

Intro to Child Care Course (Learning Plan 3)

Positive Guidance (4 hours)

Overview: Children need guidance in order to be safe, stay physically and emotionally healthy, develop social, intellectual and language skills, and develop self-concept and self-control. This Learning Plan explores various positive guidance strategies.

Target Competency 3: Analyze techniques of positive behavior management for young children.

Learning Objectives:

- a. Review Wisconsin's Administrative rules and regulations concerning child guidance
- b. Examine written policies on child guidance
- c. Differentiate between discipline and guidance
- d. Identify ways in which the environment affects children's behavior
- e. Examine direct and indirect guidance
- f. Give examples of guidance principles
- g. Summarize the effect of guidance on children's self-esteem
- h. Use active listening skills
- i. Use affirmations with young children
- j. Explore personal actions and words that promote growth and development and model positive guidance
- k. Identify guidance strategies appropriate for different developmental ages and individual child needs
- l. Identify strategies for responding to children with different temperaments
- m. Identify strategies to use when a child's behavior is disruptive

Required Resources:

Internet links:

- Positive Guidance and Discipline Principles: Description and Explanation
<http://www.education.com/pdf/positive-guidance-discipline-strategies/>
- Wisconsin Administrative Licensing Rules and Regulations for Family Child Care-
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/4069.pdf>
- Wisconsin Administrative Licensing Rules and Regulations for Group Child Care-
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/4024.pdf>

Handouts:

- Factors that Create Discipline Problems
- Guidance and Discipline with Infants and Toddlers
- Developing a Child Guidance Policy

Introduction:

Positive guidance is a framework in which children can learn acceptable social practices and ways to express their feelings. Children need guidance in order to be safe, stay physically and emotionally healthy, develop social, intellectual and language skills, and develop self-concept and self-control. The goal of positive guidance is to develop children's self-control, encourage children to assume responsibility, and assist them in making good decisions.

As a professional in the field of early care and education you must value childhood and understand that this is a time of learning. Children will make mistakes and it becomes the job of the teacher, parent or caregiver to assist the child in learning how to respond or express themselves in a socially acceptable way. All behavior, positive and negative has meaning. With understanding of why a child may be behaving in a particular way, the teacher, parent or caregiver then becomes better able to provide a child with what s/he may need and later teacher the child a skill to get his/her needs met in a more acceptable way.

Assignment:

Review Wisconsin's Administrative rules and regulations concerning child guidance

After reviewing these rules and regulations make note of any that you would like to research further to learn more about.

Discipline vs Guidance

To be effective in guiding children to make meaningful changes to their behaviors it is important to understand the difference between punishment and discipline. Review the chart below, from Focus on Family web article, "Punishment vs Discipline" by Chip Ingram.

	PUNISHMENT	DISCIPLINE
Purpose	To inflict penalty for an offense	To train for correction and maturity
Focus	Past misdeeds	Future correct acts
Attitude	Hostility and frustration on the part of the parent, teacher or caregiver	Love and concern on the part of the parent, teacher or caregiver
Resulting emotion in the child	Fear and guilt	Security

Understanding the difference between discipline and punishment makes all the difference in terms of attitude and results. Punishment is negative. It is intended to hurt. Piaget described punishment as arbitrary, with no relation between the content of guilty and the nature of the punishment. i.e. spanking, writing lines, standing in the corner. Punishment conveys revenge or vindictiveness. In contrast, the purpose of guidance is to teach children to behave appropriately. Discipline is part of child guidance, punishment is not. **Punishment is not allowed in early childhood settings.**

Direct and Indirect Guidance

Basic guidance techniques include both indirect and direct strategies to use in preventing, resolving, and correcting behaviors. Indirect guidance refers to strategies that are used in establishing a positive classroom environment including room arrangement, consistent routines, group rules, and developmental activities. A positive classroom environment meets the needs of the children and provides a foundation for building positive relationships between the child, the teacher, and other children. Direct guidance includes techniques that build on a positive classroom environment by focusing on the individual child, setting realistic

expectations, and recognizing appropriate behaviors. Direct guidance techniques include verbal guidance, natural consequences, redirection, and problem solving

The Problem Solving Approach, which was adapted from Guiding Young Children, is a set of principles which can help to prepare an early care and education provider to support children in solving their own problems. These principles include; active listening, modifying the environment, negotiation, setting limits, and affirmations.

