



The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre (LWCC) believes that in order for children to become happy, secure members of society, they must learn how to successfully deal with problems in interpersonal relationships. As well as learning self-discipline and inner control they must also learn positive, constructive ways to interact with other people. The role of the teacher is to support a child's sense of being a worthwhile person while providing opportunities for the child to learn appropriate ways to interact with others.

Children need the opportunity to explore their environment and discover their capabilities. This involves the testing of limits and experimenting which often results in behaviour that adults find unacceptable. Given that these situations will occur; we must develop appropriate intervention strategies.

Child Guidance Practices Used at the Centre

The following are child guidance strategies used at the Centre and can be used as resource/guidelines for parents to use at home.

Important Strategies

1. Never raise your voice, be firm but calm.
2. Be patient and calm in your behaviour, actions and responses.
3. Be consistent and set limits prior to activities and transitions.
4. Follow up when limits set are broken.
5. Remember that each child is different, so your approach or method with dealing with a child may vary, depending on that particular child's needs in that particular situation.
6. Encourage children to verbalize their feelings, fears and anxieties, etc.
7. Call another staff member if the situation becomes too difficult to handle by yourself. Recognition of needing help is a strength, not a weakness.
8. Be alert to the development of potentially difficult situations or disputes between children.
9. Arrange each area of the program in a way that can help prevent disputes from arising, i.e. have enough stimulating and interesting activities set up for the number of children in the situation.

Tips on Giving Directions

- Be sure you have the child's attention (use his/her name).
- Give positive directions that leave the child no choice of interpretation.
- Give a choice of two things when possible.
- Warn ahead of time before changing activity.
- Never use threats.
- Invite participation – never force it.
- Use a quiet voice as much as possible.
- Get down to the child's level when talking with him/her.



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How and Why to Set Limits

- Setting limits is very important: it gives the children the security of knowing that their behaviour will never get too far out of control. They know an adult will take the responsibility of stopping unacceptable behaviour until they are able to do so themselves.
- Teach children about safety, to respect property, good health and consideration for others.
- Allow the children to make as many decisions as possible within the necessary limits.
- Explain the rules in a clear, sympathetic manner to make them understandable and acceptable to the children.
- Be consistent, fair and firm.
- Enforce the rules in a positive, personal way.
- Try to understand the reason(s) for the child's disruptive behaviour.

Handling Difficult Situations and Behavioural Problems

- In spite of the limits that you set, difficult situations will arise.
- Always be aware of what is happening, try to anticipate.
- Redirect the entire activity into a more positive direction.
- Help children deal with a disagreement; have them quietly talk about how they are feeling and why.
- Help children understand one another's actions. (Show them the importance of listening to each other.)
- Try to ignore improper language. (E.g. "We use nice words here").
- Try and find out why they are using these words - are they angry? (Discuss this with the child.)
- Treat toilet accidents casually.
- Do not allow a child to strike you or another child. Stop them gently and let them know it is unacceptable here. ("We do not hit people here.")

The staff's goal in discipline is to help the child retain control of his/her emotions and actions – not to stop him/her from expressing feelings and moods.



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The Don'ts of Discipline

Don't use any form of corporal punishment (physical violence such as hitting, spanking, pushing, heavy shoving, grabbing, squeezing arms, etc.).

Don't use any deliberately harsh or degrading or disrespectful treatment that will humiliate a child or undermine his/her self-respect; and/or abusive language such as swearing, yelling or screaming.

Don't deprive or deny children of any basic needs, i.e., food, clothing, shelter or bedding. (Food should not be used to discipline children at snack time.)

Don't confine or lock children in a room or dark area for any reason. If a child must be removed a staff person must stay with him/her.

Don't ever leave children unattended at any time.

Steps Towards Limit Setting and Following Through

1. Anticipate.
2. Redirect play.
3. Give a clear warning.
4. Touch the child to get their attention and give one more warning.
5. Redirect the child to another area.
6. If the child needs help have the child walk with you to watch how the others are playing.
7. If negative behaviour continues, have the child sit in a chair in the same room but away from the other children. When the child is quiet talk about his/her behaviour.
8. If the child loses control, remove him/her from the room and stay
9. with him/her. This is so he/she can get back into control without being embarrassed and so the other children's play is not disrupted.
10. When you bring the child back, help him/her settle into an activity before moving on or if relevant solve the problem which had caused the disruption in the first place.



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Professional Attitudes

1. Never discuss a child when another child is present.
2. Never discuss a child within his/her hearing.
3. Do not discuss one parent's handling of a situation with another parent.
4. Do not at any time leave children unattended, either indoors or out, even for a few minutes.
5. Do not talk among yourselves in the playrooms or playground. Staff will have an opportunity to discuss children at staff meetings.
6. If a child has a behavioural problem staff should first discuss it with the Coordinator of the Centre before discussing it with a parent.

Resource Teacher

Each childcare centre has access, through the City of Toronto, to a Resource Teacher. The purpose of this teacher is to support the Centre, the child, the parents, and teachers and to observe and assess any difficulties the child may be having. Examples: speech and language or behavioural issues.

The Centre staff may approach a parent if they observe any difficulties with behaviour or language, etc. and ask the parent or guardian for permission to contact the Resource Teacher to assist with an observation to further assess the child.

Parents must sign permission forms to allow this process to take place.



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College of ECE Compliance

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures on how LWCC will handle complaints made to the College of Early Childhood Education (the “College”) regarding the Centre’s staff. This policy applies to all employees who are governed by the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (“Act”).

