

# Behavioural Guidance Policy - Early Learning Services

## Policy Statement

The YMCA Behavioural Guidance Policy emphasises that Children and Young people have the same rights as adults. We recognise, value and celebrate the differences and similarities that exist in all people. We believe in the importance of educators providing positive guidance that fosters respect and tolerance, building a child’s wellbeing and sense of identity.

Children and young people face many challenges throughout their lives including learning acceptable behaviours. YMCA educators are committed to a Behaviour Guidance Policy that shows children, families and educators working collaboratively to support each other when guiding children to express themselves in a positive manner.

## Objective

- To support children and young people to guide their own behaviour, consequences and choices recognising them as capable and competent learners.
- To provide opportunities for children and young people to express their thoughts and feelings in an open and respectful environment.
- To support children to build relationships that are caring, respectful and empathetic to each other.
- To develop children and young people’s feelings of happiness and satisfaction through successful engagement.

## Procedures

### Educators will:

- Provide a curriculum with an enthusiastic and positive attitude.
- Ensure their expectations of behaviour are realistic and suit the uniqueness of each child.
- Encourage children to develop strategies to solve problems as they arise.
- Develop positive relationships with children through being an active listener and open communicator. They will remain calm and keep their voices at a speaking level that shows respect and care.
- Practice a guidance approach to supporting children’s behaviour as they learn to express and share their emotions.
- Clearly express behaviour guidelines verbally and non verbally in positive ways using vocabulary that reflects each child’s individual potential.
- Model positive behaviour and reinforce it consistently, in a way that suits children’s individuality and strengths.
- Work collaboratively with the family to support the best interests of the child.
- Use interactions that set an example by being in control of their own emotions, being clear about expectations and giving positive instruction.
- Ensure the environment and curriculum are stimulating and provide a balance of planned and spontaneous learning experiences as these factors are key influences on behaviour.

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- Maximise the effectiveness of their verbal and non-verbal communication by using voice intonations, facial expressions and explanations as methods of guidance to encourage desired behaviour.
- Implement consistent and age appropriate expectations and routines.
- Acknowledge children and young peoples strengths and achievements rather than focusing on their challenges.
- Observe and recognise situations in which behaviour is more likely to become inappropriate and take action to divert these situations before they arise.
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism when communicating, establishing and maintaining behavioural guidance strategies and practices.
- Monitor and comply with Legislation and regulatory requirements at all times.
- Attend to the primary behavioural issue and avoid getting drawn into secondary issues (avoid the arguments).
- Display respect and empathy towards children by labelling the behaviour, not the child. This shows the behaviour being guided not the children. (Educators will NOT label children)
- Be available to discuss and assist with any concern a family or another educator may have in respect of a child's behaviour or participation in the curriculum.
- Recognise that children's behaviours may be affected by their:
  - age and development.
  - General health and well being
  - Relationships with their families and friends

**Families will:**

- Build collaborative, supportive relationships with educators that support and show respect for each others role.
- Not discipline their own children at any time using any form of corporal punishment or unacceptable language whilst in the centre.
- Not discipline any other child within the centre.
- Refrain from using unacceptable language or raising their voice when speaking to children, educators or families within the centre.
- Refrain from speaking about children's behaviours in front of the child to support their dignity, show respect and build their emotional wellbeing.
- Disclose any behaviours they feel may impede a child's inclusion into the centres daily routine and curriculum.
- Work alongside the educators to develop a plan for guiding the behaviour.
- Families are encouraged to discuss behavioural guidance options with educators at any time.
- Families are encouraged to discuss their children's behaviour in a positive manner.

**YMCA will:**

- Provide professional development training on behavioural guidance to build on educators existing knowledge and strengths.
- Provide learning resources for educators to access strategies and solutions to guide behaviour.
- Support the Work Safety ACT which states that employers have a duty of care to their employees to ensure that the working environment supports educators emotional wellbeing.

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- Will recognise that when educators are supporting children with aggressive behaviours increased levels of stress and anxiety may occur. Additional professional development, strategies and support will be offered by the organisation in these times.
- Question and monitor educators about their knowledge of behavioural guidance strategies and practices.
- Monitor and investigate any ongoing behavioural concerns, that have been highlighted by families or educators.

### **Guiding Biting in Early Learning Settings:**

Young children bite for a wide range of reasons including;

- Learning self control
- Teething
- Language and vocabulary learning
- Sensory exploring their world with their mouths
- Frustration
- Needing more stimulation
- Changes in the home environment

YMCA Early Learning Centres aim to minimise biting in group settings by;

- Providing appropriate supervision
- Redirecting children in situations which might lead to biting
- Observing the behaviour closely for triggers
- Acknowledging when children are engaged positively in the environment
- Providing sufficient resources for exploration
- Extending opportunities for professional development to educators
- Role modeling and sharing practical strategies to guide the behaviour
- Implementing stimulating experiences that challenge and extend learning

Where biting is occurring on a regular basis the educators will work in partnership with families to identify consistent ways of guiding the child towards more appropriate forms of behaviour.

The steps taken if a child is biting on a regular basis are;

1. Written observations to help assess why and when the child is biting
2. Completion of a Behavioural Guidance Support Plan (attached)
3. Family meetings with the involved parties to work out consistent strategies to minimise the behaviour reoccurring.
4. If the biting still occurs educators may draw support from a family support service with the families permission.
5. Evaluating behaviour on a regular basis to ensure that incidents of biting are lowered or have ceased.

## **Related Policies and Procedures**

Curriculum Planning  
Safeguarding Children and Young People  
Interactions with Children

## **References**

Women & Children's Health Network, Child & Youth Health, [www.cyh.com/default.aspx?p=1](http://www.cyh.com/default.aspx?p=1)

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Accessed January 2014

Guiding childrens behaviour – A NCAC factsheet for families, National Childcare and Accreditation Council

Education and Care Services National Regulations, December 2011

YMCA Behaviour Management Policy 2009

Education and Care Services National Regulations, December 2011

National Quality Framework – Quality Area 2 Childrens Health and Safety.

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## Behavioural Guidance Support Plan

Child Profile	
Child Name:	D.O.B:
	Age:
Parent / Guardian Names:	Background:
Strengths and Interests:	
Service / Room / Environment:	Educators / Team:

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**Behaviours Observed: (attach observations if required):**

Empty space for observations.

**Effective Communication:**

Empty space for effective communication notes.

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Support Area:	Strategy / Action:	Evaluation:

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<b>Family Collaboration / Correspondence (calls, meetings, feedback):</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Resources / Professional Development:</b>	

Educator Signature:  
Date:

Family Signature:  
Date:

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