- **Active listening:** Really listening to what a child is saying shows a child s/he is cared about and that the teacher is interested in what s/he has to say. Active listening is the process of listening for feelings, interpreting them and reflecting them back to the child. When children are able to express themselves and feel they are being heard, they are more likely to be prepared to face the feelings associated with the problem at hand.
- **Negotiations:** During negotiations it is the teacher's job to help the child identify the problem, discuss many possible solutions, choose the best solution, and supervise the implementation of the solution.
- **Setting limits:** limits are boundaries that are set, yet they are negotiable (in contrast to rules). Limits are set to ensure safety of children and teachers, to ensure respectful treatment for all children, to ensure children take responsibility for their actions, and ensure materials are not destroyed.
- **Modifying the environment:** Successful early care and education professionals recognize the environment should be set up to tell children what to do. The learning environment should be adjusted to eliminate problems. This could include child proofing, providing additional materials, ensuring materials are interesting and age-appropriate, etc.
- **Affirmations:** Affirmations are a way to make children feel important and to acknowledge them and their work. Behaviors that are acknowledged, whether positive or negative can be increased and more likely to occur to again.

Guidance and Children's Self-Esteem and Temperament

The work of an early care and education professional will continue to influence a child long into their continued journey though childhood and throughout life. You may notice in the behavior strategies already mentioned and those to come, the purpose is always to teach the child a more appropriate skill to get his/her needs met. A successful professional will recognize that children are not acting out simply to irritate or to purposely make another angry, but rather the behavior has worked for them in the past in getting their needs met.

One might note that there is not a reference to using behavior charts or stickers to reward children. Research continues to show that the long term effect of these does not benefit the child, but rather promotes the child acting in a way only to get something rather than to intrinsically do what is right. As adults work with children there is a need to be firm, fair and positive. To do this, it requires early care and education providers to know and understand each child as an individual, recognizing each child's temperament, interests, background, and experiences.

A child's temperament can describe the way in which s/he approaches the world. A child's temperament will affect their behavior and the way s/he interacts with others. There are three temperament types; easy/flexible, slow to warm up/fearful, and difficult/feisty. Some people fit neatly into one of these categories while others are a mix of the categories. Temperament is important because it helps caregivers better understand children's individual differences. By understanding temperament, caregivers learn how to help children express their preferences, desires, and feelings appropriately. Caregivers and families can also use their understanding of temperament to avoid blaming themselves or a child for reactions that are normal for that particular child. Most importantly, adults can learn to anticipate issues before they occur and avoid frustrating themselves and the child by using approaches that do not match her temperament.

There is no perfect formula to answer all questions about discipline. Children and families are unique. A discipline strategy that works for one child may not work for another. Effective guidance focuses on the development of the child and preserves the child's self-esteem and dignity. When discipline results in actions of insults or belittling it causes the child and family to see the provider negatively, which inhibits learning. When children are treated in this manner, they often then treat others as such, in an unkind way. The approach a teacher, parent or caregiver takes with guidance will have a direct impact on the self-esteem of a child.

Strategies to Implementing Guidance:

1. **Model appropriate behavior:** Be a role model for children. Behave as you expect children to behave.
2. **Choices:** Provide children with many opportunities for choice throughout the day.
3. **Re-Direct Energy:** Plan activities that allow children to move their bodies and create space for them to do so.
4. **Provide Physical Presence:** Problematic behavior is often prevented by simply being physically near children. Place yourself in the learning environment where children can see and feel your presence.
5. **Teach Expression of Feelings:** Teach children how to express their feeling, both comfortable and uncomfortable feelings. Intentionally talk about all types of feelings and appropriate ways to express them.
6. **Individualized Needs:** Recognize when children are in need of their basic needs being met; hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. Provide children with individualized schedules when needed.

