

## Behavior Guidance Policy

Every family disciplines differently. Keeping this in mind, we encourage allowing Smart Start Academy to be the first public introduction to respectfulness, caring and positive reinforcement of the world outside your home. We will strive to direct your child to excel and help promote a positive and enjoyable learning experience. A well-planned schedule, curriculum, classroom arrangement and well-trained team members, significantly reduces instances of inappropriate behavior. Most of the day, your child will be able to make his/her own decisions about which center to visit, how to express themselves and be offered guidance to learn about their world without time to misbehave. However, when children do make mistakes in behavior, we use the following guidance techniques.

- Tell the child what they CAN do
- Give choices whenever possible
- Support children in learning to solve their own problems, work out conflicts and learning how to play with friends
- Re-direct a child to another activity
- Time out for children aged 2 and above, will be used sparingly, when necessary, at the rate of one minute per year of age.
- Physical punishment and threats are never used by our staff AND we do not allow on site abusive language or physical parental discipline. When a pattern of inappropriate behavior continues, parents are required to meet with the team member and/or director. The goal will be to work together to find a solution to the problem behavior and resolve the difficulty. We allow outside professional consultation, screenings or evaluations when necessary to help the child meet their needs and help them succeed.

### Biting Policy

Children biting are one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in group childcare. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers involved. For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem. Toddlers try it out as a way to get what they want from another toddler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. They discover that biting is a sure-fire way to cause the other child to drop what they are holding so the biter can pick it up. However, they experience the disapproval of the adults nearby and eventually learn other ways of gaining possession of objects or expressing difficult feelings. For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or to feel a sense of power. No matter what the cause, biting in a group situation causes strong feelings with all involved. It does help, however, to be aware of the potential problem before it happens, and to form a plan of action if it does occur. We have developed the following plan of action to be used if and when biting occurs in any of our rooms. When a child is bitten:

#### **For the biter:**

- The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "biting is not okay – it hurts." Avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the biter. The caring attention is focused on the victim.
- The biter may not be allowed to return to the play area and is talked to on a level that the child can understand. "I can see that you want that truck, but I can't let you hurt him. We don't put our teeth on people. "Or "That hurts Johnny when you bite him, he is sad."

- Redirect the child to another play area.
- Write an incident report and notify the parents of the biter. **For the victim:**
- Separate the victim from the biter.
- Comfort the child.
- Administer first aid.
- Write an accident report and notify parents of the victim. If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, Academy, and other children, termination of the child from Academy enrollment for the duration of the biting stage may occur. Three bites within 5 business days may receive notice of dismissal. **Dismissal of Children** If for any reason, your child has the inability to follow directions, socialize properly or behavior continues to escalate in a negative way, it is the right of Smart Start Academy to dismiss any child or refuse services if it is necessary. Smart Start Academy is structured toward learning; we cannot devote extensive amounts of time to behavior problems that take away from a positive learning environment. **Withdrawal Policy** If your child will be withdrawing from the Academy, **we require a two week written notice**. This allows us to help your child prepare for the upcoming new experience. Also, we can notify another family who may be on our waiting list for a place in our program. Vacation week cannot be used after notice of withdrawal has been given.