



Discipline Policy

HPMS follows the guidelines of Positive Discipline. All adult community members are encouraged to read Positive Discipline for Preschoolers by Jane Nelsen. At HPMS, discipline is an important opportunity to teach. Positive discipline empowers children to make appropriate choices with respectful, relevant and reasonable consequences.

Elements of positive discipline include:

- Opportunities for success
- Respect
- Limits and firmness
- Allowing children to be children (adults are expected to act like adults).

While each situation is different, here are some ways to implement positive discipline:

- Offer children appropriate choices
- Create routines
- Get children involved
- Use a sense of humor
- Be patient while a child processes a situation and/or action
- Teach respect by modeling respect
- Provide supervision, distraction and redirection
- Step back to figure out what a child needs or is feeling (e.g., attention, power, revenge, assumed inadequacy)
- If you say something, mean it; because you mean it, follow through
- Remember that children model whatever adults do (e.g., if an adult yells, a child will yell; if an adult is respectful, a child learns to be respectful).

Children are encouraged to process and reflect upon a situation. Adults are present to help children identify feelings and communicate. Children are not forced to say "I'm sorry." "I'm sorry" may be offered as a choice to resolve an issue, but not the only way to resolve an issue. A child may be asked to calm down and think about ("reframe") a situation before resolving it, but a child will not be placed in "time out."

Children will not lose outdoor time, sleep or food as a consequence for behavior unless it is a relevant consequence. For example, if a child is throwing food, the food will be removed from the table until the child is ready to eat it, not throw it. If a child is refusing to put on his/her coat and the entire class is waiting, the class will go outside and someone from the office will wait for the child to put on his/her coat. When the coat is on, s/he may join the class outside.

It is the responsibility of HPMS to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for community members. If behavior by a child or adult creates an unsafe environment, the Director of the program has the right to dismiss the person from the community.

1 McWilliams Place, Suite 206, Jersey City, NJ, 07302