More Strategies for Implementing Discipline

1. **Honoring the Impulse:** Sometimes children's behaviors are identified as challenging or misbehaving when they are simply following their developmental impulses. This is very common in toddlers and children without language. For example, a toddler who drops his juice on the floor might be exploring the process of letting the glass go and seeing the juice spill. In this situation, it is important to understand the developmental process for this child. It does not mean that you allow the child to continue spilling juice over and over again, but rather to recognize the need to provide the child with an opportunity to learn about pouring. You might say to the child, "It looks like you are enjoying pouring, let's find a place for you to pour at the sink or sensory table." By saying this to the child you are honoring the impulse. You can further explain that juice stays at the table.
2. **Sports casting:** A nonjudgmental verbalization of events used to support children (especially infants and toddlers) as they struggle to develop new skills. When sports casting the adult does not judge, fix, shame, blame or get emotionally involved. The technique includes keeping the children safe, observing and stating just the facts on what you see, while giving children the space or time they need to continue until they either solve the problem or decide to move on to something else. An example, "Matthew, you had the bear and now Ben has it. You both want to hold it. Matthew is trying to get it back... Ben, I won't let you hit."
3. **Facilitation:** This strategy also works well with conflict between two children. It works well if you use it in conjunction with sports-casting, "Bobby I see that you are grabbing the toy from Johnny, is there another way to let him know you want to play with it?" This strategy encourages children to think of solutions and to verbalize their needs. This is a strategy that preschoolers and school age children will benefit from.

Assignment

Instructions: Consider the following situations- paying attention to the actions or words used and circle the response that would best promote growth and development and model positive guidance:

“Kayla argues about which dress up clothes she’ll wear every day!”

Response A:

Offer her two choices; would you like to wear the purple dress or the blue pants and shirt?

Response B:

Tell her if she cannot play without arguing she will not be allowed in the dress up area.

Why did you choose this response?

“No matter how many times I tell Madison to stop splashing in the sensory table, she keeps doing it and gets her friends wet.”

Response A:

Tell Madison it’s time to leave the sensory table because she is splashing.

Response B:

Sit with Madison at the sensory table showing her how to play gently with the materials without splashing.

Why did you choose this response?

“Every time it’s time to come inside, Gavin runs and hides under the climber!”

Response A:

Line the other kids up and yell for Gavin to line up right now or you’ll leave him outside.

Response B:

Before telling the kids it’s time to go inside, stand next to Gavin and ask him to help you tell the kids it’s time to go inside. Hold his hand until everyone is lined up and walk inside with him.

Why did you choose this response?

Written Policies on Child Guidance

Assignment

Using the internet to locate at least three child guidance policies for child care programs in addition to the child guidance policy at the child care program you currently work at. (If you are not presently working for a child care program, just use the three on-line policies.)

Refer to the reference provided, "Developing a Child Guidance Policy" from TA Child Guidance School Age, pages 2 and 3 and note whether the policies you found would meet the outlined guidelines.

Identify the most important aspects of each article, keeping in mind what you have learned in this lesson.

Children Learn What They Live
By Dorothy Law Nolte, Ph.D.

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.
If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.
If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.
If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.
If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.
If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envy.
If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.
If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.
If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.
If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.
If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.
If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.
If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.
If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.
If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.
If children live with fairness, they learn justice.
If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.
If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those
about them.
If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to
live.

The following information was authored by Brenda Jones Harden at the Program for Infant and Toddler Care. As you read these factors consider your current discipline strategies, expectations, and the child's point of view.

Factors That Create Discipline Problems

- Too high expectations for self-control
- Too little space or too much open space
- Too few materials or too little equipment
- Materials or equipment that is too challenging or too simple
- A lot of waiting time
- Inflexible routines, spaces, schedules, and people
- Too little order or predictability
- Too much change
- Too many temptations
- Too much noise
- Excessive requirements for sharing
- Long or frequent periods of sitting still
- Too much looking or listening time (v. being directly involved)

DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES (To use when child is engaged in harmful behavior)

DO:

- Be consistent and flexible (age, temperament)
- Tell child to STOP firmly and at close range
- Give brief reasons why behavior is unacceptable
- State and model acceptable behavior
- Concretely help children stop doing unacceptable behavior
- Offer children reasonable choices when choice is acceptable
- Avoid implying choice when there is none
- Recognize/acknowledge child's feelings with language
- Clarify that it is not child but child's behavior that is unacceptable
- Use redirection, logical consequences, or Cool-Out Time
- Seek help if you are about to lose control

DO NOT:

