Timberlin Creek Little Eagles Learning Center

**Discipline Policy**

The following guidelines represent the Discipline Policy for the Timberlin Creek Little Eagles Learning Center. Our center recognizes that individual differences and situations can exist and that not every technique works with every child.

There is never any instance when corporal punishment is to be used. Corporal punishment includes belittling, demeaning, frightening or embarrassing a child, as well as physical punishment. The punishment will never be associated with food, rest or toileting. Discipline will take place in an objective manner and children are never referred to in negative terms. Incidents with children are kept confidential.

The Little Eagles Learning Center will follow a seven step discipline method. The Learning Center workers will use this to help overcome inappropriate behaviors. These procedures are developed in order to allow children the freedom to correct the difficulty they are having on their own. Little Eagles workers respond to a discipline scenario beginning at number one (1) below and proceed through the list until the behavior is corrected.

1. Reminder: Either before the activity begins or during the process, the Learning Center worker will remind the child what is acceptable and is not acceptable. This can include solutions to problems and to role play what things they may do or say if a problem presents itself.
2. Reinforce: The Learning Center workers will comment on the child’s success. This lets the child know that his/her appropriate behavior is valued and appreciated.
3. Redirect: The Learning Center worker will anticipate a behavior problem or see a problem beginning and make suggestions as to what alternate activities are available. This may just be a simple process of pointing out what might become a problem.
4. Restatement: The Learning Center worker will take the child aside and in a quiet voice, at the child’s eye level, restate the appropriate limits and discuss the logical consequences if the behavior continues.
5. Removal: This involves the removal of a child from the activity for a brief amount of time. In the past, a similar technique was known as “time out.” Removal differs from “time out” in the following ways:
* Removal is not a “punishment.” It is a time for the child to calm down and regain control.
* Since this process should not be humiliating, we will not have a predetermined chair or place for removal.
* The child determines the length of the removal period. The child may return to the activity, when s/he feels able to remain in control and act appropriately.
* The procedure is intended to be part of the learning process which has the goal of enabling the child the child to eventually develop “self-discipline.”
* Removal is not meant to be simply exclusion from the group for the worker’s convenience.
1. Rejoin: This will take place when the child feels ready and able to rejoin the group. A dialogue will occur between the Learning Center worker and the child to address why they were removed from the group and the alternative behavior choices. If the child had difficulty verbalizing the problem, the Learning Center worker will assist.
2. Roundtable: When all else failed and the behavior problem becomes extensive or repetitive, it will be necessary to involve the parents, the Learning Center worker, Director, and in some cases, the child, for a roundtable conference. This will give everyone the opportunity to pool their resources and determine strategies and consequences.

In instances where discipline becomes a concern due to severity or repeated incidences, the Director and Learning Center worker will begin to document the inappropriate behaviors. Documentation will include an objective description of the time, the behavior that occurred, the activity that preceded the behavior, what steps the Learning Center worker took and the results of the action. This may be an ongoing process in some cases. Documentation is needed before we can refer a child for intervention and also for making sound decisions concerning the child. The parents will be notified of continuing problems. When a specific behavior is addressed three times in writing to the parent, the Director has the right to remove the child from the Center and no longer provide child care services.

When discipline problems involve a child who bites, kicks or hurts others, the problem will be referred to the Director. If the child does not respond immediately to our correction, s/he will be dismissed from the Center for the protection of the other children in the program.