

Children need to have the opportunity to fully explore their environment and their social connection to others in order to establish a sense of independence, trust, connection, and self-esteem. At times, this means they will test, challenge, and defy, both the materials, and people within their environment. As early childhood professionals, we feel that a child's emotional development progresses in stages, like all other aspects of development and that children need time and maturity to develop mastery and behavioral control. We have a responsibility to nurture, support and assist all of the children as we help each of them find constructive ways to express their feelings and needs.

Limits at any age are essential in terms of the safety, security, and protection of all individuals. These limits must match the level of development and the individual needs of each child. Because young children are only beginning to fully grasp the causes and effects of their behavior, it is the responsibility of the adults present to set clear limits. When setting limits, it is important to let children know what is expected, why certain behaviors are unacceptable, and what might be an appropriate alternative. Showing that you care, along with patience, consistency and the use of simple language, are key factors in setting limits.

At no time will we strike, shake, shame, scream or knowingly hurt a child in the process of discipline. Parents will be kept informed of issues and situations that occur so that they can be aware of measures taken and be involved and supportive. Teachers are also held accountable for appropriate interactions with children at all times. Teaching staff never use threats or derogatory remarks. Food is never withheld or threatened to be withheld as a form of discipline.

If a pattern of unacceptable behavior persists, a child may be gently, but firmly, removed from the situation and redirected to another area, or kept close to a teacher until that child seems ready to return to play. Redirection to a different activity, changing the space, schedule, or the pacing of the day, reinforcement of positive behaviors, and intervening before the behavior starts or has a chance to get out of control are some appropriate and effective techniques used to help young children learn to live in a group.

Teachers also document observations of inappropriate or challenging behaviors. These are discussed with parents, and when necessary, a plan is developed to assist the students and parents. This plan may include consultation with outside support programs. During Parent Conferences, we listen to and problem-solve with parents as well as share ideas on what we see works with their child to help with any issues or concerns they or we may have.

From time to time, written handouts may be available at the Parent Sign-In table on specific aspects of development that may be of interest to you. Also, be sure to talk with teachers about specific areas of concern and we may be able to provide some additional resources.

I have read and understand the discipline policy of First Congregational Church Day Care & Nursery, Inc. (1st Church Preschool).

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date