- As of February 14, 2009, membership in the College is required by the Act in order to use the title “Early Childhood Educator” or “Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE).”
- For RECEs, status as an RECE is a condition of employment and as such, revocation of this status will leave to frustration of the employment relationship.

Definitions

“Professional misconduct” refers to conduct that contravenes the Act, the regulations made under the Act, such as the professional misconduct regulation, or the College’s bylaws; conduct that contravenes an order of the College’s Discipline Committee, Complaints Committee, Council or Registrar; or conduct that is defined as being professional misconduct in the regulations.

“Incompetency” refers to a member of the College who has displayed, in his or her professional responsibilities, a lack of knowledge, skill or judgment or disregard for the welfare of a child of a nature or extent that demonstrates that the member is unfit to continue to carry out his or her professional responsibilities or that a certificate of registration held by the member should be made subject to terms, conditions or limitations.

“Incapacity” refers to a member who is suffering from a physical or mental condition or disorder such that the member is unfit to carry out his or her professional responsibilities, or the member’s certificate of registration should be made subject to terms, conditions or limitations.

Responsibilities

Coordinators

- Investigating and responding to employees in a timely manner regarding issues or concerns raised through this procedure outlined below;
- Advising the Board of Directors of the name of any employee who has a complaint with the College made against them;
- Training and informing employees to understand the expectations of the Centre on a consistent basis; and
- Ensuring employees are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and for ensuring that employees have been provided with appropriate assistance.

Employees

- Maintaining registration in ‘Good Standing’ and being certified by the College
- Informing the Centre of any changes in status regarding their registration with the College, immediately upon receiving notification, including:
 - Any investigation of professional misconduct, incompetence, and/or incapacity relating to their practice of Early Childhood Education;
 - Any finding of professional misconduct, incompetence and/or incapacity relating to their practice of Early Childhood Education;
 - Any proceeding for professional misconduct, incompetence and/or incapacity relating to their practice of Early Childhood Education;
 - Any suspension for any finding of professional misconduct, incompetence and/or incapacity relating to their practice of Early Childhood Education;
 - Any limitations or loss of certificate of registry due to professional misconduct, incompetence and/or incapacity relating to their practice of Early Childhood Education; and
 - Suspension or revocation of status due to non-payment of registration fees.
- Understanding and adhering to the standards of practice set out by the *Early Childhood Educators Act* and the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*;
- Renewing their registration with the College annually;
- Avoiding any actions that could be construed as professional misconduct as defined by the College;
- Providing the following for RECEs who have been reinstated following a suspension and have been cleared to return to work:
 - Documentation confirming good standing
 - Certificate of registration to practice as a RECE

Board of Directors

- Investigating and responding to employees in a timely manner regarding issues or concerns raised through this procedure
- Ensuring employees are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and for ensuring that employees have been provided with appropriate assistance

Procedure

The College under the Act has a duty to consider and investigate complaints regarding the conduct or actions of its members. Once a member has been notified by the College of an investigation, the member is required to disclose to the Centre the nature of the allegations, if the member has not done so already. While the College addresses the complaint within its own mechanisms, the Centre is committed to conducting its own internal investigation fairly and adequately to address the complaint against the member.



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Investigation Process

The purpose is to determine the facts of the situation at issue.

- The Centre may conduct an investigation into allegations made to the College against an RECE within five days of becoming aware of the complaint;
- The Coordinator will review the complaint with the Centre's Board of Directors to determine the scope of the investigation;
- All those directly involved, and witnesses will be interviewed, and notes/statements will be prepared during each interview, reviewed by the person(s) being interviewed and signed for accuracy. The affected employee will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint;
- Records or other documents relevant to the incident being investigated (this may include safety reports, incident reports, work schedules, injury reports, complaints and observation notes, and may involve taking pictures of the scene) will be reviewed;
- A final summary/report of the investigation will be prepared within seven (7) days of the conclusion of the investigation. The report will be shared with the Board of Directors;
- The Board of Directors shall consider whether any further action is warranted;
- If it is determined by the Board of Directors that no further action is necessary, a response outlining that decision and reasons will be provided to the employee; and
- If it is determined by the Board of Directors that further action is necessary, then the Board of Directors will follow the Progressive Discipline Process.

Corrective Action

Based on the findings of the Board of Directors or its designated committee, the Centre may implement discipline up to and including termination of employment in accordance with the Progressive Discipline Policy in the Personnel Policies Manual.

The following are some examples of "Professional Misconduct" under the Act that may result in discipline up to and including termination:

- Contravening a term, condition or limitation imposed on the member's certificate of registration;
- Failing to supervise adequately a person who is under the professional supervision of the member;
- Verbally abusing a child who is under the member's professional supervision;
- Physically abusing a child who is under the member's professional supervision;
- Psychologically or emotionally abusing a child who is under the member's professional supervision;
- Practicing or purporting to practice while under the influence of any substance or while adversely affected by any illness or dysfunction which the member knows or ought reasonably to know impairs their ability to practice;
- Practicing while in a conflict of interest;
- Improperly disclosing information about a child;
- Refusing a parent's access to a child's information without reasonable cause;



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- Failing to maintain the standards of the profession;
- Breaching a term of an agreement relating to the fees for professional services, or professional services of a child; and
- Acting in a disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional manner.

The member who remains employed with the Centre is required to disclose the outcome of the investigation once completed by the College and findings have been determined. The Centre, along with the Board of Directors, will determine whether the outcome has any consequences to the member's employment in accordance with its practices, procedures and standards.