



Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5180:2-20-10 Child guidance.

Effective: July 1, 2026

(A) Who is responsible for child guidance in preschool programs?

A preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for developmentally appropriate intervention and behavior management in accordance with the preschool program's child guidance policy.

(B) What are the procedures for child guidance in a licensed preschool program?

(1) The preschool program shall have a written child guidance policy that:

- (a) Describes the preschool program's philosophy and restrictions as listed in paragraph (C) of this rule and the specific methods of child guidance used at the preschool program.
- (b) Will be on file at the preschool program for review.
- (c) Is constructive and developmentally appropriate for all children enrolled in the preschool program and includes such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation, and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.
- (d) Will apply to all persons on the premises and is to comply with this rule, section 3319.46 of the Revised Code, and rule 3301-35-15 of the Administrative Code.

(2) The preschool is to give a copy of the program's written or electronic child guidance policy to:

- (a) The parent of each child upon enrollment in the program; and
- (b) All preschool staff members for review upon employment.

(C) What are the prohibited child guidance techniques?

In addition to the restrictions outlined in rule 3301-35-15 of the Administrative Code, the following apply:

- (1) There will be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- (2) Discipline will not be delegated to any other child.
- (3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than a preschool staff member holding a child for a short period of time, so the child



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may regain control. Prone restraint of a child is prohibited. Prone restraint is defined as all items or measures used to limit or control the movement or normal functioning of any portion, or all, of a child's body while the child is in a face-down position.

- (4) No child will be placed alone in a locked room or otherwise confined in an enclosed area.
- (5) No child will be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family, or other verbal abuse.
- (6) Discipline will not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- (7) Techniques of child guidance will not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- (8) Discipline will not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior.
- (9) Separation will be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child will be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.
- (10) Preschool staff members shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

(D) What are the child abuse and/or neglect reporting requirements?

A staff member who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected is to immediately make a report in accordance with section 2151.421 of the Revised Code and then submit a serious incident report to the department of children and youth (DCY) through the Ohio statewide licensing system within twenty-four hours.

(E) What are the child behavior management plan requirements for preschool programs?

The preschool program is to communicate and consult with the child's parent prior to implementing a specific behavior management plan. This written plan will be consistent with this rule, any applicable individualized education program (IEP), individualized family service plan (IFSP) or 504 plan, for the child and signed by the child's parent.

(F) What are the suspension, expulsion, and removal requirements for preschool programs?



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Child guidance policies and procedures shall ensure the safety, physical, and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises. If suspension, expulsion, and removal policies exist, they are to be written in accordance with section 3313.66 of the Revised Code. When a child is expelled from the preschool program for a behavioral reason, the expulsion is to be reported to DCY in the Ohio statewide licensing system.