- Shame or humiliate child
- Physically indicate your disapproval
- Say "bad" boy/girl; avoid "good" boy/girl for acceptable behavior
- Moralize or let too much anger come through
- Use "NO" too often
- Use bribes, false threats, and false choices
- Use food or scheduled activities as re-enforcers
- Retaliate against children
- Make children say "sorry"

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Assignment: Reflection on Discipline Strategies

Environment and Children’s Behavior

The environment has a great impact on a child’s behavior. Adults within the environment possess great power in whether a child will be successful or not. Consider the factors listed in the article and how a child care provider could eliminate these within the learning environment. Record your thoughts here:

Now consider the following preventions from the article, “Guidance and Discipline with Infants and Toddlers,” adapted from J.R. Lally.

Prevention: To Promote the Optimal Social Development of All Children

- Positive, intimate relationship with caregiver
- Consistent message of unconditional caring toward child
- Adapt environment to needs of individuals and group
- Arrange spaces to decrease stress
- Address home and community environmental issues
- Clear, simple, consistent, predictable rules and consequences
- One-on-one special time with caregiver for every child
- Understand unique needs and coping capacities of each child
- Redirect inappropriate behavior
- Appreciate and encourage pro-social behavior
- Promote empathy and caring among children
- Give children words to express emotions
- Caregiver nearby and attentive
- Caregiver model of appropriate behavior
- Focus on do’s instead of don’ts
- Offer choices and respect preferences
- Share concerns firmly about hurting and other inappropriate behaviors
- Help children make connections between behaviors and consequences
- Avoid power struggles; choose battles wisely
- Refrain from shaming children
- BE PATIENT

Adapted from: Lally, J.R. (Ed.). (2011). *Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Social-Emotional Growth and Socialization* (2nd ed.)(62-70). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.

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Assignment:

After reading, "Guidance and Discipline with Infants and Toddlers," consider the preventions listed to promote optimal social development. Circle 3-5 preventions you could use in your program.

Assignment

Instructions: Circle agree or disagree and then explain why you chose that answer.

- It is okay to spank a child. Agree or Disagree
Explain:

- Children need firm discipline or they will get out of control. Agree or Disagree
Explain:

- Children should be seen, not heard. Agree or Disagree
Explain:

Assignment - Reframing

Instructions: Rewrite the following statements using positive guidance principles.

Statement:	Reframe using Positive Guidance
Don't drag your sweater in the dirt.	Hold your sweater higher, so it stays clean.
Don't scream!	
Don't spill the milk.	
Stop running!	
You are talking too loud.	
Stop wiping your nose on your sleeve.	
Don't get paint all over your clothes.	

Assignment

Instructions: Define the following in terms in the context of guiding young children.

Term	Defined in context of guiding young children
Rules	
Limits	
Positive reinforcement	
Discipline	
Guidance	
Punishment	
Consistency	
Active listening	
Praise	
Signal	
Logical consequences	
Time out	
Substitution	

Redirection	
Ignoring	
Indirect guidance	
Affirmations	

Assignment

Create a list of resources you can use for child guidance. Include 2 print resources, 1 online resource and one in-person or agency resource.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Assignment

List 5 positive behavior guidance ideas, techniques, strategies, and tactics you have learned about in the course so far. Describe a situation where the chosen idea, technique, strategy or tactic might work in your role as a child care provider.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Assignment

For each scenario listed, describe how you would handle the situation described.

1. Tabitha is a large and extremely active 4-year-old who often frightens and hurts other children. You have discussed her behavior with her parents but they feel that her behavior is typical as it is like that of her older siblings. Tabitha continues to terrorize other children and parents are starting to complain. You are becoming stressed and tired and your patience is wearing thin. You and your co-teacher are spending so much time dealing with Tabitha that you are worried other children are not getting attention they need. What do you do?

2. Tony regularly grabs items from the other children. He also shows signs of "stubbornness" - folding his arms and turning his head when you speak to him. Tony is three years old. How would you handle this situation?

3. A storm is brewing. It is lightening and thundering outside. Will, a three-year-old, starts screaming and crying. What do you do and say to Will?

4. Stephen is an active two-year-old who bites another child while the child is playing with a toy that Stephen had been playing with minutes before but had dropped and moved onto a different toy. What do you do and say to Stephen and to the child who is crying because he was bitten?