;
- Discussion of child strengths on which to build;
- List of organizations who have or could be of assistance in the management of a child's behaviour or additional need;
- List of target behaviours or goals which team members wish to promote;
- Observations to date including:
 - Direct observations (anecdotal, tally and record sheets)
 - Environmental Observations and Manipulations (Cause and Effect Analysis)
 - Functional Assessments; and
- List of behaviour management strategies agreed by all parties involved in the preparation and implementation of the plan
- After an initial meeting between families and room leaders, regular review meetings should be scheduled and conducted as agreed is necessary to ensure plan remains a current and effective tool at assisting and managing challenging behaviour. Team communication and/or specialized training may also be required and team members are asked to raise training requirements to a Co-ordinator or Director

Measurement Tools

Incident reports

Program Database



Links to Forms, Factsheets and Other Documentation which Support this Policy

[Behaviour Observation Template](#)

[Behaviour Management and Additional Needs Management Plan Template](#)

Links to other Policies

Makes note of where the policy supports or relates to other Policy Statements.

QIAS Links

Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) Quality Practices Guide (2005) – Principle 1.2

Sources

Identifies the relevant recognised authorities and sources of information used to support the Policy Statement and Procedures. Google is always a good start but always check links below for vital information links.

Examples include:

http://www.ncac.gov.au/policy_development/behaviour_guidance.doc