

2.4 DISCIPLINE

STANDARD 2.039 DISCIPLINE MEASURES

Discipline shall include positive guidance, re-direction, and setting clear-cut limits that foster the child's ability to become self-disciplined. Disciplinary measures shall be clear and understandable to the child, shall be consistent, and shall be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action.

Caregivers shall guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationships with peers and adults. Caregivers shall show children positive alternatives rather than just telling children "no." Caregivers shall care for children without resorting to physical punishment or abusive language. Caregivers shall acknowledge and model desired behavior.

For children 3 or over, facilities shall selectively use "time out" only to enable the child to regain control of himself or herself. The caregiver shall keep the child within visual contact. The caregiver shall take into account the child's developmental stage, tolerances, and ability to learn from "time out."

Expectations for children's behavior shall be written and shared with families and children of appropriate age.

RATIONALE: The word "discipline" originates from a Latin root that implies learning and education. The modern dictionary defines discipline as: "training that develops self-control, character, or orderliness and efficiency." Unfortunately, common usage has corrupted the word so that many consider discipline as synonymous with punishment, most particularly corporal punishment (52, 85). Discipline is most effective when it is consistent, reinforces desired behaviors, and offers natural and logical consequences for negative behaviors. Research studies find that corporal punishment has limited effectiveness and potentially hurtful side effects (53-57).

Children have to be given understandable guidelines for their behavior if they are to develop internal control of their actions. The aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of institutional rules.

COMMENTS: Discipline should be an ongoing process to help children develop inner control so they can manage their own behavior in a socially approved manner. Positive discipline may include brief, supervised separation from the group, or withdrawal of privileges, such as playtime with other children. Natural consequences are effective and useful if not associated with injury (for example, when a child misuses and breaks a toy, the toy does not work any more). Logical consequences of an action (such as not being able to play in the sandbox for a time as a consequence of throwing sand) are also effective methods of positive discipline.

"Time out" should not be used with infants and toddlers, as they are too young to cognitively understand this consequence (44). Certain children learn from time out. Time out should be used consistently, for an appropriate duration, not excessively. For more details on the effective use of "time out", see the American Academy of Pediatrics *Guidance for Effective Discipline* (44). Also see *The Magic Years* by Selma H. Fraiberg, published by Charles Scribner's Sons. Contact information is located in Appendix BB.

For additional requirements related to discipline, see also Management and Health Policy and Statement of Services, [STANDARD 8.004](#) and [STANDARD 8.005](#), on signed parent agreements; Discipline Policy, [STANDARD 8.008](#) through [STANDARD 8.010](#), on dealing with acts of aggression and fighting by children; Posting Documents, [STANDARD 8.077](#), on posting discipline policies; and Child Abuse and Neglect, [STANDARD 3.053](#) through [STANDARD 3.059](#).

TYPE OF FACILITY: *Center; Large Family Child Care Home; Small Family Child Care Home*

The above was taken from the below site as a Resource.

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