

BEHAVIOR POLICY AND PHILOSOPHY OF CHILD MANAGEMENT

We believe that effective child management is achieved by providing the child with:

1. respect
2. an appropriate and supportive environment
3. successful experiences to encourage the feeling of competence and self-worth, and
4. an informed and sensitive staff

Appropriate behavior will in most cases result from modeling, positive reinforcement, expectations that are clearly defined and understood, and consistency at school and in the home.

Any guidance and disciplinary measure that must be taken to extinguish undesirable behavior will be reasonable and consistent with the developmental needs of the child and the nature of the undesirable behavior. Corporal punishment will never be used, nor will harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment.

The Rock Brook behavior policy is based on the premise that each child will be evaluated on an individual basis and expectations for each child will be established based on their particular level of functioning. Baseline functional skills require an ability to function as part of a group (with some guidance and prompting), exhibit some school ready behaviors (i.e., ability to learn unpacking routine or participate in a “circle” time activity) and minimal behaviors posing safety issues to self and others.

Staff in each classroom will create a specific motivating behavior system for the class as a whole. This system will be given to parent/guardians in writing at the outset of the school year. These systems may include:

- maintaining an organized schedule with firm, supportive limits and students’ will be aware potential reinforcers as well as consequences
- reinforcing compliance to the daily schedule/classroom rules at each child’s established level
- using antecedent interventions to increase the possibility of appropriate behavior (e.g., use of picture schedules, arrangement of classroom)

On occasion, a student may engage in an inappropriate behavior in an isolated incident and staff will handle this incident according to the classroom behavior system. Parents receive copies of the classroom plans & information regarding Safety Care during Back-to-School Night. These isolated incidents may not necessarily be recorded. However, when a child has established a pattern of inappropriate behavior, and the classroom plan is not working, parent/guardian/guardians will be notified of this behavior by phone, via daily notebooks or emails. In the event of a crisis when a child may become a danger to themselves or others, it may become necessary to implement Safety Care procedures.

The Rock Brook School utilizes the Safety-Care program from QBS, Inc. There is a certified staff trainer on site and staff are trained and re-certified annually. Safety-Care provides staff with the skills they need to confidently, safely, humanely, and respectfully enhance the lives of children and adolescents who sometimes exhibit challenging behaviors.

Staff members are taught to intervene professionally and therapeutically, using a safe, straightforward, effective approach designed to prevent or reverse escalation. Safety-Care de-escalation skills work with those who can communicate verbally—and those who can't. Because it is based on an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) model, Safety-Care avoids reinforcement of crisis behaviors—because it isn't helpful to get through a crisis today in a way that makes another crisis more likely tomorrow. Safety-Care appropriately balances immediate crisis intervention and longer-term safety goals.

At the Rock Brook School, staff members are prepared—as a last resort—to initiate emergency physical interventions. Staff members are taught to manage aggression and other dangerous behaviors using a comprehensive set of physical procedures that are safe, effective, and brief.

This program supports the staff in identifying student's triggers and signals (when possible) and provides tools to respond safely and therapeutically (i.e. redirection before escalation). In the event that a behavioral incident does occur, the staff is able to apply various techniques to de-escalate without over- or under-reacting. In more extreme circumstances, intrusive physical management procedures may be necessary. Should the behavior continue to occur a meeting will be scheduled between the family, behavior consultant, and teaching team to discuss the next steps.

During that time discussion will occur regarding the need for a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), individual behavior plan and/or individual classroom modifications/strategies. The FBA will include data collection to determine frequency, duration and settings of the behavior and an assessment for the maintaining variables of the behavior. The FBA may also include a reinforcer assessment, setting assessment, analysis of sensory need and analysis of communication abilities. At the completion of the FBA, if determined necessary, a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) will be created.

All behavior management plans are given to parent/guardians in writing and must be approved by parent/guardians in order to be initiated in the classroom. Any plan devised by the school will have the input of the teaching team and any Rock Brook consultants or staff that are deemed necessary. The staff may also enlist the input of the family in creating a behavior management plan by asking them to provide information on behavior at home, ideas for techniques that have worked in other settings, or ideas for appropriate reinforcing objects/activities. When creating or revising an IEP, the most recent behavior plan should be incorporated as necessary.

The staff involved with the plan, a Rock Brook administrator and/or behavior consultant will review the plan for:

- appropriateness of plan to reduce the target behavior
- ability for the plan to be implemented in a school setting
- adequacy of data collection/assessment measures
- appropriateness of the plan as the least intrusive option likely to be effective
- ethical validity of the plan

Upon approval, the plan is reviewed with parent/guardians/guardians. Parent/guardians, who agree to the plan, will be given updates as to its status once it is implemented. Parent/guardians may also revoke approval at any time by notifying the classroom teacher in writing or contacting him/her by phone. Parent/guardians who have any questions or concerns about the behavior management plan and are unwilling to give consent will meet with the classroom teacher, Rock Brook Administrator and/or behavioral consultant to discuss the plan and any revisions needed. As revisions to a plan are made, parent/guardians will be given written notification of these changes.

The Behavior Management plan will be reviewed as outlined in the plan. Data will be collected each month to determine that the plan is effective. If the plan is determined to be ineffective, an alternative plan will be created following the same procedures. If the target behavior does not show a significant decrease after three different behavioral plans have been attempted, the student's parent/guardians will be invited to attend a meeting with the Rock Brook staff. At this time the staff, family and any pertinent consultants from school staff or through family referral (this may include the sending district case manager) will meet to determine any possible approaches to decrease the inappropriate behavior. It may be necessary at this point to review the appropriateness of placement at the Rock Brook School. If a discussion of placement takes place at this meeting a timeline for review of this issue will be presented by the Rock Brook administration.

If families are having difficulties with a child at home they are urged to discuss any issues with the Rock Brook staff. If there is the possibility of finding positive methods for linking home and school, leading to an increase in appropriate behavior, the Rock Brook staff is available to families. Rock Brook consultants can be made available to begin a dialogue with the family that may culminate in a plan for home use.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Procedures

1. Team/staff interview is completed to collect more information
2. Consent to complete a FBA is sent home (attached)
3. Upon receiving consent, data collection begins.
4. Upon completion of the assessment, recommendations will be given. A meeting will be scheduled with the team, family, and case manager if applicable.
5. If a behavior intervention plan is necessary, the plan is reviewed and parent consent is to be given before implementation of the plan.
6. Once consent is received, a copy of the plan is put in the student's main file, a copy is given to the classroom, and a copy is given to the school district.
7. A meeting will occur with staff to train them on the specifics of the plan.
8. Once the plan is implemented, staff is responsible for collecting data and following through with the procedures in the plan.
9. The plan is reviewed within two weeks of implementation and then monthly to determine efficacy.
10. Data will be turned in on a monthly basis.

~If there is a behavior which is so potentially disruptive that any delay in the implementation of a BIP might result in significant negative consequences, emergency consent will be obtained. In this case, administration will obtain verbal consent.

~At times, a dangerous behavior may require immediate attention. When this occurs, the staff trained in Safety-Care will implement those procedures. Parents/guardians will be notified when these situations occur.

~Despite the completion of the functional assessment procedure and implementation of a behavior plan, a student's behavior may continue to be dangerous. Dangerous is defined as harmful towards self or others and has a high likelihood of causing serious injury. In the event that the behavior continues in severity, Rock Brook reserves the right to terminate a placement.