



Promoting Positive Behavior

To Prevent Suspensions and Expulsions

CHILD DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES LICENSING REGULATIONS

The District of Columbia understands the importance of fostering children’s social and emotional growth, promoting positive behavior, and preventing the escalation of behaviors that may lead to suspension and expulsion of children from birth to age 5 in child development facilities.

Licensed child development facilities should have discipline policies that comply with Section 141 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) Title 5-A. These policies must include:

- Informing staff, volunteers, parents and children of the facility’s behavioral expectations for children;
- Using positive methods of child guidance that meet the individual needs of each child and encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation; and
- Applying rules, expectations and limits consistently for all children in a manner consistent with a child’s developmental ability.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The District offers the following professional development courses to increase knowledge and application of positive behavior supports, including:

Professional Development Mandated by 5A DCMR § 139	Relevant Quorum Courses
Developmentally appropriate methods of positive behavior intervention and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging Behavior: Reveal the Meaning • Building Positive Relationships • Learning Environment: How Classroom Arrangement Impacts Behavior • Responsive Caregiving: Nurturing Relationships with Infants and Toddlers • Juggling Act: Schedules Routines and Transitions • The Developing Infant and Toddler • Autism 101 • To Expel or Not to Expel
Community health and social services resources for children and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Engagement • Building Strong Relationships with Families • Honoring All Families • Developmental Milestones
Enhancing self-regulation and self-esteem in children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Positive Relationships • Learning Every Day Through the Senses • Creating Positive Connections • Responsive Feeding for Infants and Toddlers • Building Resilience After Natural Disasters • Dual Language Learners

UNUSUAL INCIDENT REPORTING

Child development facilities must notify OSSE of unusual incidents that impact the health and safety of children, using an [Unusual Incident Report Form](#). The form should be immediately submitted (by fax or email) after the incident occurred to the Licensing and Compliance Unit.

Attn: Licensing and Compliance Unit (LCU)
Fax: (202) 727-7295 | Email: osse.childcarecomplaints@dc.gov.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

Child development facilities can support children and families in preventing suspensions and expulsions by:

- Having clear expectations in writing;
- Routinely communicating with children, families and staff;
- Utilizing and implementing strategies—such as those in the resource section—that de-escalate children’s behavior to prevent the need for disciplinary actions; and
- When children act out, responding with strategies that promote empathy to help children take the take the perspective of the other child (or adult), which can help to de-escalate the situation.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

- The [Strong Start DC Early Intervention Program](#) serves as the single point of entry for young children (birth to three years) in Washington, DC whose caregivers have concerns about their development. Strong Start accepts referrals from anyone who has concerns about a child’s development including parents, family members, friends, physicians, hospitals, child care staff and social workers. As of July 1, 2018, children with a developmental delay of 25 percent or more, in at least one development area, may receive early intervention services.
- The [Healthy Futures Program](#) offers child and family-centered consultation services to child care providers and family members that build their skills and capacity to promote social emotional development, prevent escalation of challenging behaviors, and increase appropriate referrals for additional assessments and services.
- The [Primary Project](#) provides screening and early intervention services to children in pre-kindergarten through third grade identified with mild school adjustment issues.
- The [Parent Infant Early Childhood Enhancement Program](#) involves play and art therapy, infant observation, and Parent Child Interaction Therapies, and supports parenting groups. Children served by this program are primarily five years of age and younger.