

## **Bal Swan Children's Center Challenging Behavior Policy**

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A Team-Based Process for Responding to Challenging Behavior

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In a young child, challenging behavior is defined as being hurtful to self or others, persistent, disruptive, destructive, or interfering with child's or peer's learning.

Staff will respond to challenging behavior at each level of Pyramid practices.

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

- Review child's Ages and Stages–Social Emotional Questionnaire with parents. Reflectively listen to any concerns. Be honest about child's behavior in class, while remembering to validate parent's care and love, as well as child's strengths. Let parents know you will be trying some strategies to help child learn to get needs met more appropriately.
- Discuss with Director of Education the option of making a home visit.
- Check the ratio of 5:1 "deposits-to-withdrawal" statements to child by all staff who work with the child.
- Inform/Invite families about Bal Swan's Positive Solutions for Families class.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

- Staff will review classroom environment organization and structure to determine if all Pyramid practices are in place.
- Is there a predictable visual schedule that is consistently maintained? Are all children kept informed of transitions in routines throughout the day?
- Are there "routines within routines"? Staff will discuss what methods are being used to help children answer four questions.
  - What am I supposed to do?
  - How do I know if I am progressing?
  - How do I know that I am finished?
  - What comes next?
- Staff will review all routines to see if there is a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Staff will consider creating additional individual visual strategies...social story, first-then picture schedule, transition schedule, or center choice schedules.

### **INTENTIONAL TEACHING STRATEGIES**

Staff will self-reflect on the following practices.

- Are behavior expectations and rules posted in the classroom in a way that is meaningful for all children?
- Are behavior expectations and rules (general rules and rules for specific routines, such as circle time) being intentionally taught and reviewed daily?

- Are a variety of teaching strategies being implemented to teach rules, appropriate attention seeking, requesting and giving an object, friendship skills, problem solving, self-calming skills, and emotional literacy? These strategies will include teaching the concept in large and small groups, modeling “wise” and “unwise” choices relating to the skill being taught, creating daily activities for practice, providing descriptive praise which links positive behavior with specific expectation, and verbally modeling adult’s emotions and solutions when Teachers are feeling frustrated as well as supported. (powerful strategy)
- How often are children given planned social opportunities to work together with their peers? Peers are a natural reinforcement! Much challenging behavior occurs because children are seeking peer attention without knowing how to do that appropriately. Teach them!
- Are a variety of visual play schemes taught and posted in centers? Many children do not know how to create play schemes with materials or peers. They will need to be taught, modeled, supported, and specifically reinforced to begin to learn to play appropriately with materials and peers.

### **FAMILY SUPPORT**

We do our very best to keep all children safe. However, there are times when children will be hit, kicked, pinched, spit on, and bit by a child who is exhibiting challenging behavior. It is imperative to be prepared when a parent voices their concerns for the safety of their child. I trust that no staff member will become defensive! Remember that the bridge between a parent and a teacher is ALWAYS the child! You both have that child’s best interest in your heart! Talk to the parent about the fact that challenging behavior is a special need. Families already understand that Bal Swan includes all kinds of children with special needs. Explain our process of supporting all children in the classroom to learn that each child has an important part in helping others learning to be friends, asking all children to play, giving all children complements. In addition, all children learn to think of solutions to challenges with peers, including learning to tell others, “please stop” and tell a teacher, if the behavior is aggressive. We are supporting all children whenever they have a social problem. We are giving children the language to stand up to a peer who might hurt them, supporting children to know what to do in the future if someone tries to bully them. We are also teaching children how to get their needs met in socially appropriate ways. We need the support of the community of families in the classroom to support ALL children in the class. Who has the solution to one child’s challenging behavior in a classroom? Everyone! Not only the child, or the child’s family, not only the teachers, not only the other children in the class. The families are equally involved in supporting the family of the child with challenging behavior. Not to judge, criticize, ostracize, but to support!

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLANS**

If challenging behaviors have not decreased after self-reflection and coaching with Classroom Coach (C) or Director of Education (DE) on the above practices, staff will initiate the Positive Behavior Support Plan with family. The Team will consist of each staff member who works with the child at school and all family members and/or care givers whom the parents want to include.

1. Begin collecting Behavior Incident Report data. Collect data for a minimum of two weeks.
2. Team will meet together. This meeting will begin by listing all the child’s strengths. Family members will be asked to describe their hopes and dreams for their child. Behaviors of concern

will be discussed and how they are interfering with learning. All staff members (SM) who work with the child, C and/or DE, and family members will review observations.

3. The Team will begin collaborating on the Prevent, Teach, Reinforce (PTR) Child Assessment (Dunlap, Wilson, Strain, and Lee, 2013). The Team will work together to create a functional behavior assessment. The Team will brainstorm a hypothesis of the function of the behavior and identify antecedents and consequences which surround the behavior. The Team will collaborate to create strategies which will assist in preventing the challenging behavior, identify replacement skills which need to be taught, and discuss reinforcements for appropriate behavior, both at home and school.
4. Team will create materials and data sheets needed for plan implementation.
5. SM will begin implementing plan and collect data for a minimum of six sessions.
6. During that time, supervisor will provide fidelity checks in the classroom to assure that staff are following the plan with fidelity.
7. Team will review data after six sessions and choose to continue or modify plan.
8. Follow up meetings with the family will occur in a timely manner.