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The Value of Positive Guidance

Using Maryland EXCELS Standards to Support Best Practice.

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Objectives

- Define the components of positive guidance.
- Reflect upon, and assess current policies and procedures
- Develop and implement policies and strategies that support positive guidance.

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Pre-Assessment

- Define the following
 - Positive Guidance
 - Choices
 - Redirection
 - Reflection
 - Problem Solving
 - Clear Rules and Expectations

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CHOOSE and TRUTH

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.
Maya Angelou



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Positive Guidance

- A system of behavior management that emphasizes positive outcomes to facilitate a child's development.
 - Teaches children and youth the skills they need to self-regulate
 - Has clear and consistent limits and expectations based on the child's current level of development.

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Maryland EXCELS Standard

- DAP 3.5
 - Provider/Staff use positive behavioral supports and strategies with children that include: providing choices; using redirection, reflection, and problem solving; and clear rules and expectations developed with input from the children.

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Choices

- Child-centered environment in which children are allowed to choose among a variety of activities and behaviors.
 - Provide numerous opportunities to make acceptable choices throughout the day
 - Give children guidance when they have difficulty choosing



Redirection

- Redirection is a proactive teaching strategy used before a situation escalates
 - Verbal
 - Physical
 - Non-verbal cue
 - Attention



Clear Rules and Expectations

- A short list of common rules used to guide behavior
 - Rules stated in a positive manner
 - Expectations aligned with the child's age and ability.
 - Enforced with consistency
 - Developed with input from children when appropriate.



Reflection

- A process used when thinking about a situation
 - What happened?
 - How did you react?
 - What was the reaction of others?
 - What could be done differently next time?



Problem Solving

- Skills used to self-regulate behavior.
 - Learning appropriate reactions
 - Naming feelings, gaining vocabulary to describe emotion
 - Developing empathy
 - Building a repertoire of coping skills and the knowledge of when to use them



I think I'm doing this!

- Complete the self assessment tool to determine which of these elements of positive guidance are already in place in your home or classroom.



Sample Level 1 Policy

- Children will be redirected from misbehavior and will be offered acceptable choices in order to learn how to make better decisions.



Sample Level 3 Policy

- We use a positive guidance approach to behavior management. We have a simple set of rules that all children are expected to follow. Children can choose from a wide variety of toys and activities throughout the day. Staff step in to redirect unacceptable behavior before small issues become larger ones. When conflicts arise, staff assist children to reflect on their actions and talk through the situation in order to build problem solving skills that can be used independently in the future.



Sample Level 5 Policy

Our main goal in behavior management is to prevent problems before they happen. Staff model positive behavior and have consistent expectations aligned with a child's age and developmental ability. Simple rules for each classroom are developed with the help of the children and reviewed often.

Our environment provides children with the opportunity to make numerous choices throughout the day. Children are gently redirected away from inappropriate behavior and are guided through a process of reflection on the possible consequences of their actions. Staff regularly share creative problem solving strategies during lessons and in teachable moments. Children are encouraged to try to work things out amongst themselves before seeking adult help.



Put it in Writing

- Draft a behavior policy for your program that reflects your philosophy and includes the elements of Positive Guidance that are included in your daily practice.



Resources

- SEFEL Training and Information
<https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/sefel/>
- Social and Emotional Learning (school-age)
<http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Social-and-Emotional-Development-Afterschool-Programs.pdf>
- Tips for teachers
<http://www.education.com/reference/article/positive-guidance-techniques/>
- Maryland EXCELS www.marylandexcels.org

